One Good Question...

A reading on Jesus' healing of the man on the Sabbath. For four readers

- **Reader 1:** "And Jesus went on from there, and entered the synagogue. And behold, there was a man with a withered hand. And the Pharisees watched him..."
- **Reader 2:** And "behold"—the question is put, the scene is set, the point of tension created. A man with a hand not whole, a man with the power to make whole, their lives come together on a holy day in a holy place in front of holy men. Holy cow! What's going to happen here!?
- Reader 1: "And they watched him to see whether he would cure him on the Sabbath."
- **Reader 3:** Oh, those Pharisees. Was their questioning of Jesus' actions to engage the truth, or to entrap, to ensnarl, to encircle? And the man? the man with the hand? A person *in need*, or a person *they needed* to get the person they wanted, to save the system they needed to keep their place of privilege intact?
- Reader 1: "And Jesus said to the man who had the withered hand, 'Come forward.""
- Reader 4: Was our Lord itchin' for a fight—or just couldn't keep from doing right?
- Reader 1: "He said to them, 'Is it lawful to do good or to do harm on the Sabbath, to save life or to kill?'"
- **Reader 2:** Simple question really—straightforward, easily revolved . . .
- **Reader 3:** Why do I think it may *not* be so easily resolved . . .?
- Reader 1: "But they were silent."
- Reader 4: Cat got their tongues?
- Reader 2: Or tongue-tied by a question whose answer was obvious to everyone but them?
- Reader 1: "Jesus said to the man, 'Stretch out your hand.' And the man stretched it out, and it was restored."
- **Reader 2:** Now that's something to celebrate! The ill made well. The injured made whole. A man who can now face life fully "armed" with a healthy body. Who could be troubled by that?!
- Reader 3: I think / know who . . .
- Reader 1: "But the Pharisees went out and conspired against him, how to destroy him."
- **Reader 2:** Those men . . . why did they do that?
- **Reader 3:** The man made well . . . why didn't they care?
- Reader 4: The man named Jesus . . . was this the beginning of the end?
- **Reader 1:** Our world today...who's hurting, who's watching, who's speaking up to bring change for the better?

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