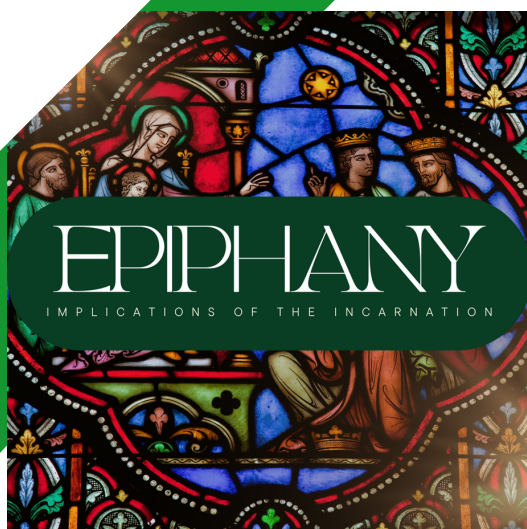
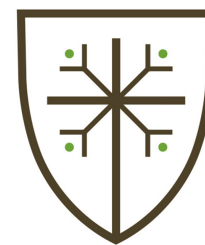


# SERMON NOTES



February 4, 2024

## SERMON INFO

### TITLE

"Because of the Crowd"

### PREACHER

Rev. Tim Frickenschmidt

### TEXTS

Malachi 3:1-4

Romans 1:20-23

Mark 2:1-12

## DISCUSSION QUESTION

1. What do you see as your greatest, most urgent need?
2. How do you see God working in your own life or in those around you to change your heart and your desires?

## SERMON IN SUMMARY

This Sunday, Tim continued our series for Epiphany, the implications of the incarnation looking at the story of the paralytic lowered through the roof. He began with the question, what is your greatest need and what will you do to get it?

### The Crowd

In nearly all of the stories in the Gospel of Mark, "the crowd" is mentioned. And not in a complimentary way. Mark is commentating on a particular type of person. The crowd is amazed by him, entertained by him, but they don't necessarily know him. Most often the crowd is pressing in on Jesus. They want something from him. But in the end, when we reach chapter 15 of Mark, their amazement is over. They are shouting to crucify him. In the end, the crowd always gets what it wants. But our wants, even our deepest, most seemingly urgent desires, are not always what we need.

### The Epitome

The paralytic and his friends who lowered him through the roof represent the epitome of the crowd's desires. They didn't tear a hole in the roof of the house to get forgiveness. This man and his friends, very understandably, see his greatest most urgent need as physical healing. Once he is healed, everything will be all right again. But Jesus says no, he doesn't have a more urgent need than forgiveness. We all, like this man, have that one unending demand of God – "If I just had this." We think we know what the biggest problem is in our life but we don't. And in the moment, that one main thing we think will fix everything, that is our God. Jesus has to change our desires and our hearts.

### The Riddle

In our gospel passage, Jesus poses a question to those criticizing him for claiming to forgive the man's sins. Which is easier, to say your sins are forgiven or to say get up and walk? At first glance, we may think forgiveness is easier. You and I can forgive someone who has wronged us, but we can't heal people. But sin is indelible – it leaves a spiritual mark on our soul that is impossible to erase. Tim quoted Jerram Barrs who said, "God doesn't reveal all our sins to us all at once because if he did, it would crush us." If we could see the mark of our sins, it would utterly crush us. And the answer to Jesus' riddle is that forgiving sin is impossible. To forgive sin, God himself in the flesh must die. Christ died and rose again in order to meet your true greatest need.