

Not Getting What You Want

Jesus’ First Priority

Felt needs vs. the most important needs

Wanting the wrong thing

“Thank God for unanswered prayers.” – Garth Brooks

Jesus’ first priority – a new heart

“I will give them a new heart” – Ezekiel 11:19, 36:26, Jeremiah 31:33, Hebrews 8:10

Jesus’ Last Priority

Throwing rocks at the wasp nest

The scribes’ reaction: “Why does this man speak like that? Who can forgive sins but God alone?”

A warning to those of us with theological accuracy.

Which is easier?

On the one hand, it’s easier to “say” your sins are forgiven than “do” the impossible miracle. After all, declaring a person’s sins to be forgiven is an invisible action that nobody can prove or disprove. In this case, the powerful and undisputable healing shows that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins. If he can do what is more difficult, than certainly he can do what is easier.

On the other hand, which is it truly easier for Jesus to do? Healing the man of his paralysis only took a short phrase and a moment of concentration. Forgiving the man’s sin would take a little bit more than that...

The looming cross

Jesus’ last priority

True healing

What does Isaiah say true healing is? Isaiah 53:5

⁵ But he was pierced for our transgressions; he was crushed for our iniquities; upon him was the chastisement that brought us peace, and with his wounds we are **healed**.”

“[Jesus says] you think you know what you really need, but you don’t. I’m not going to play the rotten practical joke of giving you the deepest desire of your heart until I change the deepest desire of your heart, so that it’s me. Then and only then can you know a little bit of what paradise is.” – Tim Keller

Extra Space for Notes

Questions for Personal Study

1. Why does Jesus point this man to a different need than his paralysis?
2. What does Jesus do that offends the scribes?
3. Which do you think was easier for Jesus to do? Forgive the man’s sins or heal him? Why?
4. What should your desire above all other things be? In what ways does God lead you to have that desire?