



I'VE
CHANGED
MY
MIND

S E R M O N G U I D E

I've Changed My Mind

John 5:1-9

INTRODUCTION

NOTES

Oftentimes what constrains and restrains us is not what is going on around us, but what is happening within us. If we can begin to think differently about where we are, who we are, and what we are going through, then we can literally turn our lives completely around. But that means we're going to have to change our minds about a few things. So as we look at the story of the man Jesus healed at the pool of Bethesda, let's talk about what it looks like practically to change our minds and what we need to be changing our minds about.

KEY POINTS

1. Change Your Mind About Your Environment/ Atmosphere/Surroundings

Many years ago, after reading this story in Greek, I began to think differently about the point of the passage. Many versions of the Bible say that when Jesus saw the man and knew that he had been “in that condition” or “in that case.” But the Greek text does not have this phrase. It just says, “When Jesus saw the man and knew that he had been **THERE** for a long time.”

So Jesus asks the man, “Do you want to be made well?” It is a shocking question because you think that anyone who has been in a bad situation for 38 years would want to be made well, but the fact that Jesus asks this question perhaps gives us clues as to the nature of the man’s problem.

He had been stuck in the same environment for so long, and he hadn't made the move to change. He remained stagnant, and therefore so did his condition. When we're stuck in a situation in our own lives, we must be willing to change our minds about our surroundings and our environment. After all, what's around you might have more of an impact on what's going on inside you than you even realize.

2. Change Your Perspective

If you view your problem through the prism of a different lens, you could turn things around entirely. This man at Bethesda got the breakthrough he needed because he changed his mind. He needed healing and was desperately in need of deliverance, and it happened because he changed his mind. And if he could do it after 38 years of a sit-in in that sad situation, then you can as well.

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When Jesus arrives on the scene, he asks the man the direct and provocative question, “Do you want to be made well?” While it may sound ridiculous to pose such a question to anyone who needs help, it is actually a necessary and relevant question to ask a person who may have become satisfied in and with their situation. A change in perspective was going to be necessary if a change in circumstance was going to take place. That’s why Jesus asked the question, and that’s what we need to think about if we want to see Jesus bring about change in our own lives today.

3. Change Your Approach

Jesus’ question in today’s key passage may sound like a silly question. Of course, you want to get well; who doesn’t want to change their circumstances when they are dissatisfied and unhappy? Unfortunately, a lot of people do not.

When the question is posed the way Jesus said it, it would sound silly to say anything but “yes, I want to get well.” But for many, their actions actually would say, “No, I’m not happy but I just want to continue to live this way.” We go back and put the shackles on ourselves. We pray for freedom, but when Jesus opens our prison door, we willingly walk back into it and shut ourselves in.

Do you want to get well? Jesus wants you to get well. But it is a choice you have to make for yourself. No one can make it for you. What Jesus told the man next was important. In verse 8, “Jesus said to him, ‘Get up! Pick up your mat and walk,’” and “At once the man was cured; he picked up his mat and walked.” He was cured of his own psychological bondage. But first, he had to get up and walk. He had to change his approach. He had to do the thing that a lot of people wouldn’t have done. He had to change his mind, and that’s when the life change happened.

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QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

1. What is something about your life you would like to see Jesus change?
2. If you're being asked to change your environment, your perspective, or your approach, which one is the most difficult for you to change?
3. What is something you feel like Jesus is trying to change in you, but you're reluctant to accept that change?
