

Be Opened

A woman comes to Jesus, asking for healing. Because this woman does not follow the same religion as Jesus and his followers, he at first turns her away. Did you catch that? It bears repeating in case you did not. Jesus refuses to heal the woman because she does not follow the same religion. Even Jesus cannot see past his notions of right and wrong, black and white, in and out.

But we have this story because the woman startles Jesus into changing his mind. Not only is her child healed, but Jesus and those who followed him then and follow him now are forever changed.

Even Jesus has to change his mind sometimes. Even Jesus has to pivot away from his entrenched beliefs to embrace a new way. Even Jesus has to be uncomfortably challenged before he can imagine a new way of doing ministry and healing those in need in his community.

This story is a powerful encouragement to those in leadership positions in church, who fear that change in this 21st context of ministry is both inevitable and impossible. Like Jesus, may you discover that while the only constant is change, you can be who you need to be to lead in these changing times. Jesus himself went through the process of recognizing that what he had been doing was no longer fruitful. Even Jesus saw that it was imperative that he open his heart and mind to new possibilities.

In her book, *Dynamic Discernment: Reason, Emotion, and Power in Change Leadership*, Sarah B. Drummond notes that she has studied change for more than two decades and in that time, she has “found that even change is changing.” She has uncovered “dramatic shifts in the language we use for the role of leader in bringing about change.” But change itself is not the end of the story. “Throughout the history of God’s interaction with creation, we see God providing the resources to face that which is uncertain and new.”*

What tools is God providing you in this time of rapid change? How can you make the best use of those tools? What prayer can you offer to our Christ, who shows us how to change our minds?

*Drummond, Sarah B. - *Dynamic Discernment: Reason, Emotion, and Power in Change Leadership*. The Pilgrim Press, 2019.



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