

Do you just want to _____, or do you
really want to _____?

If you want more than _____,
you'll have to move past 4 " _____ " on the way
to lasting _____.

1. OUT #1: Overwhelming _____

2. OUT #2: Necessary _____

3. OUT #3: Honest _____

4. OUT #4: Intentional _____

Do you just want to improve, or do you really want to change?

If you want more than improvement,
you'll have to move past 4 "outs" on the way
to lasting change.

1. OUT #1: Overwhelming drama
 - a. Don't read verse 22 and miss the drama in it.
 - i. Some people brought a blind man.
 - ii. Those same people begged Jesus to touch him
 1. "beg" literally means "entreat, call to one's side"
 2. Another way to say it could be "demand" or "nag"
 - iii. Let's face it: drama wears people out
 1. Other peoples' drama wears us out
 2. Our drama wears other people out
 - b. Sometimes it is the drama that gets people near Jesus
 - c. How people get to Jesus isn't as important as them actually getting to Jesus.
 - d. Bottom Line: Drama is a hassle, but it can't become a hindrance.

2. OUT #2: Necessary discomfort
 - a. Jesus took the blind man outside the village
 - i. Jesus took him from the place that had labeled him
 - ii. Real change is always more internal than external
 - iii. Being led requires trust
 - b. The feeling of discomfort will be an out unless we recognize the difference in Jesus' touch
 - i. Some people had brought the blind man
 - ii. Jesus took him by the hand and led him
 - iii. My guess is the blind man noticed the difference
 - c. Jesus spit on the man's eyes
 - i. Talk about unexpected and uncomfortable!
 - ii. At least the blind man didn't see it coming
 - iii. In Jesus' day, there was a belief that a holy man's spit was holy
 - iv. People believed it could cure
 - v. Perhaps part of what Jesus was doing was showing that the best the culture had wasn't good enough
 - vi. What we know for sure is that there's a man in front of Jesus:
 1. Who was pushed there by people (drama)
 2. Who is outside his comfort zone (discomfort)
 3. With spit running down his face (more discomfort)
 - d. In that scenario, Jesus asked a question that opened the door for another out.

3. OUT #3: Honest desperation

- a. If people have made it past the first 2 outs on their way to change, this is the one that usually gets them
- b. This is when we decide if we've had enough
- c. Jesus asked the blind man a question
 - i. "Do you see anything?"
 - ii. It was a simple yes or no question
- d. Now, if you're only goal is to improve - to get better - your answer to this question is yes
- e. Even with all the drama and spit, this man had experienced new sight
- f. Not perfect sight, but better than he'd had before
- g. But he didn't want to improve; he wanted to change
 - i. He was desperate enough to answer the question honestly
 - ii. He told Jesus, "Kind of."
 - iii. When is the last time you told Jesus - or gave another person the freedom to tell Jesus - "nice try?"
- h. The American church culture is built on improvement, not change.
 - i. Camps, retreats, conferences
 - ii. Flashy, exciting services
 - iii. All designed to give momentary improvement with no real lasting change
- i. That's why so many live "paycheck to paycheck" with God
 - i. They have to find a greater payoff to make it to the next big moment
- j. When you're desperate for change, you're willing to risk being spit on again in order to change
- k. Hang in to this point, and you'll be changed
 - i. "Then" - v. 25
 - ii. He was restored and saw everything clearly

4. OUT #4: Intentional distance

- a. Being changed and living changed are different
- b. Jesus told the man not to go back to the village
 - i. He told him to stay away from the old places that new him as the blind guy
 - ii. He was changed outwardly (sight) but also inwardly (identity)
- c. As God sends us out to people far from Him, we'll see lives changed
- d. We'll also see the tremendous pull of the old identity
 - i. It's comfortable
 - ii. It requires little thinking and effort
- e. Have you ever tried to go home a new way?
 - i. It takes longer
 - ii. You have to pay attention
 - iii. It's awkward because you are relearning
- f. This last out is what stands in the way of being changed and living changed
- g. Here is where we show our commitment to others being changed
 - i. They need new surroundings
 - ii. They need new friends