

Embrace  
Holy  
Living

# RE- FLECTING GOD

04/13/18 - Who We Are

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Matthew 9:1-13

While Jesus tells the Pharisees to think more deeply on the meaning of Hosea 6:6, "I desire mercy, not sacrifice," the surrounding story gives us a pretty good idea of what Jesus understood the meaning to be. The healing of the paralytic is the climax of the first story, but the focus is primarily on the forgiveness of sins. In the second story we see Jesus defiling himself, according to the Pharisees, in order to eat and fellowship with sinners. God desires the forgiveness of sinners more than proper rituals.

Whether formal or informal, rituals play an important role in discipleship and spiritual formation. However, Jesus reminds us that the rituals should not impede the first work of offering forgiveness to sinners and welcoming them into the presence of Christ within the community of faith. Are there "rituals" or unspoken expectations within our churches that impede our first work of offering forgiveness? If so, may the Lord give us eyes to see.

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