

To the pastor: The purpose of these outlines is to provide you a resource to cast a compelling and motivating vision for your people to read John Ortberg's *The Me I Want to Be* and to engage in small group discussions using the Participant's Guide. Through these outlines, you will lay a strong biblical foundation for both personal and community transformation. These outlines present some ideas from John Ortberg that are not in the book and guide.

Sermon Outline One

Bridging the Gap

[read chapters 1 and 2 in TMIWTB]

Introduction: John Ortberg tells of a picture of himself that hangs in his closet and that his mother gave him because she was tired of looking at it. John says it is a picture of him before he learned how to sin. He looks at the picture and ponders all the potential that young boy has as he grows. John wonders about the person he might have been and the person he actually is. We all wrestle with the "me" we want to be or could have been and the "me" we truly are. We face a gap between the two. Who can do something about that gap? Who has the power to forgive it? Who can begin to change it? Only Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ gives us both *a compelling vision* for transformation and *a pattern of behaviors* that provoke transformation. We all can become "the me I want to be."

- I. When Jesus invites you to 'follow him,' it is the greatest opportunity you have to become the you that you want to be.
 - A. The invitation to follow Jesus is an energetic aspect of the kingdom of God. Mark 1:14-16
 - B. The kingdom of God, the way life is supposed to be, is here and open with all the love and power of God available to transform our lives.
 - C. Jesus demonstrated for all to see the flourishing of a human life as he loved, served, healed, prayed, died, and rose again.
 - D. Jesus' call to follow him is his invitation into the wonderful, yet rigorous life of spiritual transformation.

John Ortberg says that Jesus' plan was not to start a church of people who call themselves 'Christians' but remain cranky, egotistical, judgmental, deceptive, greedy, lustful, gossipy, self-righteous and religious until they die and go to heaven. Jesus' plan is to have a church of transformed people who experience and express the joyful life of God together for the sake of others.

Sermon Outline One: Bridging the Gap

- II. We can grow more like Jesus as we arrange our lives around the activities Jesus himself practiced to remain at home in fellowship with the Father.
 - A. The kingdom of God is both the vision and practice of living the way Jesus did. Matthew 8:21-22; 16:24; John 8:2
 - 1. “Follow me” not only means to enter into a new realm of kingdom life, it means doing the things Jesus did.
 - 2. Jesus’ behaviors are doorways to freedom to live as the people God created us to be.
 - 3. We must *train* ourselves to be like Jesus. 1 Timothy 4:7b
 - B. If we neglect looking to Jesus we fall victim to our false selves—the me I do not want to be.

John Ortberg describes “the me I pretend to be,” “the me I think I should be,” “the me other people want me to be,” “the me I’m afraid God wants me to be,” and “the me that fails to be.” All of these are prisons stifling our true selves. Jesus came to bridge the gap and set us free to experience “the me I want to be.” *TMI WTB*, 26-31

- C. Following Jesus leads us into the flourishing life. Psalm 92:12-13
 - 1. Flourishing means becoming the person God had in mind in creating you.
 - 2. When you grow spiritually you do not become someone else, but the very person you were created to be.

Application:
Have you made a decision to follow Jesus? Now is the best time to decide.
Have you committed to a small group study of TMIWTB? Join us in the series on the path to spiritual transformation.