

Sermon Series: Book of John
Sermon Title: The Healing of an Official's Son
Scripture Reading: John 4:43-54
Clearwater Bay International Baptist Church
September 8, 2019
S.C. Brown, Pastor

We continue the book of John today. Remember I told you last week that John has made it clear to us why he is writing the book. We know exactly what we are supposed to see in **John 20:31**.

These are written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.

So, the second sign that we will look at today has that purpose....that we might believe in Jesus.

But what does he mean by "believe" ?

As we will see in the book of John, many say they believe but what kind of Jesus do they believe in?

The context of what comes before this passage in Chapter 4 is important to know. We can't fully understand this 2nd sign/ miracle of Jesus unless we know what happened in the first part of the chapter.

The beginning of Chapter 4 is the story of the Samaritan woman whom Jesus meets at the well. There's a few things that we need to know from this story.

First, the Jews hated the Samaritans because they were half-Jews who had intermarried with the idolatrous peoples of Assyria and others. They didn't worship in Jerusalem and they were hated.

Second, we see in **Chapter 4 verse 39** these words, "Many Samaritans from that town believed in him because of the woman's testimony." And in **verse 41** it says, "Many more believed because of his word." And they declared about Jesus in **verse 42**, "We know that this is indeed the Savior of the world."

So, the people who were hated by the Jews believed in Jesus pretty easily. And yet, as we will see today, his own people the Jews struggled to believe in him.

Let's pick up the story in verse 43. *After the two days he departed for Galilee. 44 For Jesus himself had testified that a prophet has no honor in his own hometown. 45 So, when he came to Galilee, the Galileans welcomed him, having seen all that he had done in Jerusalem at the feast. For they too had gone to the feast.*

I don't know if you caught how strange this is. It says that Jesus said a prophet has no honor in his own hometown...therefore, when he came to Galilee, the Galileans welcomed him. What's going on here?

Jesus is a Galilean. His hometown is always referred to as Nazareth, in Galilee. But Jesus...you're not welcome there? But they welcomed you! Well, if we read on in the story what we find is that they *welcomed* him, but there's a big difference between welcoming and honoring. Let's pick it up in verse 46.

46 So he came again to Cana in Galilee, where he had made the water wine. And at Capernaum there was an official whose son was ill. **47** When this man heard that Jesus had come from Judea to Galilee, he went to him and asked him to come down and heal his son, for he was at the point of death. **48** So Jesus said to him, **“Unless you see signs and wonders you will not believe.”**

Now, it's important for us to know that the “YOU” in this verse are both plural. “You guys”, “Ya’ll”, “You all”, “You people”. So, he's not speaking about the man but he's speaking about a group of people.

Who does he mean?

Galileans? The people of the village of Cana?

There's a good reason to believe that he's talking about the Jewish people in general. Remember, that I started off mentioning that the context is the Samaritans and their faith vis-à-vis the Jews.

He's already stated in **John 1:11** that, "He came to his own and his own people did not receive him."

He says in **verse 48** that...

"Unless you [people] see signs and wonders you [people] will not believe."

He's talking about the Jewish people.

This point about the Jews seeking signs is not new and is often repeated in Scripture.

Even Paul says in **1 Corinthians 1:22** that, "Jews demand signs and Greeks seek wisdom, but we preach Christ crucified, a stumbling block to Jews and folly to the nations."

So, this official (*which this term Basilikos is used of royalty and he's likely an official in Herod's government*) has a young son who is dying. He travels 20 miles from Capernaum on the Sea of Galilee, uphill to Cana to ask Jesus to come down and heal his son.

And Jesus responds with **“Unless you see signs and wonders you will not believe.”**

It's a rebuke to the Jewish people in general, Galileans and others alike.

This is a theme running throughout the gospels. People don't believe in Jesus for who he really is. They believe in who they want him to be.

People wanted to use Jesus!

Thousands came to him and 'believed' but really only wanted to be healed or fed or they wanted Jesus to lead a revolt against Rome.

What we find more and more in the pages of John is that the people don't want a Messiah who is going to die for their sins.

Well, what about this royal official? Let's not forget about him. Remember....his son is dying. It's not joke. If you've ever had a kid on a hospital bed and you wondered if they were going to make it, you know this isn't funny. It's serious.

We hear the seriousness in his response.

Verse 49, “Sir, come down before my child dies.”

There's desperation in that statement!

But Jesus doesn't answer his request... he doesn't go down with him. But he does answer his prayer!

Verse 50, "Jesus said to him, "Go, your son will live."

Well, did it happen?

Verse 50- The man believed the word that Jesus spoke to him and went on his way. **51** As he was going down, his servants met him and told him that his son was recovering. **52** So he asked them the hour when he began to get better, and they said to him, "Yesterday at the seventh hour [1PM] the fever left him." **53** The father knew that was the hour when Jesus had said to him, "Your son will live."

John wants us to see Jesus's glory.

That's what these signs are for. We saw him turn water into wine last week. Today we see him heal a kid..... from 20 miles away. It's an 8 hour walk from Cana to Capernaum.

Instantaneously he makes a fever leave someone he can't see, has never met probably, without touching them.....just makes it happen.

No abracadabra. No essential oils. No mantras. Just a simple, "Go, your son will live." And the boy is healed.

He doesn't even pray for the kid, "Father, *right now I pray for the kid to be healed.*" Jesus has the power to heal him because we wants to!

How can he do this?

Because, Jesus is God!

Jesus is manifesting his glory a second time and John wants us to see it so that we may believe.

That's what the man did.

Verse 53 "And he himself believed, and all his household."

Now, what can we take away from this story?
How does God want to apply it to our own lives?

We see 3 kinds of so-called faith in this story.

1. **Superficial faith-** The Jews, the Galileans, the crowds, want to see signs and wonders from the miracle man. They don't want to follow him, they only want to see something cool happen.

In **John 2:18** they say, "What sign do you show us for doing these things?"

In **John 6:30** they say, "What sign do you do, that we may see and believe you? What work do you perform?"

A superficial faith is simply a surface interest in Jesus and nothing more; a Jesus to perform for us. A Jesus who will do what we want him to do. A Jesus who is our advisor but not our ruler.

A superficial faith is no faith at all.

We 'welcome' Jesus on our own terms and get what we can from him but still live the life we want and never surrender our entire being to him.

This superficial faith is the faith of the crowds and it's no faith at all.

Secondly, we see another kind of faith in the man, at first. It is a....

2. **Seeking faith-** The man comes to Jesus out of desperation. His son is dying. We can't see into the man's heart. We simply don't know anything beyond the text.

Why did Jesus heal his son, after a rebuke to everyone that they only want to see signs and wonders?

Seems that we would expect Jesus to say, "*No. I won't come down because you guys have the wrong motives.*" But it seems that Jesus sees some faith in the man or that Jesus is encouraging faith in the man.

It says in **verse 50** that the man, "*believed the word that Jesus spoke to him and went on his way.*"

It's a simple faith.....or is it the birth of faith?

For some reason, the Scriptures include here two different accounts of the man believing.

He, "believed the word that Jesus spoke to him and went on his way" and then...as he meets the servants on the road he seems to want to make sure that it was the same time that Jesus said, "Go, your son will live." Take a look at **verse 51**. As he was going down, his servants met him and told him that his son was recovering. 52 So he asked them the hour when he began to get better, and they said to him, 'Yesterday at the seventh hour [1PM] the fever left him. The father knew that was the hour when Jesus had said to him, "Your son will live." And he himself believed, and all his household.

So, at first he 'believes the word the Jesus spoke' and then 'he himself believes and his household'. The only conclusion I can draw from this is that the man's faith is growing on the way. He has sought Christ out of desperation. His faith is birthed in the words of Christ and he continues to seek proof that Jesus actually did the miracle.

Which drew him to saving faith.

3. **Saving faith-** "He himself believed, and all his household."

This phrase is only used in the Bible where someone truly follows Jesus Christ.

(See Acts 11:14, Acts 16:15, Acts 16:34)

Dear friends, these things are written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God and that by believing you may have life in his name.

What kind of faith do you have today in Jesus Christ?

Do you have a **superficial** faith today; simply a surface interest in Jesus and nothing more; a Jesus to perform for you ...A Jesus who will do what you want him to do. A Jesus who is your advisor but not your ruler.

Or maybe today you are **seeking**. You've read some of the Bible. You've attended this church or others. You're interested in Jesus but you have yet to believe in him and all that the Bible says He is. My advice to you is to keep reading the book of John. Behold his glory and believe!

You may be a Christian today you may have **saving faith**.

Can I simply remind you and encourage you today to keep following Jesus with all of your heart!

It's easy to get to a place where we lose our edge.

We get comfortable.

We start to think that we can do what we want with our lives.

Let me encourage you to keep believing.

Keep Beholding the glory of Jesus Christ.

Keep Belonging to your sisters and brother in the church...encouraging one another and being encouraged by others so they you might walk worthy of the calling that you've received.

And Be Sent wherever he tells you. Without hesitation.