

Summer in Galilee – The Life of Faith

John 4:46-54 July 6-7, 2019

Story

- **John 4:46-54** “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.” 49 The official said to him, “Sir, come down before my child dies.” 50 Jesus said to him, “Go; your son will live.” 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 the fever left him.” 53 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. 54 This was now the second sign that Jesus did when he had come from Judea to Galilee.”
- According to John’s gospel, Jesus was in Cana for a wedding, ministered in Capernaum where he healed many and gathered some disciples, went down to Jerusalem, traveled back through Samaria and arrived again in Cana.
 - We see Jesus doing signs in Cana both in a time of joy and celebration and in a circumstance of sorrow and anxiety.
 - Remember that scripture makes clear that signs and wonders are always for the purpose of confirming the veracity of the message being spoken and the legitimacy of the one giving the message...they are for the purpose of strengthening faith and pointing us to Jesus and how awesome and mighty He is.
- **V46-47** Official likely working in the court of Herod Antipas (son of Herod the Great), and quite probably a gentile, traveled from Capernaum to Cana
 - Note that this is not the same account as the centurion having his servant healed from Matthew 8 and Luke 7
 - John shows progression of Jesus ministry first to respected Jewish teacher (Nicodemus) in **John 3:1-21**, then to a Samaritan woman (**John 4:1-45**), now to a gentile (**John 4:46-54**)
- **V48** “Unless you see signs and wonders you will not believe”
 - “you” plural – speaking both to official and people around him
 - Addressing the difference between inadequate belief and saving faith to everyone present

- Jesus is drawing a distinction between those who are consumers and those who are worshippers, between those who admire Jesus but are not His submitted followers and disciples.
- **V49** asked Jesus to go with Him back to Capernaum – needed to see Jesus at work and have Jesus physically present with him.
- **V50** Jesus told him his son would be healed, and the official believed Jesus’s word and returned the next day.
 - We know he waited a day because his servants told him that the son was healed “yesterday at 1:00”. So hearing the words of Christ, the official stayed in Cana probably continue to listen to the teachings of Jesus, and made his way home the next day.
- **V51-53** once received confirmation of Jesus’s words, the official believed not just in the word of Jesus, but in Christ as Messiah along with all his household

Application – main point – Christ wants to progress our faith to the point where we worship him for who he is and not what he can do.

- Progression of faith
 - Seeking Christ personally – 20+ mile journey – hard day’s travel through very hilly terrain.
 - Note: many miracle workers (e.g. Simon Magus Acts 8), but only could do miracles if physically present – hence he sought out Christ for a miracle and needed him to come back with him to Capernaum because he only saw Christ as a miracle worker, nothing more (i.e. didn’t see Him as the all-powerful God of the universe)
 - “He went” (GK – *aperchomai*) – to move with haste
 - Evidence of the stirrings of faith in seeking out Jesus – didn’t just send his servants
 - **Deut. 4:29** “But from there you will seek the Lord your God and you will find him, if you search after him with all your heart and with all your soul.”
 - **Hebrews 11:6b** “whoever would draw near to God must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who seek him.” See also Prov. 8:17, 1 Chron. 28:9
 - “Ask” (GK – *erōtaō*)- to implore or beg
 - Tense that means he repeatedly did so over and over
 - Found Christ and received a hard truth – that Jesus isn’t just a genie in a bottle who makes all your troubles disappear

- **John 16:33** “I have said these things to you, that in me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation. But take heart; I have overcome the world.”
- “Sir” (Gk – kyrios) – Lord, master, possessor
 - Humbled himself to one who was of a much lower social position, and acknowledged Christ as the one who was in control – despite just hearing that Jesus isn’t here simply to make all of our cares disappear.
 - And meeting Jesus and hearing Him speak, the man stayed with Him and didn’t leave until the next day. Likely, continuing to hear the teaching of the one he recognized as Lord.
- Faith in action in responding to Jesus words with trust and obedience
 - “go” is an imperative – Jesus commanded him to depart – had to trust without seeing anything
 - Jesus is challenging his view that he can trust only what he sees from a healer – and not the healer himself and the words he speaks.
 - In the man’s view, if he left Jesus, he was leaving behind his one chance to save his son. But Jesus sought a deeper faith.
 - Signs and wonders may produce awe and admiration, but it is the power of the word that produces faith
 - **Romans 10:17** “So faith comes from hearing, and hearing through the word of Christ.”
 - Our modern minds often demand an explanation, a logical reasoning, or a tangible experience that we can emotionally feel. And while the Lord will provide those things at times, ultimately Jesus is seeking to progress our faith beyond intellect or emotion and rest in firmly in trusting what He says because it is Him who said it.
 - **Hebrews 11:1** “Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen.”
 - **Martin Luther** “Faith clings to the naked and pure Word, neither its works nor its merits.”
 - And we can do this because of who speaks those words – our faithful and true God.
- Recognizing who Jesus is, not just what he can do, and having confidence and trust in the truth of His word to anchor us because of who He is – our divine Master, King, and Savior – our elder brother who loves us and died for us.
- Seeking answers and being ok with getting a different answer than expect
- Strengthened faith as we see God work in our lives
 - Relish the victories