

The Word Became Flesh
Week 11
John 4:43-54
“Believe and Be Healed”

Introduction

“...so that everyone who BELIEVES in Him will not perish...”

John 3:16 (partial)

After His two day stay in Samaria, Jesus continued northward to His home region of Galilee. The religious leaders of Judea, with few exceptions, had dismissed Him, preferring to stir up controversy between Him and The Baptizer in hopes that they would both go away. Jesus, rather than be involved in such childish things, made His way back home. He had been raised in Nazareth, and He knew that even those who knew Him best would have their doubts, but some there would also come to believe in Him. So, He took the road from Samaria with a word of warning to His disciples:

Jesus Himself had testified that a prophet has no honor in His home country.

John 4:44

This verse always reminds me of a dear friend of mine. He was “born and raised” as they say, in the very same community. Everyone knew who he was. And like many of us, he didn’t always live a Godly life. In fact, he made a ton of mistakes along the way. But one day, God really got a hold of him. And he was changed. Anyone who walked with The LORD could see it, but many of those who had known him all his life were skeptical. When he surrendered to the ministry, many scoffed at the notion. They didn’t think that God could use him. His decision became the talk of the town, and most of it was negative.

When the local church decided to call him into the ministry, the vote was the slimmest of margins. But he barely made it in. It was official, he was now a minister of the gospel. He asked me to preach the charge sermon for his ordination service and I was honored to do so. Many in attendance still had no faith in this young man, and they made their opinions known. But he would not allow his detractors to discourage him. He just kept on serving Christ.

I will not reveal this young man’s name, but suffice to say that some twenty-five or so years later, he is still going strong. And he has led more people to Christ than any minister that I have known personally. All I can say is that I am so thankful that I came down on the right side of things back then! Many misguided souls think that they can pick and choose whom God will use, but this is both ridiculous and arrogant. God once spoke through Balaam’s donkey, and that should be proof enough that He can speak through whomever or whatever He chooses. And it is His prerogative to call whosoever He will. They just have to believe in Him.

Even Jesus, The Son of God, would face this kind of bias against His teaching. All over His home region of Galilee, foolish people spoke their doubts about Him.

He went to His hometown and began to teach them in their synagogue, so that they were astonished and said, “Where did this man get this wisdom and these miraculous powers? Isn’t this the carpenter’s son? Isn’t His mother called Mary, and His brothers James, Joseph, Simon, and Judas? And His sisters, aren’t they all with us? So where does He get all these things.” And they were offended by Him.

Matthew 13:54-57

So the question remains: Why should Jesus even bother with such people? Because God so loved the WORLD! And although The Savior knew that He would be rejected by many, in fact, many who had known Him all His life (on earth that is), some of them would come to saving faith. And just knowing that some would believe in Him made all that rejection worth while. Today, we will look at just such a person. Someone much like the Samaritan woman, who few would consider worth saving, but would come to saving faith in Christ. It is the second miracle that John records for us. It is a story of *Sinners*, *Skeptics*, and *Saving Faith*.

Sinners (vs. 43-45)

After two days He left there for Galilee. (Jesus Himself had testified that a prophet has no honor in His own country.) When they entered Galilee, the Galileans welcomed Him because they had seen everything He did in Jerusalem during the festival. For they also had gone to the festival. John 4:43-45

Jesus had been rejected in Judea by those who should have recognized Him better than anyone else. He had been accepted in Samaria by those who should not have. And here we see Him coming back to His home region. The place where many had known Him for years. He received a great welcome there, but not for the reasons that one might suspect. They welcomed Him as a miracle worker, for they had been to the festival at Jerusalem and had seen the wonders for themselves. But they were yet to see Him for Who He truly was, The Messiah, sent to save them from their sins.

For you see, there are many kinds of unbelief. There are those who will refuse to believe in Jesus simply because they refuse to admit their need for salvation. The Pharisees were just such people. They knew the Word of God better than anyone else, but they were convinced that by their own "righteousness" observing the Law was sufficient. They were offended at the notion that they too were sinners in need of repentance. They were appalled at the very notion that they needed a Savior. And because of this self-righteous attitude, they rejected the One Who had been spoken of by the same prophets that they loved to quote so often! What a terrible tragedy to miss out on salvation, because you are too religious to accept it. To remain in your sins when you know the truth is in fact the unpardonable sin (**Matthew 12:31-32**).

A great number of sinners refuse to place their faith in Christ for a myriad of reasons. The first, as we just discussed, is the absolute rejection of His message. But there are other reasons for unbelief. Some have had no exposure to the truth. Others are skeptical and need further proof in order to believe. When Jesus came to a region, He often performed signs and wonders, so that the people would see that His message was legitimate. But just being amazed at His miracles was not sufficient for salvation. People needed to see Him for Who He was. He was not simply a miracle worker. He IS the Son of God. The miracles were given in order to verify THE MESSAGE. And the message was the gospel of Christ. It is not enough to believe that He was a prophet. It is not enough to believe that He was a good teacher and a good moral man. *True faith requires that He be confessed as LORD (**Romans 10:9**).* A miracle does you no good, if you are not converted to saving faith in The Miracle Worker! The Galileans welcomed a celebrity into their midst that day when Jesus came home, but they still did not see Who He was. And until you really see Him my friend, you are still dead in your trespasses and sins.

Skeptics (vs. 46-49)

He went again to Cana of Galilee, where He had turned water into wine. There was a certain royal official whose son was ill at Capernaum. When this man heard that Jesus had come from Judea into Galilee, he went to Him and pleaded with Him to come down and heal his son, since he was about to die. Jesus told him, "Unless you people see signs and wonders, you will not believe." "Sir," the official said to Him, "Come down before my boy dies." John 4:46-49

When Jesus returns to the scene of His first miracle (turning water to wine) in the village of Cana, a "royal official" comes to Him and pleads for a miracle. His son was sick, and he requested that Jesus come to Capernaum, some twenty miles away and heal him. This man had obviously heard of Jesus' reputation as a healer and a miracle worker. Or perhaps he too had been in Jerusalem for the feast and had seen for himself. Whatever the case, he was desperate. No doubt he had done everything that he could possibly do to save his son. He was obviously a man of means, so he could have afforded the best physicians at the time. But all other efforts had failed, and his son was dying. So he made the twenty

mile trip to find this healer that everyone was talking about. He must have thought that this was a long shot, but he was desperate.

Jesus response to him seems harsh considering the circumstances. But it was a necessary one. For you see, Jesus knows the hearts of men. He knew that His welcome in Galilee was not because He was The Savior of The World as the Samaritans had proclaimed. No, it was because He was a miracle worker. He saw the skepticism in the eyes of the people there. They had come for the show and not the salvation that they needed. For what good is physical healing, when the wrath of God remains upon you? Jesus' words of warning were not just to the nobleman from Capernaum. They were spoken in plural form, meaning the message was for everyone.

“...Unless you people see signs and wonders, you will not believe.” **John 4:48b**

The man from Capernaum was undoubtedly from King Herod's royal court. The word that John used to describe him, translated “royal official”, actually means “king's servant” in the Greek. Herod The Great, the puppet king who had been installed to rule over the Jews by Caesar had been pretty much despised by the entire nation. He wasn't even a “real Israelite”, but rather a descendant from Esau, the brother of Jacob. But Caesar knew that he could count on him to be a loyal lackey, who would ruthlessly keep the “Jewish rabble” under control. Upon Herod's death, his sons (Herod Archelaus, and Herod Antipas) succeeded him, and they weren't exactly “loved” by the people either. So, needless to say, this royal official, who represented the courts of Herod, would have more than likely not received a warm welcome in Cana. He had traveled there out of desperation, and you can hear both the desperation and annoyance in his response to Jesus' words. He hadn't come there to be saved, he had come in the hopes of saving his son.

“Sir” the official said to Him. “Come down before my boy dies.” **John 4:49**

The nobleman used a different word here to describe his son. The first time he uses “huios” a word that simply means son. Here in **verse 48**, he refers to his son as “paidion”, which is a word used for an infant or a small child. He in essence is saying, “Please come before my little one dies.” This was all that he cared about in this moment. But he still has much to learn about the One to Whom he was praying. He assumed that the miracle worker needed to come to where his son was in order to heal him. But God is not restrained by space and time. The nobleman needed to understand that Jesus was much more than just a miracle worker. So Jesus was about to stretch the limits of his faith. He proclaimed that the boy was healed and commanded this royal official to go back home! For you see, Jesus wanted to save not only his son, but to save this nobleman as well.

Saving Faith (vs. 50-54)

“Go.” Jesus told him, “your son will live.” The man believed what Jesus said to him and departed. While he was still going down, his servants met him saying that his boy was alive. He asked them at what time he got better. “Yesterday at one in the afternoon the fever left him.” they answered. The father realized this was the very hour at which Jesus had told him, “Your son will live.” So he himself believed, along with his whole household. Now this was also the second sign Jesus performed after He came from Judea to Galilee. **John 4:50-54**

I absolutely LOVE the man's response to Jesus command to return home, for his son was already healed. He believed **“what Jesus had said”**. The actual Greek is that he believed the “logos of Jesus.” Oh there is that word again! This very wisdom of God. Remember what John wrote in **Chapter One**? **“In the beginning was the WORD (Logos) and the Word (logos) was with God and the Word (logos) was God.” (John 1:1).**

This man heard it and believed in it without question. How do we know? Because he went home. And what's more, he didn't even hurry to get there! If he had hurried he could have made it on the same day. It was only a twenty mile journey. But this man took his time, more than likely he rented a

room for the night and got some rest. Because he didn't get home until the next day (**vs.52**). Don't you just love that? He came to Jesus in desperation and returned home in peace. Why? Because he believed the logos! I am here to tell you today, that it is NOT by witnessing a miracle that people get saved, it is by believing the Word of God!

Abram believed The LORD, and He credited to him as righteousness. Genesis 15:6

When the man got to Capernaum, his servants ran to meet him and tell him the news that his son was healed. He already knew it by faith, but now he was about to see with his own eyes.

Now faith is the reality of what is hoped for, the proof of what is not seen. For by this our ancestors were approved. Hebrews 11:1-2

What a great verse! It tells us that our faith in the word of God is actually the proof that we have of the things yet to come. Jesus had told this man that his little boy was healed. The man believed the words of Christ and went home. He knew that his son was healed, before he had even seen it for himself. The word spoken by Christ was that convincing. When he inquired with his servants about the time of his little boy's recovery, they confirmed what he already knew! It was exactly when Jesus spoke that the child was healed. As a result, not only had this royal official received salvation, but he shared the "logos" with his family, and they all became believers!

Do I really need to explain this any further? When we believe the Word of God and receive our salvation, we share it with others so that they also can believe. In **Luke Chapter 2**, we read of a woman named Joanna, the wealthy wife of a man named Chuza, "a steward of Herod". She followed Jesus from town to town and assisted Him in His ministry. More than likely she helped to finance His ministry. Could this be the wife of this same nobleman mentioned here in John's Gospel? It is merely speculation on my part, but I am inclined to think it is. Because the proof that someone is a true believer in Christ is demonstrated by their desire to follow Him and to serve.

This nobleman shared the word of God and others believed and came to Jesus because of it. If you skip back a few verses and read the story of the Samaritan woman, you see the exact same result. The villagers of Sychar believed because of her testimony about Jesus. Would you like to know what the Greek text says about that? They believed because of the "logos" that she spoke to them! (**John 4:39**). You see, when people hear the Word of God, it always has an impact. So when you witness to your friends, don't just give them your opinion, but speak the Word!

"...So My Word that comes from My mouth will not return to Me empty, but it will accomplish what I please and will prosper in what I send it to do." Isaiah 55:11

Jesus spoke to the man and he believed. And because he believed, salvation came to his house. He no longer saw Jesus as just a miracle worker, He truly **saw** Him as the Samaritans had **seen** Him, The Son of God, The Savior of the world. And that my friends is saving faith. You are not saved because you prayed some little prayer as a child, that you repeated after the pastor. You are saved because you believed in Jesus. And just like this little child's healing, your salvation came the very instant that you received the word and believed. I love that verse in the song Amazing Grace.

*"Twas grace that taught my heart to fear, and grace my fears relieved.
How precious did that grace appear, the hour I first believed."*

For whosoever believes in Jesus will not perish, but have everlasting life! The first sign that John gives us (turning water to wine) reveals that Jesus is LORD over time. Christ skipped over the whole fermenting process and produced fermented wine in an instant. The second sign (the healing of the nobleman's son) reveals that Jesus is LORD over space, for he merely spoke the word, and the child was healed some twenty miles away. God's Word is powerful. He that has ears to hear, let him hear it and find life everlasting.

And let the believers say... TRUTH!!!