

# Small Group Guide: Signs - Week 3

## John 4:43-54 - "The Official's Son"

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### Opening Prayer

Begin your time together by asking God to open your hearts to His Word and to help you take Him at His word in faith.

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### Ice Breaker

Share a time when you had to trust someone's word without seeing immediate proof or results. How did that feel? What was the outcome?

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### Key Scripture

**John 4:50** - "Then Jesus told him, 'Go back home, your son will live.' And the man believed what Jesus said and started home."

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### Sermon Summary

Jesus heals a royal official's son from 20 miles away, simply by speaking a word. This miracle reveals that Jesus is the true King whose authority is not limited by distance, time, or location. While crowds followed Jesus for miraculous signs, the Samaritans and this official believed based on His word alone. The kingdom of God operates through faith in Jesus' word, not just visible proof.

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### Key Takeaways

1. **Jesus is the True King** - His word carries divine authority and creates reality
  2. **The Kingdom is Not Limited by Geography** - God's power extends everywhere, always
  3. **The King's Word Creates Life** - Jesus speaks and life happens
  4. **Faith is the Currency of the Kingdom** - Believing leads to seeing, not the other way around
  5. **Jesus Offers Promises, Not Just Proof** - We must learn to trust His word even when we don't see immediate results
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## Discussion Questions

### Understanding the Text

1. What's the significance of Jesus being in Samaria for two days before this miracle? How did the Samaritans' response to Jesus differ from the Galileans' response?
2. Why do you think John emphasizes that the royal official was from "the king's household"? What does this detail add to the story?
3. Jesus asks, "Will you never believe in me unless you see miraculous signs and wonders?" Who is He addressing with this question, and why?

### Personal Reflection

4. The sermon mentioned the danger of wanting "proximity to Jesus" for the benefits rather than recognizing who He truly is. Have you ever caught yourself approaching God this way? What does it look like to genuinely recognize Jesus as King?
5. The royal official walked 20 miles uphill to get to Jesus. What does this reveal about his desperation? What are you willing to sacrifice to get to Jesus?
6. "If you're good, then I'm good." How does this statement challenge or encourage you in your current circumstances?

### Going Deeper

7. The official wanted proof (Jesus physically present), but Jesus offered a promise (His word). Why is it so hard for us to trust God's promises without visible evidence?

8. Read Hebrews 11:1 and 11:39-40. How do these verses help us understand faith when we don't see immediate answers to our prayers?
9. The sermon states: "The world says seeing is believing, but Jesus says believing leads to seeing." Share an example from your life or Scripture where this proved true.

## **Application**

10. What situation in your life right now requires you to take God at His word without seeing the outcome yet? How can this group support you in holding onto faith?
  11. The prayer team was invited forward at the end of the sermon. What keeps people from coming forward for prayer? What would make it easier?
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## **Practical Applications**

### **This Week's Challenge**

Choose one of the following to practice this week:

#### **Option 1: Take God at His Word**

- Identify one promise from Scripture that applies to a current situation in your life
- Write it down and declare it daily, choosing to believe God's word over your circumstances
- Journal about how this practice affects your faith and perspective

#### **Option 2: Pray with Expectant Faith**

- Commit to praying for someone's specific need this week
- Instead of hedging your prayer with "if it be Your will," boldly claim God's promises for healing, restoration, or provision
- Follow up with that person to see how God is moving

#### **Option 3: Study "The Word"**

- Do a word study on "word" (Greek: *logos*) in John's Gospel
  - Track how John uses this theme from chapter 1 through the signs
  - Share your findings with the group next week
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## Memory Verse

**John 4:50** - "Then Jesus told him, 'Go back home, your son will live.' And the man believed what Jesus said and started home."

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## Prayer Focus

**Pray for one another in these areas:**

1. **Faith Over Sight** - That we would learn to trust God's promises even when we don't see immediate results
  2. **Healing Needs** - For physical, emotional, relational, and spiritual healing in your group
  3. **Wavering Faith** - For those whose faith has been shaken by delayed answers or difficult circumstances
  4. **Kingdom Perspective** - That we would see every situation through the lens of God's unlimited authority and power
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## Looking Ahead

- Continue reading through John's Gospel, paying attention to the theme of "life" and "the word"
  - Next week we'll look at another sign Jesus performed - come prepared to discuss how your faith has been challenged or strengthened this week
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## Closing Prayer

Close by praying John's stated purpose for his Gospel: "That you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name" (John 20:31).

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## Leader Notes

- Be sensitive to group members who may be struggling with unanswered prayers or health challenges
- Create space for honest doubts and questions - faith grows in community
- Consider having anointing oil available if someone wants prayer for healing
- Encourage the group that taking God at His word is a practice that grows stronger over time
- Remind everyone that faith isn't denying reality, but choosing to believe God's promises are more real than our circumstances