

Introduction:

I. The Second Sign:

A. Jesus Heals the Officials Son.

1. We ended the last lesson with the scene that involved Jesus witnessing to the Samaritan people after speaking with his disciples and the Samaritan woman at the well (John 4:1-45).
2. Verses 43-45 tell us that Jesus moves from Sychar back to Galilee and that Jesus is welcomed back quite positively.
3. It is good to note that there is no internal inconsistency within scripture when we note that v. 44 (regarding Jesus and the prophet's hometown) may look different than the other gospels but is, in principal the same (Matthew 13:57, Mark 6:4, and Luke 4:24).
 - a) That is, Galilee is noted to still be part of Jesus' home base and it certainly was true that some were reluctant to see Jesus back despite the way John frames the emotion here in 4:43-45.
 - b) We understand the reluctance true with the data from the other gospels—thus, we see something like what John is communicating as complimentary.
 - c) Not everyone was happy to see Jesus in Cana of Galilee, but that does not mean all were reluctant.

B. The Relevance of the Welcome Back

1. The people welcoming Jesus back must be taken with discernment.
2. Again, as noted above, some people did welcome Him back positively, though, with John's Gospel, we must remember that Jesus' miracles did achieve faith—namely in the disciples—but it also showed people wanting Jesus for the miracles, rather than Himself (2:23-25).
3. This is good because the relevance of Jesus' sign in John 4:46-54 will be cutting against that same narrative.
4. One last thing to keep in mind, the reason we must be discerning is because we are going back to Cana, according to the Narrator.
5. It is at Cana where we saw vv. 23-25 come to life in the negative sense.

C. Always Recall the Purpose of the Signs

1. John 20:30-31, regarding the signs, is the ultimate reason as to why the seven included are present rather than others.
2. Thus, we will do well to look at this scene with Jesus' healing of the officials son moving us toward proving that He is the Christ so that "you may have life in His name," (John 20:31b).

Exegesis of John 4:46-54

I. The Official (v. 46).

A. What do we know about him?

1. Interestingly, the ESV translates the adjective *βασιλικός* as “an official.”
 - a) The NASB and CSB each translate this more clearly as “a royal official’s son.”
 - b) The ESV could be stronger here because there is much relevance that the official is not some every day Joe who is part of politics in local Galilee.
 - (1) The official is a royal official who has strong connections to a king, as it were.
 - (2) This would be of Herod Antipus
 - (3) Herod Antipus would be the man who eventually is seduced to have John the Baptist killed.

B. Outcast?

1. While the official is not an outcast, per say, he would be considered unlikely, as well, to receive attention from Jesus as the official is of a corrupt regime, namely, the Roman Empire.
2. Yet, as we will see, the man’s son is healed and it is Jesus he turns his attention to.
3. The question we will have on our minds is whether or not the official believed Jesus to be the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world or if he is no different than the group of entertained people (2:23-25).

II. Jesus Challenges the Official (vv. 47-49)

A. Jesus’ Word About Belief

1. First, we see, clearly, that the son of the official is on the brink of death (v. 47).
2. But, when the official approaches Jesus, rather than asking about the boy, Jesus’ attention is on the official, himself (v. 48).
 - a) Here again, we see something interesting happening with the ESV.
 - b) The NASB and the CSB each say, “unless you *people* see signs and wonders you will not believe.”
 - (1) The Greek use of the word *ἰδητε* is a second person plural use, which is why we see “people” as opposed to just the official himself.¹

¹ I have included this information on the Greek so it is understood as to why one translation includes “people” (i.e. NASB and CSB among others) and why the ESV does not. The ESV, as noted earlier regarding the “royal official” or lack thereof is emphasis. That is, the ESV is taking a direct translation and focusing on the official more personally in the word choice and is playing off of the implications of “you people.” I prefer the CSB and the NASB on the translation because Jesus is warning against the lack of faith from those in vv. 2:23-25 and that is more clearly seen in the addition of “you people” vs. just “you,” in v. 48.

- c) The significance of this is that Jesus is lumping the official in with those who did not believe in Jesus but enjoyed His benefit.
 - d) The challenge is to see the true faith of the official—if it is really there.
 - B. The Officials Plea and Jesus' Response (vv. 49-50a)
 - 1. The official seemingly ignores Jesus' comment, but—as we will see—more is happening here than meets the eye.
 - a) There is urgency here (v. 49) but Jesus will simply step away from that urgency and offer a simple reply.
 - 2. Jesus simply says, "Go. Your son will live."
 - a) Jesus does not tell the man that he will go with him.
 - b) Perhaps, though not necessarily implied, this is to test the man's reaction.
 - c) There is an interesting contrast that does occur within the whole gospel narrative that we will come back to in a little bit!
- III. The Official's Faith and Purpose of the Sign (vv. 50b-54)
- A. The Response from the Official (v. 50b)
 - 1. The man's response is astonishing!
 - a) He takes Jesus at his word and leaves, and is met by his servants (v. 51)
 - 2. He goes on to find out that his son was not only alive but that the boy began to get better around the seventh hour or around 1pm (v. 52)
 - 3. This is understood, by the official, to mean that the exact moment Jesus spoke those words, "your son will live," is when he was healed and the fever left him (v. 53a).
 - B. The Official's Faith (v. 53b)
 - 1. Belief truly occurred within the official—again, another seemingly undeserving person like the Samaritan woman—and not only for the man but his whole house believed.
 - 2. Surely, we can infer this to mean that the boy understood he was healed by Jesus' very words and all of that household took on faith because they saw Jesus for who He really is—the life itself (1:4).
 - C. The Second Sign (v. 54)
 - 1. This is the official note that tells us the second sign, but it must be asked:
 - a) What made the faith of the official different from the faith of those who first saw Jesus in Cana of Galilee?
 - 2. What do we make of the signs?
 - a) Water to wine and healing from dying to now healthy and living

What does this passage teach me about God, man, and the Gospel?