



# The Gospel of John: *Know Jesus and Live*

Part 11

John 4:43-54

## I. A Tale of two cities

- ❖ John 4:43-45--*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.*

### 1. Samaria

- The Samaritan woman was so awed by Jesus that she dropped her water bucket and ran into town to tell everyone she could find that she had met the Messiah.
- The people of Samaria spent two days with Jesus and concluded that...
  - ❖ John 4:42--*this is indeed the Savior of the world.*
- They came to this conclusion without seeing him heal anybody, raise anyone from the dead, turn water into wine, calm a storm, feed thousands with 5 small loaves and two small fish, etc. They came to this conclusion not because of what they had seen Jesus do, but because of what they had heard. They believed him at his word.

### 2. Galilee

- This is not a comparison of opposite extremes. It is not that all Samaritans received him perfectly and all Jews refused him entirely. After all John's gospel testifies that...
  - ❖ John 2:23--*Now when he was in Jerusalem at the Passover Feast, many believed in his name when they saw the signs that he was doing.*
  - ❖ John 4:1--*...Jesus was making and baptizing more disciples than John*
- Nevertheless, the Jews did not always receive Jesus as they ought to have. Rather than hailing him as the Messiah, they celebrate him only as a miracle worker...
  - ❖ John 4:45--*So when he came to Galilee, the Galileans welcomed him, having seen all that he had done in Jerusalem at the feast.*
- The Jews ought to have been the most ready to receive Jesus. After all, they had the entire Old Testament. They had all of the Messianic prophecies. They were the ones most looking for the Messiah. Yet many would not believe in Jesus without signs and wonders...
  - ❖ John 2:23--*Now when he was in Jerusalem at the passover, in the feast day, many believed in his name, when they saw the miracles which he did.*
  - ❖ John 4:48--*Unless you see signs and wonders you will not believe.*
- This is not to say that signs and wonders are a bad thing. This is not to say that believing in Jesus because of his signs and wonders is a bad thing because it isn't. That's what he did them for (John 14:11)! The point is that those who knew what to look for in the Messiah (the Jews) shouldn't have been the one's needing signs and wonders while the Samaritans believed Jesus to be the Messiah without them.
- Many Jews would not believe in him even with all the signs and wonders.
  - ❖ John 1:11--*He came to his own, and his own people did not receive him*



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- ❖ John 7:5--*For not even his brothers believed in him.*

### Jesus' Response

- At least on a human level, it seems that this was frustrating to Jesus. This frustrated tone can be detected in passages like...
  - ❖ John 4:48--*Unless you see signs and wonders you will not believe.*
    - Here, the word “you” is plural in the Greek. Thus, we can see that Jesus frustration is not necessarily just with this one guy. It is with the Jewish people in general. It is with his hometown Galileans in general.
  - ❖ John 14:8-9--*Philip said to him, Lord, show us the Father, and it is enough for us. 9 Jesus said to him, Have I been with you so long, and you still do not know me, Philip?*

### Jesus's Purpose

- ❖ John 4:46--*So he came again to Cana in Galilee, where he had made the water wine.*
  - The word “so” in this verse is startling . This Greek word, most often translated “therefore,” tells us that the very reason that he is coming back into Galilee is because he receives no honor from them. This word tells us “the reason Jesus is now going to Galilee: he is going to minister where he does not yet have honor, so that people would then come to believe in him.<sup>1</sup>”

## II. Inside the second city

### Jesus encounters small, UN-saving faith in one man

#### 1. Small faith:

- ❖ John 4:47--*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.*
- ❖ John 4:49--*The official said to him, Sir, come down before my child dies.*
  - Notice how he assumes that Jesus's physical presence is necessary. Twice he asks him to “come down.” This man has no idea who he is talking to. He does not have the faith that another official from his city demonstrates...
- ❖ Matthew 8:5-8, 10--*When he had entered Capernaum, a centurion came forward to him, appealing to him, 6 Lord, my servant is lying paralyzed at home, suffering terribly. 7 And he said to him, I will come and heal him. 8 But the centurion replied, Lord, I am not worthy to have you come under my roof, but only say the word, and my servant will be healed...10 When Jesus heard this, he marveled and said to those who followed him, Truly, I tell you, with no one in Israel have I found such faith.*

#### 2. UN-Saving Faith:

- Jesus himself points this out quite directly when he says...
  - ❖ John 4:48--*“Unless you see signs and wonders you will not believe.”*

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<sup>1</sup> ESV Study Bible Notes



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- This man had yet seen signs and wonders from Jesus. Thus, Jesus is both rebuking the official and declaring to him his own agenda. Jesus is subtly informing him of his purpose in the miracle he is about to perform. Jesus is letting him know, you will know me when you see what I am about to do.

### 3. One Man:

❖ John 4:46--*...And at Capernaum there was an official whose son was ill.*

- In Samaria there was one woman at a well. By Jewish standards, she deserved nothing. She was Samaritan (strike 1), a Woman (strike 2), and faithless (strike 3). Yet, he revealed himself to her so that she believed and was saved.
- Likewise, in Galilee there is an official. Official probably means that this man is one of Herod Antipas's court officials and Jesus was extremely unfavorable toward Antipas. This man who comes to Jesus would be a wealthy aristocrat, probably much influenced by Greco-Roman culture and not very religious by general Palestinian Jewish standards.<sup>2</sup> Thus, the man standing before Jesus asking for a miracle is something of an adversary. Yet, he is about to reveal himself to him so that he believes and is saved.



## Jesus causes profound, saving faith in many

### 1. Profound Faith:

❖ John 4:50--*Jesus said to him, Go; your son will live. The man believed the word that Jesus spoke to him and went on his way.*

- The words that Jesus spoke "Go, your son will live" powerfully affected the official. No longer did he underestimate the power of Jesus. No longer did he feel compelled to have Jesus's physical presence with his son. He was given confidence to believe that Jesus could heal no matter where he was.

### 2. Saving Faith:

❖ John 4:51-53--*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,*

- Here the official goes from having confidence in the healing power of Jesus to beholding the healing power of Jesus. This changes everything! Jesus said...

❖ John 4:48--*"Unless you see signs and wonders you will not believe."*

- Well, he has now seen signs and wonders. He has seen the power of almighty God and has come to saving faith in Jesus.

### 3. Many:

❖ John 4:53--*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.*

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<sup>2</sup> Craig Keener, *IVP Bible Background Commentary New Testament*



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- In Samaria, Jesus used the words he had spoken to one woman to bring nearly the whole town to saving faith.
- Here in Galilee, he demonstrates his infinite power to one man so that this man's entire household would come to saving faith. I don't want us to miss the profoundness of God's sovereignty in this event. God ordained that this one child be brought to the brink of physical death so that his entire family would be brought to eternal spiritual life in Christ Jesus!

### III. In this Jesus reveals himself to be...



#### Gracious and Compassionate.

- The man had nothing to offer Christ to compel him to heal his son. He was not a pious man. He did not possess adequate faith. He worked for the tyrant who would later have John the Baptist beheaded. Yet, Jesus chose to be gracious to this man. Jesus chose to show compassion to someone who could probably be considered his enemy. Jesus heard the man's desperate plea and met his need.



#### More Powerful than imagined

- The man had some awareness that Jesus was powerful but he had no idea just how powerful he was. The man was hoping that he would come to his house and bring with him the power to heal his son. He never imagined that Jesus possessed this power through his spoken word. Jesus simply saying, "Go, your son will live" changed the physical chemistry of this man's son. Jesus is the very word of God thus when he says, "Let there be light" there is light.
- The man discovered that the power of Jesus's spoken word has immediate and full effect.
  - ❖ John 4:42-53--*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.*
- The boy didn't begin to get better shortly after Jesus spoke. The fever that he had was gone entire the very moment that Jesus spoke. Jesus's spoken word has power enough to change everything immediately!

### Closing

- As we leave I want us to know these two things about Jesus. I want us to know that...
  1. Our savior is gracious and compassionate. He does not turn a deaf ear to our desperate cries. The savior who has met the very deepest need that we have, the need to be brought from death to life, will either give you the grace you need to endure your difficult circumstances or he will graciously deliver from your difficult circumstances. He will not forsake you.
  2. Our savior is more powerful than we imagine. He saves people that we think are utterly unsavable. He conquers human hearts and the power of sin over human hearts immediately with a mere word. He endured the wrath of the Father and yet was raised in glory. There is nothing to big for our powerful savior.