

Can Your Faith Save You?

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John 4:46-54

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Do you believe in miracles? If you do, you're not alone. I've read that as many as nine out of 10 Americans believe in miracles. And for the Christian, really, it's not hard to believe in miracles. If you can get past the first three verses of the Bible, that God created everything just by speaking... If you can get past that, then miracles shouldn't be too big of a problem. Now, believing in miracles doesn't mean everything we can't explain is a miracle. Miracles break natural laws. Miracles are unexplainable apart from there being a being out there that is very real but which our five senses can't detect.

Miracles like the one we're going to see in John today have a very specific purpose. They're called signs because they point to a reality beyond the miracle itself. The idea is, if this miracle happened, then something else is true. They give evidence. Listen to the way John puts it in John 20:31, saying, "The signs in his book," the miracles were, quote, "written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the son of God, and that by believing you may have life in His name." So the miracles point to something else. The miracles in John point to a fact, point to a reality, that Jesus is the Christ. He's the Messiah. He's the king. And that he's the son of God. But that fact, that truth, that those miracles point to, are meant to move you, move me, to a decision. And that decision is to believe in Him. And for all who believe in Him, they will receive eternal life as a gift.

So with eternal life on the line, then, the question for all of us is obvious. Namely, can your faith save you? Can your faith save you? I talk to people all the time, and you'll hear all kinds of faith. All kinds of belief. I believe in God. I believe in aliens. I believe I'll win the lottery. I'll believe I'll go to heaven when I die. The question is, will they? Will you? Is your faith adequate, in other words? Is it enough? Is it enough for God to accept you into heaven? Is your faith enough for you to be saved? Or to put it differently, what kind of belief in Jesus, what kind of believing in Him, receives eternal life? Because not all faith saves. In fact, the clearest example of this is James 2:19, which says demons, evil spirits, believe. It says, "You believe that God is one. You do well." Even demons believe and shudder. They believe God exists. They believe that there is one God. They believe, but it's not the kind of faith that saves, right? After all, they are demons.

In other words, if demons have faith and their faith is the kind of faith that doesn't save, then what kind of faith does save? See, John ends this chapter with a man who shows us what saving faith looks like. He did this, I think, so that we can assess everyone in the rest of the book. So as we read the rest of the book, we can see what kind of faith do they have? But not only so we can understand the book, but so we can understand what? Ourselves. So we can look at our own lives and assess our lives, and not only that, but we can assess those that we know and love who still

need Jesus. We can assess where are they on this path? Because true saving faith has three parts. Three steps. And those three steps are going to be seen in our text.

Also, our text explains something we don't think much about. Because, you see, Christians have an all or nothing view of faith that the Bible doesn't really have. That people just go from not saved to saved. When the truth is, saving faith is often a process. No one goes from nothing at all to saved. Now, God can do that, of course, but for most of us, it's a growing thing. It's a process where you go from lost to almost saved to saved, right? In this process, we learn, we grow, we reject false ideas, we embrace new ones, we experience things, we embrace truth that eventually leads to salvation, but it's a process. And it's that process we're going to see in this man in our text.

Now, as we enter the text, Jesus' divine power and His divine compassion as the son of God and as the savior of the world is on display for all to see. Verse 46. "So He..." that's Jesus, "... came again to Cana in Galilee where he had made the water wine." So Isaiah 9:1 says that, when the Messiah comes, he will come to, quote, "the land beyond the Jordan. Galilee of the Gentiles." So one of the things that Messiah is going to do when he comes is he's going to go into Galilee. "These people," Isaiah continues, "who walked in darkness have seen a great light." Well, Jesus is that light. And with 700 years passing since Isaiah wrote those words, his prophecy in Isaiah 9:1 is now fulfilled when Jesus starts to shine in Galilee with this miracle. Jesus will end up spending the better part of the next two years in Galilee shining his light with the miracles he'll perform and with the teachings he will give.

Verse 45 says people in Galilee knew about Jesus because they were in Jerusalem when he cleaned out the temple and did many miracles, which we saw in chapter two. People must have been talking because the news spread from Cana all the way to Capernaum and to the home of an official. Notice verse 46. "And at Capernaum there was an official whose son was ill. 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." So we read that and we're like, okay, Cana, Capernaum, all of that, but the distance from Cana to Capernaum is the distance from here to Sky Harbor Airport. It's about 20 miles. So without cell phones, without internet, but just with word of mouth, Jesus gets to Cana, 20 miles from Capernaum, and it doesn't take long until this guy in this house hears Jesus the miracle worker is in Cana.

Tragedy has hit his home and it's hit him hard. This man is probably a gentile because he's an official, it says there, which is a specific word that meant that he worked directly for and in service to the king and that king was probably Herod Antipas who was not Jewish. His family line was not Jewish. But if this official works directly for the king, this guy is part of the political and social elite of that day. Herod, not a nice guy. Jews didn't like him. Evil man. He's the same guy that will eventually have John the Baptist executed for calling out his sin. This guy is also a man... We know he's a man with money because verse 51, which we read earlier, says what? This guy had servants.

What I love about this text, though, is the humanity of it. The official, notice, didn't send a servant, didn't send his wife, didn't send one of his other children if he had any. He goes to Jesus himself and he did it because he loved his sick boy. I mean, put yourself in his shoes. There's an anxiety and an uncertainty and even a desperation in everything this man does. He's heard about Jesus through what Jesus did in Jerusalem. He believes Jesus can heal his son. So he arrives. He swallows his pride. And that word asks in verse 47 is a word that means he kept on asking. He kept begging. Jesus, come with me to Capernaum. Come with me down to my house because my boy is going to die. And from this text we see real faith, but it's inadequate. It's not the kind that saves. At least not yet. It is needed, yes, but it's not enough.

So for us, let's **#1) identify a started faith. Identify a started faith.** This is step one of saving faith. This is what... I started faith. Identify it in your life. Identify it in those who need Jesus. Identify a started faith. A started faith can't save anyone because a started faith is just information in the head. That's all. But information in the head is absolutely necessary if anyone is ever going to be saved. Before this, a person doesn't know anything about Jesus at all. They're a totally unreached person. They have no knowledge about Jesus at all. A started faith begins with true knowledge in the head. That's what we see in this man. It starts with knowledge of the truth.

This man had true knowledge of Jesus. Namely, that he could do miracles, which means he could heal his sick boy. This is true. Jesus could do miracles. But if that's all this man had, that's not enough. This is a partial faith. It's incomplete. That's why I'm calling it a started faith. He believed in Jesus the miracle worker, and that was true, but all of his information and all of his knowledge was inaccurate, right? Think about it. He thought Jesus needed to be where in order to heal his son? Needed to be at his house. You got to come with me. Let's go. And that he had to get there fast, right? Because his son was about to what? Die. He didn't think that Jesus could raise him from the dead. So we got to get you there now. He has true information about Jesus, but he also has a lot of ignorance as well. He doesn't know Jesus is God. He doesn't know Jesus could heal him without being there. Didn't know he could raise him from the dead if he needed to.

We see this kind of faith... We heard about this kind of faith in James 2:19. That demons have true knowledge of God, namely that God is one. But it's obviously not enough to be saved because it's the faith demons have, and demons aren't saved. So true faith, saving faith in Jesus, is the kind of belief in Jesus that saves starts with knowledge. It starts with facts. It starts with what the New Testament calls the faith, which are the ideas, the teachings, that make up what Christianity teaches. A started faith contradicts the idea that it doesn't matter what you believe as long as you're sincere. No, faith is not a psychological state of mind. Faith in the biblical sense begins with basic information. A started faith, like we see in this man, knows truth about Jesus. In other words, Jesus is a particular person and there's a lot of false Jesus' out there and this is having true information about him.

Like this man, we often see this started faith in tragedy. Much of life has lived without thinking about Jesus, but get sick, get in a car accident, get fired, lose a loved one, and people will often go to Jesus. Well, what are they doing when they do that? Think about that. They're affirming a truth about Jesus. Namely, what? That he can help them. So they pray. They get religious. I mean, I see it here. When people need God because some tragedy strikes, they start going to church. Like, "Hey, I haven't seen you for a couple years. What's going on?" "Oh, yeah. Something happened in my life and I need to get back to God." What they're affirming when they do that is that God is real. God can help them. They need to be committed to him. All of that is true. There's some truth about God so they act on the knowledge that they have.

When I was about 20, I jumped out of an airplane. Anybody do that? It was a minute-long free fall where the guy I jumped with flipped me over so I could see the plane leaving as I jumped. Yeah, no challenge was scary after that. It's not like, oh, do this or do that. It's so scary. Is it jumping out of an airplane? No, it's not. No, I'll be fine. I was terrified. Absolutely terrified. But a friend of mine got it for me and I didn't want to look dumb to that friend so I was like, okay, let's do this. Knowing the facts about jumping out of an airplane, like the location, the quality of the parachute, the company, the process, how high it was going to be, how many people die from jumping out of an airplane... I had my will written out already. All that knowledge was needed, but it wasn't jumping out of the airplane. In all of us knowledge about Jesus is where saving faith starts. Without this started faith based on knowing the truth, knowing facts about Jesus... Without this, there can be no saving faith.

So how do you identify a started faith? It's by answering questions like, what is God? Well, the answer is God is a trinity. Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Who is God? It's the God of the Bible. Who is Jesus? He's the God man. What did Jesus do? He lived a sinless life. He died as a substitute for sinners. He rose from the dead. These are the basics. This is where a person starts. Right answers, true answers, to questions like these. No one can be saved with wrong answers to these questions because these are the core. This is the center. So you can know for yourself and for others if their faith is genuine, if their faith is what's necessary, if they have this started faith. Again, meaning faith that starts with true knowledge in a person's head about Jesus.

Now, it can't stay there. Just knowing the truth isn't enough to be to have saving faith. Saving faith has to start somewhere, and this is where it starts. With facts. True knowledge. But it doesn't end there, as we see this man starting in verse 48. "So Jesus said him, 'Unless you see signs and wonders, you will not believe.'" Jesus sounds like he's frustrated with this man in verse 48. Some of your translations say, "Unless you people see signs and wonders, you'll not believe." We kind of read frustration in the words you people. But what Jesus is doing is he accepting the dawning of this man's faith in him, but in verse 48, he's actually challenging him to step beyond the facts he knows to what the miracles actually mean. Jesus is affirming that this man has a started faith in him as a miracle worker and he's challenging him about those signs, saying, what do they actually point to? Namely, if I'm doing these signs, then I'm the Messiah the Old

Testament predicted. I'm the son of God. That God himself has now visited you because I'm doing things only God can do.

So he's challenging him, and the man responds in humility in verse 49. Think about it. He works directly for a king, but this one with authority humbles himself and speaks to Jesus as a servant. Verse 49. "The official said to him, 'Sir.'" You look at the Greek of that word, it's the same word Lord. "Lord, sir, come down before my child dies." See, he's not irritated or even impatient with Jesus' answer in verse 48. He doesn't challenge Jesus. He doesn't disagree with him or doubt him either. Tragedy has humbled this man to the dust. His money, his status, his rank in society, didn't matter anymore. He is just a scared father. That word child in verse 49 is a term of affection. It means my little boy. My boy. My little buddy. Please come. Please come and rescue him. Please come and heal him. I mean, you can feel the humanity of this man. You can feel the humanity of this gut-wrenching moment. And Jesus doesn't chastise him for his ignorance. Oh, you think I need to be there to heal him? Oh, let me show you something. No. He doesn't chastise him for his persistence. Yeah, I heard you the first time. He graciously, compassionately endures what this man's faith lacked and responds in a way that this man could not have expected. Why? Because Jesus didn't answer his request. He does better.

Verse 50. "Jesus said to him, 'Go, your son will live.'" Your son will live. This doesn't mean your son will get better someday. This means he's completely, instantly healed right now. The healer usually had to be there to say his magic words and to go through all of his ritual in order to get the healing. No, all this man was given is a word. And he takes Jesus at his word. Notice his word was enough. Verse 50. "The man believed the word that Jesus spoke to him and went on his way." No miracle in his presence. Only a word. No angels singing. No fire from heaven. Just a word. This man went from believing in Jesus for his works to believing in Jesus' words. As one pastor put it, not only was Jesus a miracle worker, he was a truth teller. Knowing nothing but that word, this man starts home. Believing that word.

Again, in this man we see real faith, but it's not yet saving faith. What we see here is necessary, it's needed but it's not enough. So for us, let's **#2) progress to a settled faith. Progress to a settled faith.** The person has to move from the started faith of true knowledge or he will never be saved. It must progress to a settled faith. A faith that not only knows the facts, but in addition to knowing the facts about Jesus, accepts those facts as true. This goes from knowledge of the truth to ascent to the truth. This is agreement with the facts. This is conviction. Think about this man. He came to Jesus because he believed that Jesus did real miracles. And because he did real miracles, he can heal my dying son. And he was right about that. He came to Jesus and asked him to heal his son based on this truth.

And when Jesus affirms not only that he could heal his son but that he just did heal his son, notice what he does. Gets up and goes home. Convinced that what Jesus said is true. His ignorance is fixed in that Jesus didn't need to be there to do it like he thought he needed. He could do it and he did it just by speaking the word. He heard Jesus speak the word. He believed the word Jesus spoke. He obeyed the word, got up and left, and rested in that word. He didn't beg

Jesus to come with him anymore. He didn't argue or pout. He just started home. And all he had was Jesus' word as a guarantee. This man came with true facts, true knowledge about Jesus, and he left convinced that the knowledge he had about Jesus was actually true.

I think about the demons in James 2:19. They not only know the facts about God, that there's only one God, but they also what? They know those facts are true. But again, knowing the facts and knowing the facts are true still don't save. You see, from a started faith based on facts, based on true knowledge about Jesus, a person must progress to a settled faith where he or she is convinced that the facts they know about Jesus are true. In verse 48 where it says, "Unless you see signs..." I said the you's there are plural. That's why some translations say you people. He said to this guy, unlike your countrymen in Galilee, you need to move on. You need to progress from the fact of the miracles to the truth those miracles proclaim. This man had Jesus can heal my son in his head. He knew this fact and he acted on it. After Jesus showed mercy and healed his son, he also acted on it, convinced that the knowledge he had about Jesus was true.

This progress is seen in people. A started faith progressing to a settled faith, where I know the facts becomes I think the facts are true. It goes from I know about Jesus to I think what the Bible says about him is true. When I jumped out of the airplane, I may have known the facts. And I knew a lot about the facts. I had a three-hour training before I could jump out of the airplane with an expert attached to me even. I knew all the facts beforehand, and as I listened, I became convinced that what they're saying to me was true. Even though I was terrified, I was like, well, gosh, this is pretty safe and they know what they're doing. This guy has jumped out of an airplane hundreds and hundreds of times. I think I'm going to be okay.

And then there was one particular moment, as the plane is in front of me and I'm the first person in line and I'm walking to the plane and the expert that going to jump connected to said to me, "You know what? It's five times more likely that you'll get hit by lightning than die today." And you know what I thought? I've never been hit by lightning, so I guess I'll be okay. And with that, my fear was gone. I was ready to jump. With facts I was now convinced were true. But again, being convinced the facts about skydiving are true and actually skydiving aren't the same thing. In the same way, being convinced Christianity is true, being convinced Jesus is the Christ, the son of God, and responding to that truth aren't the same either.

So are you making progress in your settled faith? Has your faith settled on the fact that Christianity is true? Is it settled on the fact that what the Bible says about Jesus is true? If not, now's the time. This is where facts and evidence and reason help in the process. This is where the truth informs us about what is true and what's not true. This is where we ask questions and get answers and ask more questions and get more answers. Not just to know the facts, but to be convinced the facts are true. Are you progressing towards a settled faith? Is your faith settling on the fact that Christianity is true?

Now, can a person have saving faith and yet still have questions? Of course. That's discipleship. That's growth after salvation. But for others, it's their questions, it's their needs, it's their doubts, that keep them from believing in Jesus. Oftentimes, most of the times, it's their sin. And they

need to get to the point like a guy last night where I said, "Listen, you've got your sin and you've got Jesus, and you've got to get to the point where the sin that is keeping you from Jesus... You've become convinced that that sin is trying to kill you because it is keeping you from the one thing that can save your soul, which is Christ." See, he had to go through this process in his head. Because he came up to me and said, "I'm on step two." Great. How do we get you to step three? Because that's all that matters. It's good you're on step two. That's awesome, but you got to go the next step. This can take a while as a person keeps progressing and further and further agreement with the facts about Jesus that a person has in his head.

So there's having the facts, knowing the facts, that's step one. Then, step two. There is thinking the facts are true, being convinced. But again, that's also inadequate. A started faith based on the facts and a settled faith based on being convinced that those facts are true. While both of those are necessary, again, it's still not enough. There's one more step. Look at verse 51. "As he was going down..." Cana is 1200 feet above sea level from Capernaum. "As he was going down, his servants met him and told him that his son was recovering." Recovering, I think, is an unfortunate translation because the word here is life. That his son didn't die. That the sickness ended. The fever stopped. His son was healed.

And think about these servants. They're impartial witnesses. They don't know what their boss heard from Jesus. It's not like Jesus said that to him and then he texted him, hey, Jesus said he's going to live. Let me know if he does. They have no idea. All they knew is that he went to see Jesus because he believed Jesus could heal his son. But he didn't text them with an answer. All they know is, now, their boss' son is well. So he confirms this wasn't just a natural course of an illness or a happy accident that his son didn't die. Starting at verse 52. "So we asked them the hour when he began to get better and they said to him, 'Yesterday at the seventh hour, the fever left him.' The father knew that was the hour when Jesus said to him, 'Your son will live.'" His boy got better at the same time Jesus said his son would live. Around 1:00 PM the previous day.

Let me just say, before I jump back into the text, God doesn't always do this. Sometimes miracles happen, but sometimes our loved ones die. We may never know why that happens in this life, but when we don't know the why, we rest in the who. We rest in the God who knows best. We rest in the God who will make all things clear to us one day. We rest in his character when we don't understand what's going on. When this dad heard their answer, verse 53, "he himself believed and all his household." Well, wait a minute. Verse 48 says he was part of that group that kind of believed. And didn't verse 50 say that he believed Jesus' word? So why does it say a third time he believed? Well, do you notice those words he himself in the text? If you're like, no, it's because you don't have the ESV and you should have the ESV. You should be using that translation.

He himself believed. You see that repetition? That's done for emphasis, meaning he really believes now. He has now taken the third step. The final step. He went from a started faith in the fact that Jesus could heal to a settled faith that Jesus did heal to the third and final step, which is that Jesus is who he says he is. He is the Christ. He is the son of God because he just did that.

When the Bible talks about believing in Jesus for eternal life, that's this right here. This is the culmination. This is the goal. What we see here is necessary, yes, and it is also sufficient. This is faith enough to save, which means all must, **#3) arrive at saving faith. Arrive at a saving faith.**

So to answer the question from the beginning, can your faith save you? Answer. Only if it's saving faith. And how do you distinguish saving faith from incomplete or insufficient faith? You go from facts to conviction to commitment. From knowledge to agreement to trust. As you look on your life, you look back at your life, you can see this. If you are a Christian or you're in the middle of this right now, you're either in the I know things in my head that are true about Jesus or I'm convinced that stuff that I know about Jesus is true or it's I've now committed my life to Christ. The truth about Jesus. Now, the penny drops. Yes, now, I'm committed to him because he is all of these things that I know to be true.

This is what happened to the father and this is the faith of all who will ever be saved. This is the goal of the process. That a person arrives with the facts they believe are true from God's word that moved them to trust in Christ. This man moved from believing that Jesus could heal his son to belief in Jesus himself. He's an example of why John wrote this book. That all who read it would believe. He's gone from something that's intellectual to something that's personal. He's gone from assessing Jesus, wondering about him, to committing to him. Other words used to convey this personal idea are taking Jesus' yoke upon you, which speaks of submission to Jesus. It's receiving or coming to Christ, which speaks of a close and embracing of Jesus. It's talked about as eating or drinking Jesus, which speaks not merely of sipping or sampling, but taking him in completely. Making him your own.

Those demons again in James 2:19. They know the facts. They know the facts are true. But they are anything... anything... but committed to Jesus. They're committed to rebellion against Jesus. See, it's not knowledge and it is not conviction that separates Christians from demons. Because demons know the facts and know the facts are true just like Christians know the facts and knows the facts are true. What's the difference? Answer. It's commitment to Christ himself. Demons will never do that. Christians do. This is what it means to believe. The sign, the miracle, pointed beyond the truth that he knew, like this man knew, pointed to the person of Jesus. If he could do that from 20 miles away, then he is the Christ. He is the son of God. And he takes the final step of saving faith.

So this means people can know the facts and know the facts are true, and while that's good, it's not enough. They must commit their lives to the person these truths, these facts, are about. When a person does that, they commit their lives to Christ. They believe in him in the biblical sense of the word. And when that happens, they're saved from the penalty they deserve for all of their sins. In that person's life, belief about Jesus becomes a commitment to Jesus. To Jesus as savior and Lord and God. And notice. It wasn't just him. It was his whole household, too. Why? Because he left his house saying, "Hey, wife. Hey, son. Hey..." Well, if the son was coherent... "Hey, servants. I'm going to go see Jesus because I've heard that he does miracles and he's going to heal my boy." Imagine him coming back and meeting his wife on the road. "You're never

going to believe it, honey. Our son is healed." "Oh yes, I am going to believe it. Because you need to hear what happened. This Jesus told me he would be healed and, the exact moment he said it, our son's fever left him." "If that's true, honey, then I believe in him, too."

And a little boy. "Dad, I'm well now." "Yes, and I know. Let me tell you how that happened. I went to that Jesus that people have been talking about, and when I talked to him, he said that you would be well. And the exact moment he said you were well, you became well. Your fever left and you stepped away from death's doorstep." "Well, Daddy, if that's true, then I believe in Jesus." Maybe this man's parents lived with him. That was common. Maybe his in-laws lived with him. That was common in the day. We do know he had servants too. And the servants hear the testimony of this man. They knew that he left because he trusted Jesus could heal him. They come back and find out he did heal him. Heal him miraculously. They go, "Okay, we believe too." This whole household gets saved.

See, I knew the facts about skydiving. I'd become convinced that those facts were true. But I didn't have what the Bible calls faith until what? Until I jumped. I made the commitment. I put my trust in what I knew by jumping out of the airplane. I'm not using this illustration to illustrate a leap of faith where I close my eyes to the truth and I just believe anyway with a whole bunch of stuff that's not true. No, that's not biblical faith. Biblical faith is knowledge plus agreement plus commitment. That's biblical faith. Without all three, it's not the kind of faith the Bible says can save anyone.

This household goes from saving faith that day because of the testimony of this man gave them about who Jesus is and what he did in their lives. So the question then is, can you look back on your life and see this three-step process? For some of you, it may mean rewriting your testimony. Why? Because you thought, well, I got saved when I was five. I asked Jesus in my heart. I got saved when I was a teenager. I went forward at church and I got baptized, but I lived like the devil for years without much remorse at all. But then something happened and I suddenly wanted to read my Bible and pray and go to church and get sin out of my life. Why? Well, I believed in Jesus, but I didn't really ever live for him until after college, I had some kids, and I really started taking this whole thing seriously. When did you get saved? Oh, when I was four. Maybe not.

Well, I prayed when I was a kid. I told people about Jesus in high school. Great. Question. When did it become clear that you're a new creation? That you're not the same person you used to be. That you've been changed and the result of that change is that you started living for Jesus. You became committed to him. The Bible would say that's when you were saved. Which means loved ones who prayed a prayer and lived for the Lord for a while, but don't anymore most likely aren't saved. Listen, I know it's hard if they're not living for the Lord, if there's no commitment to him, that it really means that they're never saved in the first place. I know it's hard to kind of grapple with that idea. Especially with loved ones. Especially with children. They knew the facts. They acted on the facts for a while. They maybe were convinced some of them were true. But the commitment isn't there now, and if there is no commitment, it's most likely because they're not saved. They never took the third step.

And if that's you, like this guy last night, don't bet your eternity on some ritual you went through like praying a prayer, coming up to the front, or talking to a pastor. Assess your testimony based on the three steps that we see in the Bible and ask yourself. If I've never given my life to Christ, if he's not my savior and my Lord, then I need to do that now. Why? Because knowledge in my head and even being convinced that knowledge is true does not save. That just qualifies me to be a demon. It doesn't. It doesn't. It doesn't mean I have saving faith, which means I still need to commit my life to Christ.

Well, John ends this unit, chapters two, three, and four, with a summary statement. Verse 54. "This was now the second sign that Jesus did when he had come from Judea to Galilee." First miracle was turning water into wine in the town of Cana. This one, the second, was turning a sick boy into a well boy from the same town of Cana. With these words John ends this unit that started in chapter two and took Jesus from Cana, to Jerusalem, to Judea, to Samaria, and back to Cana again. Creates a circle from chapters two to four. And John does it for this reason. Think about how chapter four comes to an end. In verse 42, Jesus is proclaimed as the savior of the world. But how exactly does John show us that that's in fact the truth about Jesus?

Well, in chapters two, three, and four, he interacts with men and women. He interacts with Jews and Samaritans and Gentiles. He interacts with religious and political elite as well as the outcasts. He interacts with saints and sinners. He interacts with a poor woman at the well. He interacts with the in between, which would be his disciples who had a small business as fishermen. And he interacts with the rich like this official. Why is it that John is showing us that he interacts with all kinds of people and every kind of person there is? Because whoever believes in him will not perish, but have eternal life. So there's a started faith, there is a settled or settling faith, and there is saving faith. Without all three, a person will perish. But with all three, a person is now and forever saved. Which step are you on?

Let's pray. Jesus, thank you for these truths. Thank you for the way this text not only helps us understand the rest of the book and not only helps us understand ourselves, but thank you for the way this text helps us understand how to minister to the people. How to pray for the people we know and love in our lives. I'm sure we could think through the people in our lives and see all of them in one of these three steps. Or maybe they're not on the first step at all. Maybe they need knowledge about Jesus. So either one, whichever one it is, now we know how to pray for them. Now we know how to minister to them. Now we know how to encourage them to take the next step. To get them to saving faith where a person gives their life to you. Thank you for equipping us with this word, and thank you for using this word to help us think through our own lives and our own testimonies in a more accurate, biblical way. Please use this in all of our lives. I pray for the glory of your name. Amen.