

Life in His Name – Part 10
The Word of Life – John 4:42-54
Crosspoint – Dave Spooner – April 16th, 2023

Intro:

- This morning we are returning to our series “Life in His Name” from the Gospel of John. If you have your Bible with you today, open it up to John 4, starting with verse 42. Today we will see Jesus traveling from Samaria to the region of Galilee, where He encounters a royal official who has a very sick boy.
- Now if you remember, John’s reason for writing this gospel is **“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 ESV)**. This story continues to drive home the point that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, with the hope that all people will be convinced to put their faith in the name of Jesus. Also from this story, you and I will learn some important spiritual truths that will help us understand different responses to Jesus, the necessity of trusting in the Word, and the pivot point for believing in Christ for salvation. This passage will help build your understanding of faith, give you specific ways to pray for those who have not put their faith in Christ, and give you a chance to examine your heart.

John 4:43-45 ESV

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.

Honor the Lord Jesus

- Our passage for today is set in contrast to the previous passage. They are connected with the sentence, “After the two days he departed for Galilee.” What happened in those two days? In those two days, Jesus and His followers were in the region of Samaria, where Jesus had an encounter with a woman at a well. The passage ends with:

John 4:39-42 ESV

Many Samaritans from that town believed in him because of the woman’s testimony, “He told me all that I ever did.” 40 So when the Samaritans came to him, they asked him to stay with them, and he stayed there two days. 41 And many more believed because of his word. 42 They said to the woman, “It is no longer because of what you said that we believe, for we have heard for ourselves, and we know that this is indeed the Savior of the world.”

- Jesus did not do any “signs and wonders” in Samaria. Jesus had a word of knowledge for this woman, she shared her testimony, and people believed. Then Jesus spoke the word of God to them and as a result, a great many believed.
- After this, Jesus continued going north to His own people and to the region He grew up in. His reception in the region of Galilee was far different from the reception He received from the Samaritans. He was not honored by the Galileans as He was honored by the Samaritans. Why was this? Because “a prophet has no honor in his own hometown.” Why does a prophet have no honor in his hometown? Because they were familiar with Him, they saw Him as ordinary and nothing

special. They wondered where He got His wisdom and “special abilities.” They said things like, “Isn’t this the carpenter’s son?” Isn’t His mom Mary, and aren’t his brothers and sisters living among us? Where did He get all these things? Who does He think He is? (See Matt. 13:53-57) They did not honor Him because He was familiar to them (this, in many ways, is like how it is in our society today . . .). **DO YOU HAVE AN EXAMPLE IN MIND FOR THIS?**

- Jesus was not honored, but He was welcomed in Galilee, so long as He did something for them, some type of sign and wonder like they saw Him do in Jerusalem at the feast (see John 2:23). They would welcome Him for what they could get from Him, but they would not honor Him for who He is. They saw Jesus as a means to an end, but not an end in Himself. Honoring Jesus for who He is, serving Him and following Him, and treasuring Him, is miles apart from welcoming Jesus because of what He can do for you. There are those among us today who, if they don’t get what they want from Jesus when they want it, will leave Him for something or someone else who they think will satisfy and fulfill their wishes.
- Now I have to ask you, do you just welcome Jesus for what He can do for you, or do you honor and love Him for who He is? Do you just want “stuff” from Jesus, or do you want Jesus? Is it “I have a health need. Fix it.” Or is it “I have a sin need. Forgive me. Change me. Give me the power to live for you.” Do you use Jesus to get what you want? Or do you love Jesus and give Him what He wants? Do you go to Christ for how He can serve you? Or do you go to Christ for how you can serve Him? Unbelievers use God. Believers love God.
- This is a place for us to ponder about our own hearts, and also this a place where we can pray specifically for family and friends, those in our community, who need to move from welcoming Jesus to honoring and treasuring and believing in Jesus. This is the only way they will have life in His name.
- Now we must pay attention to what Jesus does next, how He tells the truth and looks to move them to saving faith.

John 4:46-50 ESV

So he came again to Cana in Galilee, where he had made the water wine. And at Capernaum there was an official whose son was ill. 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. 48 So Jesus said to him, “Unless you see signs and wonders you will not believe.” 49 The official said to him, “Sir, come down before my child dies.” 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.

Trust in The Word

- Jesus and His followers were back in the town of Cana in the region of Galilee, the place where He performed the first recorded miracle, the first sign of who He is. (He has power over creation.) News got out that He was there, and an official in the royal house, out of his desperation and love for his son, traveled 16 ½ miles to see Jesus to get Jesus to go home with him to heal his son. People often reach out to God for help in desperate circumstances.
- Why? Because these are usually the places and times we realize that we are not in charge of the world and that there are things that are bigger than us and are beyond our control. These events strip us from our self-reliance and pride and reveal the truth of reality. God will use these times and the measure of faith that we have, to move us to place our trust in Him for our salvation. He is looking to move people from seeing Him for what He can give them, to believing Him by His

word. The ultimate goal is not to fix our problems but for us to place our faith in Him and be saved from our real eternal problem.

- So Jesus tells him (and all who were listening) that unless you (plural) see signs and wonders, unless you see my power on display, you will not believe—which by the way, was unlike the Samaritans who did not need these things but took me at my word.
- So this official asks Jesus again, “Sir, come down before my child dies.” Notice that Jesus did not go with him but gave the man His word instead. (By the way, Jesus does not have to do what you ask Him to do. He does the will of His Father and takes His “direction” from Him, not us. For God always has the greater good in mind.) He wanted to move this man from trusting in His abilities and power to trusting in His word.
- Do you trust the word of God and know that what it says is true and believe what it says? Or do you just want things from Jesus and don’t choose to trust His word? Instead of going with the official, Jesus gave him His word, and the man had to choose if he would trust the Word of God. The man then trusted the words of Jesus and proved it by his actions. “He went on his way.”
- Through our journeys, God opens our eyes to the truth of our real need. He helps us see our desperation so that we will reach out to Him and believe what His word says about Him, about us, and about reality. He wants us to know what is to come so that we will recognize who He is, and that what He says is true and will be fulfilled so that we will believe in His name and receive eternal life.
- Do you Honor Jesus? Do you trust in His word and honor it? Pray that this is the movement of the thoughts and hearts of people who have not yet placed saving faith in Him.
- Now let’s see what happens in the rest of this story.

John 4:51-54 ESV

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, and all his household. 54 This was now the second sign that Jesus did when he had come from Judea to Galilee.

Believe in His name

- This official and his entourage were heading home, and servants that were at his home were coming out to meet him. As they met, the servants told him that his son was recovering (by the way, this also means that not all healings are instantaneous).
- Now this man investigated, looking for evidence of God at work, not just to see if he got what he wanted, which is different. When the truth of what happened was discovered to be directly connected to the word of Jesus, he believed in Jesus. He didn’t just welcome Him for what He could do, didn’t just trust in His word, but he believed in Jesus. He committed his life to Jesus, committed to following Him, put his faith in Him, and received life in Jesus’s name. This was the point of salvation, the point of trust, the point of belief for both him and his entire household. A mini-revival broke out.
- And this is the point of the word and work of God—that we will put our faith in Jesus, follow Him, honor Him, treasure Him, trust Him and His word, and put our faith in Him and believe in His name. Through Him, we have our sins forgiven, have our hearts changed through His Spirit, and are “born again” into fullness of life.

- This healing is the second sign (the first was turning water into wine) showing that Jesus has power over creation. This also was a sign of who He is. Jesus has power over sickness and disease, and not only power, but authority. He could command something to be done and it would be done. His very word has power to make things happen. He is the Word that became flesh. This Word was the Word that created everything and can change things, remake things and restore things.

Conclusion and Communion

- Please take time to think about what the word has given us today. Perhaps the Holy Spirit has moved your heart and shown you what is true about yourself, and you need to respond by moving in His direction in a greater way, to move from welcoming Him to honoring Him.
- Perhaps you now know how to pray for those you love, that they would reach out to Jesus from the reality and perhaps desperation of their need. Pray that they would trust the Word of God and then place their trust in Jesus.
- Perhaps today you want to move forward in your faith journey, to believe and place your faith in Jesus and follow Him. If that is you, then do so today.
- Transition to communion