

## GOSPEL OF JOHN: THAT YOU MAY BELIEVE

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### *“The Second Sign”*

John 4:43-54

Open your Bibles to John Chapter 4. Believe it or not, we are going to finish the chapter; and what a great read it has been. Let’s read our text and then we’ll see what the Holy Spirit has for us this time. Beginning at verse 43 the Apostle of Love writes:

**<sup>43</sup>Now after the two days He departed from there and went to Galilee.**

**<sup>44</sup>For Jesus Himself testified that a prophet has no honor in his own country. <sup>45</sup>So when He came to Galilee, the Galileans received Him, having seen all the things He did in Jerusalem at the feast; for they also had gone to the feast.**

**<sup>46</sup>So Jesus came again to Cana of Galilee where He had made the water wine. And there was a certain nobleman whose son was sick at Capernaum. <sup>47</sup>When he heard that Jesus had come out of Judea into Galilee, he went to Him and implored Him to come down and heal his son, for he was at the point of death. <sup>48</sup>Then Jesus said to him, “**Unless you people see signs and wonders, you will by no means believe.**”**

**<sup>49</sup>The nobleman said to Him, “Sir, come down before my child dies!”**

**<sup>50</sup>Jesus said to him, “**Go your way; your son lives.**” So the man believed the word that Jesus spoke to him, and he went his way. <sup>51</sup>And as he was now going down, his servants met him and told *him*, saying, “Your son lives!”**

**<sup>52</sup>Then he inquired of them the hour when he got better. And they said to him, “Yesterday at the seventh hour the fever left him.” <sup>53</sup>So the father knew that *it was* at the same hour in which Jesus said to him, “**Your son lives.**” And he himself believed, and his whole household.**

**<sup>54</sup>This again *is* the second sign Jesus did when He had come out of Judea into Galilee.**

Remember way back in chapter 2 of John’s Gospel, Mary – the mother of Jesus – came to Him to solve a problem. They were at a wedding in a town in Galilee called Cana, and the groom was facing an embarrassing situation. They had run out of wine, and it was his responsibility to furnish it for his guests. So Mary asks Jesus to help him out. She wasn’t asking Him to go to the local Wegman’s and purchase a few bottles. There were a lot of

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people there. Jesus said to her in verse 4, **“My hour has not yet come.”** But He helped anyway.

He produced wine out of water, and not just *any* wine. It was **“new wine,”** the best wine. When His disciples, who were there with Him, saw this, they believed in Jesus (verse 11). And that is what we have been experiencing ever since. John tells us the reason he wrote his account in chapter 20 verse 31. He wrote:

**but these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in His name.**

And that is exactly what we have seen thus far.

Everywhere Jesus goes He touches someone’s life, and they believe on Him. From Jerusalem, to Judea, to Samaria, the Lord has been doing the Father’s business.

First, we met a Jewish nobleman and religious scholar named Nicodemus. Jesus told him he must be born again to see the kingdom of God. (I think he eventually does this.)

Then, we learned that John the Baptist stepped aside, realizing that he must decrease so that Jesus could increase.

Next, Jesus headed into the hills of Samaria to have an encounter with a woman who was lost and hurting. Jesus offered her what she needed. He afforded some **Living Water** of which she partook. As the Lord said, this water became a fountain welling up in her soul. Her encounter with Jesus so touched her life that she headed back to a town that looked down on her and became a strong witness for Him. She told everyone who would listen that Jesus knew everything about her. Then she asked them, **“Could this be the Christ?”** (John 4:29). Yes, He was. Many people from the village headed up the hill to see if there was some of this water available for them. And a revival broke out, even though Jesus stayed in the village only two days. We left off with the villagers saying this to the woman (Verse 42):

**Then they said to the woman, “Now we believe, not because of what you said, for we ourselves have heard *Him* and we know that this is indeed the Christ, the Savior of the world.”**

They believed Jesus was not just the Savior of the Samaritans. He is **the Savior of the world.** Indeed, the harvest was ripe for the picking there.

As we begin our study this time, Jesus heads back down the mountain into Galilee – to Cana – where this all began.

Who would Jesus touch next, and how will He do it?

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Let's take a look and see (verse 43):

**Now after the two days He departed from there and went to Galilee.**

It is interesting to me that Jesus did most of His ministry in Galilee. Much like the Samaritans, the people who lived there were despised by the Jews.

Why?

Because many of them were Gentiles.

Seven hundred years before Christ, the Assyrians conquered and relocated the area of Galilee. Then they sent in non-Jewish immigrants. But what was different is that these people did not mix as much with the Jews as happened in Samaria. Thus, this region became known as **“Galilee of the Gentiles”** (Isaiah 9:1, Matthew 4:13-16). But even the Jews who lived there were looked down upon by the Judeans. They were seen as rabble rousers and of questionable birth. Many of them were involved in protests against the Roman occupiers. Listen to how some of the people in Jerusalem reacted when they found out where Jesus was from (John 7:41-44, 52):

**But some said, “Will the Christ come out of Galilee? <sup>42</sup>Has not the Scripture said that the Christ comes from the seed of David and from the town of Bethlehem, where David was?” <sup>43</sup>So there was a division among the people because of Him. <sup>44</sup>Now some of them wanted to take Him, but no one laid hands on Him.**

**<sup>52</sup>They answered and said to him, “Are you also from Galilee? Search and look, for no prophet has arisen out of Galilee.”**

I suppose they didn't know that this was fake news.

Where was Jesus born?

Bethlehem.

The point is — they looked down their noses at Him, because He came out of Galilee. And He wasn't exactly popular in His home country either. Look at verse 44:

**For Jesus Himself testified that a prophet has no honor in his own country.**

You would think that, especially after word got out about the wine at the wedding, Jesus might be a hometown hero. Not! In Matthew 13 we learn that He was rejected in the very place He came from — Nazareth. Listen to what happened there (Matthew 13: 54-57):

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<sup>54</sup>When He had come to His own country, He taught them in their synagogue, so that they were astonished and said, “Where did this *Man* get this wisdom and *these* mighty works? <sup>55</sup>Is this not the carpenter’s son? Is not His mother called Mary? And His brothers James, Joses, Simon, and Judas? <sup>56</sup>And His sisters, are they not all with us? Where then did this *Man* get all these things?” <sup>57</sup>So they were offended at Him.

But Jesus said to them, “**A prophet is not without honor except in his own country and in his own house.**” <sup>58</sup>Now He did not do many mighty works there because of their unbelief.

His neighbors admitted that Jesus was wise and did mighty works. But they still were offended by Him. To them He was just some carpenter’s son. And they knew the carpenter. That happens.

Sometimes family and friends see the radical changes Jesus makes in the lives of a believer. But rather than applaud them, they’re offended. Or even, some are envious of how much the Lord has done for you. And it can have an effect on how powerful your witness is.

However, Jesus, knowing it would be a struggle, still goes to Galilee.

Why?

Because the Bible said He would.

Listen to what the prophet Isaiah said about Messiah (Isaiah 9:1-2):

<sup>1</sup>Nevertheless the gloom *will not be* upon her who *is* distressed,  
As when at first He lightly esteemed  
The land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali,  
And afterward more heavily oppressed *her*,  
By the way of the sea, beyond the Jordan,  
In Galilee of the Gentiles.

<sup>2</sup>The people who walked in darkness  
Have seen a great light;  
Those who dwelt in the land of the shadow of death,  
Upon them a light has shined.

No light ever shined brighter than Jesus. He is the “**Light of the world.**” He stepped down into darkness to save people from the “**shadow of death.**”

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The bottom line is that Jesus left a revival in Samaria and headed toward a much more difficult ministry in Galilee. And He did it because the Bible said He would.

Maybe there would be less fruit. But there would be fruit nonetheless. Look what happens next (verse 45):

**So when He came to Galilee, the Galileans received Him, having seen all the things He did in Jerusalem at the feast; for they also had gone to the feast.**

When it says here that these Galileans “received” Jesus, it is not the same as getting saved. Many of them had been at the feast when Jesus overturned the tables and did many signs. More than likely that is what they were hoping to see now. They were not so much interested in who He was, but only in what He could do.

Isn't it interesting that the Samaritans knew that Jesus was the Savior of the world, but He didn't do a miracle there?

Here in Galilee, where He had already done a miracle, they are willing to tolerate Him. But as we shall see, they require more.

What would Jesus do?

Exactly what He came to do. Look at verse 46:

**So Jesus came again to Cana of Galilee where He had made the water wine. And there was a certain nobleman whose son was sick at Capernaum.**

Why did Jesus return to Cana?

Maybe He wanted to water the seeds He had planted when He changed the water into wine. We know that Nathanael was from Cana, and Mary His mother had some ties there. So maybe there was a personal reason for His visit. But I think what we see here is another God incidence.

Just as He went to Samaria to meet a woman at Jacob's Well, so He came to Galilee to be about the Father's business. He came to minister to this nobleman who came 20 miles up a hill to see Him. Look what happens next (verse 47):

**When he heard that Jesus had come out of Judea into Galilee, he went to Him and implored Him to come down and heal his son, for he was at the point of death.**

What we have here is a nobleman, a prominent and powerful man, coming to the Well. Most likely he was a courtier in King Herod's court. He was a man of resource and, most

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likely, had done everything possible to help his son who was on his death bed, without success. This was a guy who was used to giving the orders.

But here he “**implores**” Jesus to come and heal his son. Evidently, he had heard about this carpenter and all that He had done in other places.

Is he looking for a miracle?

No, he is begging for one. That is one of the ways the word “**implore**” is used. And the verb tense used indicates an ongoing process.

This rich and powerful man was continually begging Jesus to go to Capernaum. He is at the end of his rope — exactly where the Hound of Heaven wants him. But Jesus’ reply is kind of odd. Look what He says (verse 48):

**Then Jesus said to him, “Unless you *people* see signs and wonders, you will by no means believe.”**

This may seem harsh, but Jesus didn’t just say this to the nobleman. He was speaking to all the Galileans who were gathered around looking for some miracle to take place. Unlike the Samaritans who came looking for **Living Water**, these people wanted a show.

Signs and wonders can lead a person toward belief in God. But they can also have an adverse effect by causing people to look for the next miracle and miss looking for the One who does the miracle. Also, Satan can use lying signs and wonders to deceive people. He will do this in an increasing manner as the time for Jesus to return draws near.

Now I, for one, do not believe that the miracle signs have ceased. The Bible says that Jesus is the same yesterday, today and forever.

But signs and wonders should not be the foundation of our faith. We should not depend on them to *prove* God to us. In themselves, signs and wonders cannot change the heart.

Israel saw many incredible signs during the time of the Exodus. Yet, when Moses went up the mountain, the people made a golden calf and worshipped it.

So you cannot blame Jesus for exposing the hearts of men — not even the nobleman. The Lord could easily heal his son, but what he needed was much more than that. Look what happens (verse 49):

**The nobleman said to Him, “Sir, come down before my child dies!”**

The nobleman is now at the end of his rope. But he doesn’t appeal to Jesus on the basis of his noble status. He **implores** Jesus because of his son’s great need. And he had hope that Jesus could meet that need. Look what Jesus says (verse 50):

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**Jesus said to him, “Go your way; your son lives.” So the man believed the word that Jesus spoke to him, and he went his way.**

The nobleman trusted Jesus, but he did make two mistakes in his thinking:

He believed that Jesus had to go with him to Capernaum to save the child

And he thought that if he died, it would be too late.

In Matthew Chapter 8 another nobleman, a Roman centurion, faced sickness in his house. He too was a man of prominence and political power. Like the nobleman in our story, he lived in Capernaum. And he also came to Jesus. But that is where the similarities end.

In that case Jesus offered to go to the centurion’s house. But the man refused. Listen to what he said (Matthew 8:8-9):

**<sup>8</sup>The centurion answered and said, “Lord, I am not worthy that You should come under my roof. But only speak a word, and my servant will be healed. <sup>9</sup>For I also am a man under authority, having soldiers under me. And I say to this *one*, ‘Go,’ and he goes; and to another, ‘Come,’ and he comes; and to my servant, ‘Do this,’ and he does *it*.”**

Jesus marveled at the faith of the centurion. He said that He had not seen such great faith in Israel. By the way, this man was not a Jew. He was a Gentile — a Roman. Yet he believed that Jesus could heal with just a word.

I wonder how often we are guilty of the nobleman’s error — of giving directions to Jesus. We have a tendency to direct and instruct Jesus in our prayers. We simply need to trust Him and allow Him to respond in His time and in His way.

In fairness to the nobleman, when the Lord told him to go his way, he did. Although his faith was not as strong as the centurion’s, it was a high degree of faith nonetheless.

Before we move on, I want to look at Matthew 8 for one more minute.

Remember I said that one of the differences between the centurion and the nobleman is that the centurion was a Gentile. I think that is important. Listen to how the encounter ends (Matthew 8:11-13):

**<sup>11</sup>And I say to you that many will come from east and west, and sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven. <sup>12</sup>But the sons of the kingdom will be cast out into outer darkness. There will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.” <sup>13</sup>Then Jesus said to the centurion, “Go your way; and as you have believed, *so let it be done for you.*” And his servant was healed that same hour.**



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Who are the people who will come from the “**east and the west**” Jesus speaks of here?

You and me.

Who are the “**sons of the kingdom?**”

The Jews.

Because of their lack of faith, the kingdom was put on a pause. They were looking for the wrong Messiah. So the Gospel went out into the world. And many Jews since have been cast into outer darkness.

It is not about the miracle. It is about the Miracle Worker, Jesus.

Neither the servant nor the son was saved because they were healed. Sure, Jesus kept them from dying at that time. But it was just a reprieve. They, like the nobleman and the centurion, had to place their trust in Jesus to be saved. We don't know for sure what happened with the servant. But we do with the son. That is what the rest of our study is about. Look at verse 51:

**And as he was now going down, his servants met him and told *him*, saying, “Your son lives!”**

Was there ever any doubt?

No.

When Jesus said the boy was healed, he was, in fact, healed. And in a demonstrated way. Look at verses 52-53:

**<sup>52</sup>Then he inquired of them the hour when he got better. And they said to him, “Yesterday at the seventh hour the fever left him.” <sup>53</sup>So the father knew that *it was* at the same hour in which Jesus said to him, “Your son lives.” And he himself believed, and his whole household.**

Did you notice something here?

The servants said that “**yesterday**” the child was healed. This means that the nobleman didn't exactly sprint home to see if his son was alive. He spent the night in Cana and then headed back down the hill. Warren Wiersbe, in his commentary, said this about the nobleman:

*The nobleman's crisis faith became confident faith: he believed the Word and had peace in his heart. He was even able to delay his trip home, knowing that the boy was out of danger. His confident faith became*



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*confirmed faith. Indeed, the boy had been completely healed. And the healing took place at the very time when Jesus spoke the Word. It was this fact that made a believer out of the nobleman and his household. He believed that Jesus was the Christ, the Son of God; and he shared his faith with his family. He had a contagious faith and shared his experience with others.*

Once again we see why John wrote his Gospel. He wants us to believe that Jesus is the Christ and have the abundant life only He can afford us.

And, by the way, He did a miracle in each of us. He took a lost soul that was destined for destruction and saved each of us from the Lake of Fire. That, my friends, is a great and wonderful miracle. Because of this, we should have a contagious faith as well.

Let's finish the chapter (verse 54):

**This again is the second sign Jesus did when He had come out of Judea into Galilee.**

The first time Jesus did a miracle at Cana it was at a wedding, a family celebration. The second was at what could have been a wake, a time of devastation.

That means that whether you are experiencing gladness or sadness, Jesus is the One you need. He is the One you can always count on.

The first sign persuaded His disciples. The second persuaded a Jewish nobleman and his household.

The Samaritans believed without a sign.

And we are going to see many other ways that Jesus will reach out and touch people.

Does knowing this increase your faith?

That is why John wrote the book.

Let's pray.

SING THE REVELATION SONG