John 4:43-54

Dr. Jerry Nelson

Healing of the Official's Son

1. (4:43) From the earlier passage, where was Jesus when he left for Galilee (cf. v 40)?

2. (4:44) To what "country was Jesus likely referring when he said a prophet has no honor in his own country (cf. 4:24-29)? Why? What significance might the statement have beyond the obvious?

3. (4:45) What changed the Galilean's attitude toward Jesus? Why do you suspect they welcomed Jesus? How does 2:23 help us understand 4:45?

4. (4:46-47) What town did Jesus visit in Galilee and in what town was the official's sick son? Locate the two towns on a map. From verses 51-52, what distance (in time) likely separates the two towns? Based on these verses, speculate on the extent of Jesus' fame. What evidences do the verses suggest as to the emotional state of the royal official?

5. (4:48) Compare 4:48 with 4:39 and 2:23-25. What is apparently the depth of the "belief" that people had in Jesus? The official asks for help and Jesus speaks of "signs" and belief. What is Jesus' likely meaning?

6. (4:49) With what attitude does the official respond to Jesus? Is the official's response faith, desperation or something else?

7. (4:50) Based on the rest of the story, speculate on why Jesus chose not to go with the man. Based on Jesus' response, the official now faces a dilemma – describe it. Compared to verse 49, how would you now describe the official's belief? What evidence did the official have that his son would live?

8. (4:51) Speculate on why the servants met the official. Because the official went to get Jesus, who would the servants have expected to meet on the road?

9. (4:52) What question is implied by the official's question regarding the timing of his son's healing? Do you think the official expected a miracle or a coincidence? Why?

10. (4:53) On what basis would the official's family (and servants) think the boy's recovery was anything other than a normal recovery? The official's faith apparently grows in the story. Describe the official's belief in v46. How had it developed by v49, by v50 and by v53?

11. (4:54) Compare 4:54 with 2:11 and 2:23. Does 2:11 explicitly say this was the first miracle Jesus ever performed? Does 4:54 explicitly say this was only the second miracle Jesus ever performed? According to 2:23, other miracles were performed; what then do 2:11 and 4:54 mean (see the modifying phrases in both verses)?

Personal Reflection

The Samaritans were drawn to Jesus because of the woman's testimony. The Galileans saw the miraculous signs in Jerusalem and were drawn to Jesus. Why were you drawn to Jesus? What convinced you of his deity?

Is there a difference between trusting God to meet your needs and trusting God to forgive your sin? Which is more easily forgotten or taken for granted?

The official came to Jesus with an urgent request: heal my son. He came hoping that Jesus was capable of granting his request. What did he base his faith on as he left for home? What did his household base their faith on? Is it the same?

"Miracles cannot compel genuine faith". Do you agree with this statement? Why or why not?

What urgent request is on your heart? Are you willing to trust Jesus with the outcome, even if it is not what you prayed for? If so, you may be at a place where you trust in Jesus, not just trust him for what he can do for you.

Prayer Response

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If you are not currently in a Small Group, we encourage you to discuss your reflection questions with a family member or a close friend. Previous lessons are available on-line at www.sgc.org/John.

If you would like to be part of a Small Group, please contact Dori Sear at dsear@sgc.org

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