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A just weight
and balance

are the
LORD'S:

Thus saith the Lord...

- **John 4:43**

After the two days
he departed for Galilee.

- **44** (For Jesus himself
had testified
that a prophet
has no honor
in his own hometown.)

- **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.**

**For they too had gone
to the feast.**

- 46 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.”***

- Verse 43:

Jesus has just spent two days in Samaria,

and he is now leaving for Galilee.

- The time in Samaria was spectacularly successful.

- The focus in Samaria was not on his miracle-working power, **but on his word.**
- ***“We have heard him for ourselves, and we know that this is indeed the Savior of the world”***
(John 4:42).
- This is a better response than anything Jesus has gotten **among his own Jewish people.**

- Verse 44

begins with the word

“for”

{**G-1063**}

- And that means

there is a reason

why Jesus is
going to Galilee.

- What is that reason?

- **44 For Jesus himself had testified**
 - **Testified to what?**
 - ***that a prophet has no honor in his own hometown.***
 - John is saying that Jesus **intentionally goes where** he is less honored than in Samaria.
 - He's coming again to his own people knowing that they don't understand him **and don't honor him for who he is.**

- This is not new.

- John 1:11

set the stage for this strategy:

- “***He came to his own, and his own people did not receive him.***”
- So the argument of verse 44 seems strange to us,
 - Go to a place where they will misunderstand you and reject you.

- But it was **not** strange to Jesus.
 - **It was part of the plan**
from the beginning.
- **He keeps offering himself**
to his own,
 - And
they keep rejecting Him.
 - This will in the end
get him killed.
- **Which is why he came.**
(Hebrews 10:9)

- The second strange thing that needs explaining is the way verse 44 connects to what follows.

- He goes to Galilee, his own people, because he expects no honor there.

- Now verse 45:

“So when he came to Galilee, the Galileans welcomed him.”

- That isn't what we expect.

- They're supposed to dishonor him

according to verse 44.

- How can John say,

“A prophet has no honor in his own hometown, therefore they welcomed him”? (LTNT)

- The answer is that the **“welcome”**
- **Is not what it looks like.**
- There is a kind of receiving Jesus **that has no true honor.**
 - It’s just an interest in his **signs** and **wonders.**
 - The only way they would accept him is if He continually **wowed** and **amazed** them.

- This is not new in John's Gospel.
- We've seen it before.
 - John 2:23-25

Now when [Jesus] was in Jerusalem at the Passover Feast, many believed in his name when they saw the signs that he was doing.

- 24 But Jesus on his part did not entrust himself to them, because he knew all people
- 25 and needed no one to bear witness about man, for he himself knew what was in man.

- They “believed,”
John says,
- But this was not
a kind of faith
that Jesus accepted.
- It was simply an
excitement with
his miracles,

- **Not** what they pointed to:
- **His glory as the Son of God,**
 - **The Messiah,**
 - **The Savior of the World.**
 - The same things that the Samaritans saw, even though the emphasis there **didn't fall on miracles,** but on his word.

- That's what we are seeing in **John 4:45-48,**
 - **"They welcomed him."**
 - Yes, but then it says,
 - ***"Having seen all that he had done in Jerusalem at the feast. For they too had gone to the feast."***
 - They welcomed him because they had seen works of power in Jerusalem.

- Jesus is coming to these very people knowing this is their attitude.

- And when John mentions Jesus' coming to Cana

in verse 46,

he draws our attention

to the fact that this is

the place he had done

his first sign in Galilee

by turning the water into wine.

- John now tells us that an official shows up with an urgent need.
- Jesus will use this official to make his strongest indictment of the Galileans.

- ***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.***
(John 4:46–48)

- *So Jesus said to him,
“Unless you
[plural!]
see signs and wonders*

- you
[plural]
will not believe.”
(John 4:46–48)

- Jesus does not address the man only.
 - He addresses the whole group,
 - The whole region of his own hometown.
- And now he says explicitly what we've been arguing.

- Verse 48:

“Unless you see signs and wonders you will not believe.”

- You are
“sign-seekers”.
- You are
“wonder-worshippers.”
- You say you believe,
 - But your belief
is like those folks in Jerusalem
in John 2:23
 - And like his brothers
in John 7:5
- It is not real belief that honors me.

- **This remains a struggle**
for God's people today.
- It is so natural to let our faith
be reliant
on what we see,
- To let our faith get its strength
from
what we experience.

- I can rejoice in God if I'm having a lot of success at work.
- I can be confident in God if my bank account is bulging.
- I'll be at peace in the Lord when my health is OK,
- But as soon as life turns sour, my trust in God falters.
 - Is that real faith?

- Isn't that something like the attitude Jesus encountered in his day?
- “Unless you see signs and wonders
- —unless you experience good things
- —you will by no means believe.”
 - Our strength of faith is so often tied to circumstance.
 - Our confidence in God ebbs and flows according to our feelings.

- Instead, Christ says,
let your faith rest
on God's Word alone,
on his promises.
- Even if life is hard,
we can trust him.
- Even if the good things
don't happen.
 - God is good.

- We can call it **belief**,
- But it does not see Jesus **as the Son of God** full of grace and truth.
- It does not see Jesus as **Savior of the world.**
- In fact, it **dishonors** Him.

- But now what about this official?
 - Was he in that crowd who believed but didn't believe?
 - Believed as a sign-seeker,
 - But not as a Savior-seeker?
 - A lover of Jesus' power, but not a lover of his person?

- Is he asking for the same reason any unbelieving person would love to see a miracle.
- I have a health need, fix it.
- I have financial needs, fix them.
- I have a marital problem, fix it.
 - **Fix it; Fix it; Fix it**

- Unbelievers don't love God;
they use God.
- So Jesus bluntly
says to the man
- And to the other Galileans:
 - ***“Unless you see
signs and wonders
you will not believe.”***

- **Is this a test?**
- Like the time a **Syrophoenician woman** pleaded for help for her daughter,
- And Jesus at first **refused her,** but it turned out to be a test. (**Mark 7:27**).
- **How** does the official respond to Jesus' refusal?

- He doesn't even comment on it.
- He simply repeats his request.

- Verse 49,

“Sir, come down before my child dies.”

- Neither Jesus nor John
comments on
the man's sincerity.

- Jesus simply gives him a gift.

“Go; your son lives.”

(V. 50)

- John says:

- “*The man believed the word that Jesus spoke to him and went on his way.*” (V.50)
- What is remarkable about this is that the man had asked Jesus to come with him.

- But when Jesus simply spoke,
“*Go; your son lives,*”
- The man obeyed without a question.
- He believed and went.

- It seems logical that this nobleman had heard of Christ's miracle of *turning water into wine.*

- Would it be too much to simply believe in that power?

- So, today His word still has power to quicken and strengthen the weak in faith.
- Searching the Scripture is still a means to this end

- 1 Corinthians 1:18

For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God.

- He did not insist on
seeing the miracle.
- He did not complain
that Jesus would not
come with him.
 - And amazingly,
he simply left,
John says,
believing.
- He saw something
more than
a miracle-worker.

- It would appear that the father took lodging for the night,
- As there would have been ample time between the seventh hour (one o'clock in the day) and nightfall to get from Cana down to Capernaum.

- Why should he hasten!
- The boy was living, doing well,
 - The Master *had said so.*

- George Mueller
(1805-1898) said,
- ***“Faith does not operate in the realm of the possible.***
- ***There is no glory for God in that which is humanly possible.***
- ***Faith begins where man’s power ends.”*** ”

- Then the next day we get the confirmation of the healing at the very hour when Jesus spoke the day before.

- And faith's reward: *“his household believed”*.

(John 4:53)

- Was his faith the mere sign-seeking kind?
- It doesn't seem like it. He seems to have passed the test.
- And who is he?
- We don't know. Jew or Gentile?

- The word “official”
in verses 46 and 49

is literally

“royal one.”

{G-937}

- He is

connected to a king

in some way.

- And who is the king?
 - None other than Herod Antipas.
 - The wicked king who murdered John the Baptizer.

- We've all heard stories of men who had “foxhole” conversions.
- Men on the front lines in battle.
- Bullets flying and mortars exploding.
- Fearing that he would die.

- He cries out,
***“God, get me out of here
safely
and I will follow You
the rest of my life!”***
- His prayer
is answered.

- The real test of a man's faith is not how sincere he may have been in crying out to God in the heat of the battle.
- The real test of his faith is rather measured by what he does when the pressure is off.

- **Will he forget God**
and go back
to his old ways?
- **Or, will he go deeper**
and develop genuine faith
in the person of Christ
that is not just a response
to his immediate need?

- This applies to everyone who has cried out to God **in an emergency.**
- You cried out to God **and promised that** if He brought healing, you would follow Him.

- The Lord does not want us to seek Him merely **for deliverance** from some crisis,
- And then to put Him **back on the shelf** until we need Him in the next crisis.

- He wants us to go deeper in our faith and to trust and follow Him because of who He is,
- Not just because of what He can do for us.

- **The lesson is:**
- The Lord wants you **to move from**
the foxhole faith
that solves your crisis
to the mature,
saving faith of eternal life.

- It is of interest that John records two miracles back to back.

- The water into wine.

- And the healing of The Nobleman's son.

- Why?

- John wants us to compare the two miracles.
 - The result of the first sign was that the disciples believed in Jesus (**John 2:11**);
 - The result of this second sign was that the royal official and his household believed (**John 4:53**).

- **That's the response**
that John wants
all of his readers to make:
- ***These signs are written
so that you will believe
in Jesus as the Christ,
the Son of God,
and thus have life
in His name***
(**John 20:31**).

- The great contrast between the two stories.
 - The first is a scene of joy and happiness;
 - But the second is a scene of sickness, desperation, anxiety, and the shadow of death.

- By comparing the two stories,
 - We see that life is filled with both kinds of situations
 - And that Jesus is the One that we need to trust in all the joys and sorrows of life.

- Jesus' reply to this man's desperate cry for help seems harsh (**John 4:48**):

- **“Unless you people see signs and wonders, you simply will not believe.”**

- But Jesus knew that the man was not seeking Him because he wanted to worship Him.

- Rather, he was like the soldier in the foxhole.
- He desperately needed immediate help.
- And so Jesus' rebuked him for a reason:

- To help the man see his greater need.
 - Jesus wanted to move him from his foxhole faith to genuine saving faith.

- The man's faith at this point **was quite limited.**
 - He thought Jesus had to **make the journey** to Capernaum in order to heal his son.
 - But it was **sincere** faith, even though **limited.**

- He didn't try
to convince Jesus

that he was worthy of this miracle because he was a royal official.

- **He didn't take offense**
at Jesus' rebuke.
- He just pathetically cried out,
***"Sir, come down
before my child dies."***
(John 4:49)

- All too often,
we're just like
this royal official.
- We don't pray unless
we're in a crisis.
- We keep Jesus
on the shelf,
like Aladdin's lamp.

- When we need Him,
we pull Him off the shelf,
try to rub Him
the right way,
and ask for His help.
- But after the difficulty passes,
we put Him
back on the shelf
and get on with our lives.

- But Christ wants to be worshiped as Lord,
not used as Aladdin's lamp.
 - He wants us to believe in Him for who He is
 - And to worship Him for what He is.
 - “*Savior of the World*”

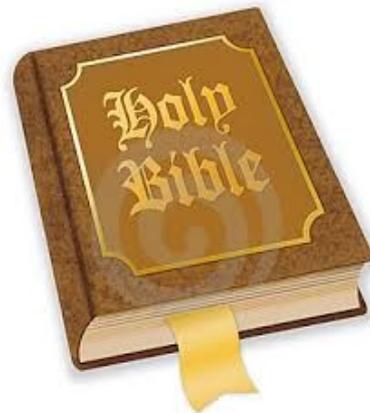
- A question for us:
Is Christ's word
as good
as
His presence?

- **Think on these things**
- **Philippians 4:8**

**The doors of the church
are open.**

**The Spirit and the Bride
Say
“Come”.**

Revelation 22:17



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