



Healing of the Official's Son

John 4:43-54

January 29, 2025, Sugar Land Baptist Church

A Second Request in Cana in Galilee (4:46-49)

- Jesus returns to Cana where he performed the first sign of turning water into wine (v 46).
 - Jesus had been in Samaria and had seen many Samaritan's believe in him due to the witness of the woman at the well.
 - Back in his "own country," Jesus acknowledges that they will struggle to believe in the same way: "A prophet has no honor in his own country" (v 44).
 - The Galileans do welcome him because they had witnessed his miracles in Jerusalem during the Passover festival (v 45).
- A royal official hears that Jesus is back, he goes to Jesus requesting that Jesus heal his son, who is in Capernaum and near death (vv 46-47).
 - This man was likely an official in Herod Antipas's court.
 - Capernaum was located about 17 miles from Cana on the shore of the Sea of Galilee.
 - His son's illness reminds us that wealth and power do not shield us from troubles.
- Jesus's response to the man's request is confrontational: "Unless you people see signs and wonders, you will never believe" (v 48).
 - Though directed at the man, Jesus's words implicate Galileans in general.
 - They welcome him only because of the miracles, not because of his own teaching.
- The official is undaunted by Jesus's challenge and desperately requests healing for his son once again: "Sir, come down before my child dies" (v 49).

Believing without Seeing (4:50-54)

- Jesus grants the man's request with a simple promise, "Go, your son will live" (v 49).
- Remarkably, the official takes Jesus at his word and departs.
 - Several people in John's gospel show this kind of faith (1:47-49; 2:5-10; 4:39-42, 50; 9:35-38).
 - Jesus praises "those who have not seen and yet have believed" (20:29).
- While the man was still on his way home, servants meet the man with news that his son's health had miraculously improved (v 51).
- When the man discovers that the boy was healed exactly when Jesus made the promise, he realized that Jesus healed the boy and "he and his whole household believed" (vv 52-53).
- John highlights that this is the second sign that Jesus performed (v 54).
 - John is aware that Jesus has performed more miracles than this, but he highlights key miracles as signs for the purpose of his gospel.
 - His aim is for people to believe that Jesus is the Son of God, the Savior of the world.
 - He desires for people to believe in Jesus as this man and his household did.



The Healing at the Pool

John 5:1-15

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A Question About Healing (5:1-7).

- Sometime later, Jesus went to Jerusalem for one of the festivals. We do not know which one.
- He encountered an invalid lying at the Pool of Bethesda who had been paralyzed for 38 years.
 - Bethesda means “House of Mercy.”
 - The sick would gather there because it was believed that an angel of God stirred the waters. The first one into the pool after each disturbance would be healed. A description of this tradition shows up in some ancient manuscripts.
 - This man had been trying to get into the waters to be healed for 38 years.
- After learning of the man’s condition, Jesus asks the man, “Do you want to get well?” (v 6), a surprising question given the amount of time he had been trying to get into the waters.
 - The word translated “learn” by the NIV can be translated “knew” and may imply supernatural knowledge.
 - Jesus supernaturally understood the situation (as he did with Nathanael and the woman at the well) and initiates the possibility of healing with a question.
- The man’s response acknowledges his inability to gain healing on his own or with help from others. This man is not the only person who is without help and reminds us of our human helplessness.
 - The man shows no awareness of Jesus’s previous miracles.
 - The man gives no evidence of faith.

The Miracle: Get up! Pick up your mat and walk! (2:9-10).

- Jesus commands the man to do what he cannot, get up, pick up his mat, and walk.
- At once, the man is cured (vv 8-9) without evidence of faith (see Mark 2:1-5; Luke 22:49-51).
- The healing brings the man into conflict with the religious leaders who chastise him for carrying his mat on the Sabbath (vv 9b-10), a violation of Jeremiah 17:21-22 and rabbinic law.
 - The man shifts the blame to Jesus, the man who made him well.
 - The religious leaders ignore the healing and ask who it was who commanded him to carry the mat.
 - We are told that the man did not know Jesus’s identity.
- Jesus later finds the man in the temple and challenges his spiritual condition, encouraging him to stop sinning (or more gently to not sin) lest something worse happen to him.
 - Jesus’s words highlight that physical and spiritual healing are not the same thing.
 - There is a worse fate than physical illness or death – that is spiritual death.
- The man leaves this encounter and goes to the Jews to report that it was Jesus who healed him. His testimony is ambiguous. Is he praising Jesus or reporting him to keep himself out of trouble? The text is not clear.
- When compared to the testimony of the man born blind in chapter 9, this man’s actions appear less commendable.

Sources:

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