**A Very Sick Son**

**John 4: 46-54**

Some things that make headlines in the news amaze me, Like…

* Brittney Spears shaves her head…
* Mel Gibson makes racial slurs…
* Certain Hollywood stars getting divorced…

But a few things are actually good, like…

* Miners in Chile rescued…
* Jennifer Smart rescued from her captors in California…
* Etc etc…

Well the story of Jesus turning water into wine was still hot news in Cana when Jesus returned there from the land of Samaria where He had met a woman by a well.

I am sure that there were some who took notice as He walked back through the city gate with His disciples. Someone may have said, “Hey look, isn’t that the man who turned water into wine at the marriage a few days ago? I wonder if He’s going to do any other neat things.”

There was probably a great gathering of people interested, wondering, hoping He would do some other great thing in their presence. And it wouldn’t be long before something did come up and He would be able to once again show His majesty and power in this small village called Cana.

***In Capernaum***

Approximately 20 miles Northeast of Cana was this tiny village called Capernaum. It was here in Capernaum that a child, a young boy lay ill even to the point of death. And here we have a frantic dad coming to beg Jesus for help.

The bible calls this dad a “nobleman.” This man was a rich man. (The antonym for noble is poor.) He had the means to take his son to the finest of doctors if need be. But the Bible still says that this boy was next to death. All of his resources had been spent to try and get this boy better, but to no avail. He was slipping fast. Look at verse 47 with me…

**John 4:47 ( KJV )****When he heard that Jesus was come out of Judaea into Galilee, he went unto him, and besought him that he would come down, and heal his son: for he was at the point of death.**

***We Love our Kids***

How much do you love your children? Would you walk 20 miles if you knew it would save their life? Would you walk 20 miles if you knew it would relieve their pain? Of course you would… Do you know why, because you love your them. No matter their age, no matter what they have done, you love them with a love that cannot be explained with words.

You know it’s interesting to note that there is never an instance in the Gospels where a son or a daughter came to Jesus on behalf of their parents, but there are several where parents come to Jesus for their kids. It is a special love that is too deep to be explained.

***Aaron Benjamin***

A few years back our family went to one of Laura’s aunt’s house to drop off some “Christmas tamales.” I waited I the van with the kids while Laura went in to drop off “the goodies.” While we were patiently waiting for her I just happened to glance back to see Aaron Benjamin convulsing. I honked the horn trying in desperation to gain the attention of my wife. She couldn’t hear the horn so I ran into the house and told her that Aaron was convulsing and needed to go to the doctor’s office now. Needless to say we rushed him to our nearby doctor’s office just to be told that he needed to go to the hospital. They generously called an ambulance where Aaron was rushed to the emergency room at the Children’s hospital here on Sugar and Trenton. The very last picture I had of my son before they rushed him off was his small, lifeless body being carted away. That was the last picture of him in my mind.

I cried… but I had to contain myself because I was taking care of the rest of my children as Laura rode with Aaron in the Ambulance. As we followed close behind I kept saying his name, Aaron, Aaron, Aaron. I WAS SCARED!!!

Let me say right now that if Jesus was in McAllen, and Laura and I were in Edinburg watching Aaron lay still and unresponsive I would have gladly walked, ran, jogged, crawled myself to where He (Jesus) was.

This is what we have in this story before us. We have a dad who is worried that his son would die if he does nothing. Here we have a dad who is at the end of his rope and has run out of options. I’m sure he was used to being able to solve many of the family’s problems with his wealth. But this was something that money couldn’t buy. HE NEEDED A MIRACLE…And their just happened to be a miracle worker walking some 20 miles away in Cana.

***The Nobleman Implores Jesus***

The Bible says in verse 47…

***“When he heard that Jesus was come out of Judaea into Galilee, he went unto him, and besought him that he would come down, and heal his son:” (V. 47)***

So here we have a dad that has just travelled some 20 miles, not in a car, not on a train but probably either on horseback or on foot and is now approaching the “Miracle Worker” (Jesus). Here they all are in this tiny town of Cana where Jesus just weeks ago turned water into wine. The news of that is still hot off the presses when this dad, this nobleman “besought” Jesus. The old English word besought can also be translated “Implore” and it leads us to believe that this man not only asked Jesus to heal his son but he repeatedly begged Him to do so.

Can you imagine the crowed that was there as Jesus and His disciples made their way into the city? As soon as the townspeople see Him they are reminded of what had happened at the wedding weeks ago and now this “Nobleman” this “rich man” was repeatedly begging the Lord to heal his son. WOW!!!

I can just imagine the onlookers amazing glares. This “nobleman” had to be somebody high up. He had to be a top government official who served Herod Antipas in some capacity.

You know it could be that some of those in the town of Cana had to go to this man for official business. I can’t say for sure obviously but we can speculate. I wonder if that be the case how did he treat them when they came to him? I mean did he give them the time of day? Was he compassionate? Was he concerned for their well being or did he half way roll his eyes and blow them off?

Jesus said in Matthew 7:12…

**Matthew 7:12 ( NKJV )****Therefore, whatever you want men to do to you, do also to them, for this is the Law and the Prophets.**

Maybe this would be a good time to stop and ask ourselves the question of how we treat others. When people come to us with a genuine concern do we take time to address it or do we just want them out of our hair?

Let me ask you this. If you got down on your knees today with a genuine concern, asking the Lord to hear your prayer and He said… “You will be helped in the way you have helped others.” Would you honestly be able to say that you qualify?

Again, this nobleman was begging Jesus for help. I looked up the definition of imploring in “The American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language” and this is what I found.

Implore means to: 1. Appeal to in supplication; entreat; beseech. 2. To plead or beg for urgently…. And it went on to say “to invoke with tears.”

I can, in my mind’s eye, see this nobleman crying bitterly before the Lord begging Him for help. He was frustrated, tired, worried, anxious and hopeful. He was 20 miles or so away from his son. The last mental picture he had of his son was of him lying in bed about to die. That, I think, would bring any caring father to tears.

I remember the last time I saw Aaron Benjamin before the ambulance took him. He wasn’t moving, his eyes were shut, and when I carried him his little body was limp and lifeless. That was the last mental picture I had of Aaron and the ambulance driver shut the back double doors and sped away to the hospital with sirens blaring.

I can imagine the frustration in this dad in our story. So, what Jesus says next seems a little cold, and little calloused, it seems a bit uncaring.

Look at verse 48 with me…

**John 4:48 ( KJV )****Then said Jesus unto him, Except ye see signs and wonders, ye will not believe.**

With a little roughness in His voice Jesus rebukes this grieving father for his unbelief. You may say, “This man, this dad just travelled 20 miles to get to Jesus because he apparently believed that Jesus could heal his son. Why would Jesus rebuke him for that?”

You’re right, at first glance everything seems to be in place and appropriate but there is one *(I hate to say minor because it really is major when you think about it)* problem with his request. Let’s look at his request one more time to see the *(Major)* error that Jesus was pointing out.

Look at verse 47 again…

**John 4:47 ( KJV )   
When he heard that Jesus was come out of Judaea into Galilee, he went unto him, and besought him that he would come down, and heal his son: for he was at the point of death.**

Now do you see it? This dad, with his petition implied that Jesus couldn’t heal the boy from a distance. So, what was the major error that caused Jesus to rebuke this dad? He **LIMITED GOD**.

***Do you ever limit God?***

Do you ever limit God? Do you ever put Him into a box and say God you can only go this far? You may say, “Brother Ray I have never put God into a box and limited Him.” That could be true, but I know that it is in our nature to doubt God.

We get sick, the doctor tells us we have cancer, tumors or whatever else kind of disease that threatens our lives. What is our first reaction usually? Is it belief, faith and trust? Or is it doubt, confusion, and fear?

The latter is common to us as human beings. The Lord can forgive us when we refuse to continue in doubt, confusion and fear and decide to believe, trust and have solid faith in Him.

Isn’t that what we see in this story? But when the nobleman accepted the fact that Jesus could just speak the word to heal his son he received a blessing.

***Centurion’s Servant***

Do you remember the story of the Centurions servant? Jesus, in the story of the Centurion’s servant was going to go to the house and heal this servant boy. But if you’ll remember, the Centurion said… “I’m not worthy for you to come under my roof. Just say the word and my servant will be healed. (Potter Paraphrase) He added, in essence that he was a ruler of men and he could say to one of them, “go here, and he would go, he would obey orders… He then said, Jesus if you just speak the word the disease has to obey Your command. (More Potter Paraphrase) *Ref: Luke 7:1-10*

In a nutshell this nobleman was limiting the authority of Christ… A big no, no!!!

***Also speaking to the Jews around Him***

Jesus wasn’t only speaking to this Nobleman, he was speaking to all those in Galilee…. He uses a plural word when saying you…. So everybody around Him was included in this rebuke.

Look with me to 1 Corinthians 1:22…

**1 Corinthians 1:22 ( NKJV )****For Jews request a sign, and Greeks seek after wisdom;**

Even after the crucifixion and resurrection of Christ the Jews required a sign, yet refused to see the most obvious sign… The death, burial and resurrection of Jesus.

What was it that Jesus said in Matthew 12:39?

Look with me…

**Matthew 12:39-40 ( NKJV )****But He answered and said to them, “An evil and adulterous generation seeks after a sign, and no sign will be given to it except the sign of the prophet Jonah.****For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the great fish, so will the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.**

***The Greatest Sign***

The greatest sign that the Jews should have needed should have been the death, burial and resurrection of Christ. In the time after the resurrection and ascension you’ll notice that it was the message that Paul constantly preached because it alone had the power to save anyone who would believe.

Do you believe? Do you really believe that Jesus died, was buried and three days later rose again?

Do you believe that Jesus died for you? Do you believe that His blood that was shed on Calvary’s cross that day will purchase your pardon from sin? My friends, we must believe that the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus alone has the power to save us if we believe.

***The Galileans***

Look with me to verse 45 of our text…

**John 4:45 ( KJV )****Then when he was come into Galilee, the Galilaeans received him, having seen all the things that he did at Jerusalem at the feast: for they also went unto the feast.**

Now, skip forward to verse 47… …***Jesus had come out of Judea into Galilee…***

Now look at verse 48…

**John 4:48 ( KJV )   
Then said Jesus unto him, Except ye see signs and wonders, ye will not believe.**

Putting these 3 verses together we get this… follow my thinking here…

* Vs. 45 – Galileans receive Him because they saw great miracles @ Jerusalem.
* Vs. 47 – We see Jesus come into Galilee when He makes the statement in verse 48…
* Vs. 48 – Unless you see signs and wonders you won’t believe…

It doesn’t sound to me like the Galileans received Him for the right reasons.

***A Poor Boy’s Sack Lunch***

Do you remember the story of Jesus turning a porr boy’s sack lunch into Moby Dick burgers? The Bible says He fed 5,000 men plus women and children…. Probably upwars of 20,000 people or more.This was done in the land of Galilee… These people, if you remember wanted to make Jesus their King by force… not for the right reasons… They wanted a bread king… someone who would do things for them… they didn’t want the King of Kings with a spiritual kingdom. The Galileans received Him alright… but it was for all the wrong reasons. They didn’t want a crucified savior, they wanted a king who could amaze them, provide for them and heal all their sickness. That’s what they wanted.

What they didn’t realize was that Jesus came to heal people of the greatest disease… SIN!!!

The greatest need that people have is:

* Not housing… people can recover from homelessness….
* Not food – people can recover from hunger…
* People’s greatest need is to be forgiven of sin – if people are not forgiven of sin they will never-ever recover from it.

Jesus’ mission was simple… ***“Seek and save that which was lost.”***

***Paralytic Carried by four***

There’s another great story found in the gospels that really shows Jesus’ mission.

There was a paralyzed man who wanted to be healed… there were four men who were willing to bring him to Jesus no matter what, there was no obstacle too great. The crowd was so thick that they had to climb up the steps with this man on a bed…. Break up the roof with a big enough hole to lower him down to Jesus. After all that effort do you know what Jesus told him? You would think He would have healed him on the spot, but He didn’t. Instead the first thing out of Jesus’ mouth was… ***“Thy sins be forgiven thee.”***

That really shows me that Jesus wasn’t on a mission to primarily heal and amaze people with His abilities… His whole goal was to ***SEEK AND TO SAVE THAT WHICH WAS LOST IN THE FALL OF MAN.”*** His primary mission was to deal with man’s sin issue.

Now, because nobody can actually see sins being forgiven, Jesus said to this paralytic man who was carried by four… ***“take up thy bed and walk…”*** He did this so that everyone around could see that He had the power to forgive sin. WOW!!!

It’s really good to know that Jesus has the authority to forgive sin. All we need to do is go to Him.

***He won’t push you away***

Here is a verse to stand on… it’s found in John 6:37, Jesus says…

**John 6:37 ( NKJV )****All that the Father gives Me will come to Me, and the one who comes to Me I will by no means cast out.**

What a great promise. Have you come to Christ? He promises that if you come to Him He won’t cast you out, He won’t push you away. The God of all creation will receive you…. If you go to Him in faith…. Much like this nobleman…

Notice verse 50 with me…

**John 4:50 ( NKJV )****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.**

This nobleman believed Jesus. Here they were, some 20 miles away from where this man’s sick child lay, close to death, and this man trusts what Jesus says to be true. It would have been very easy for him to have doubted and pleaded for Jesus to make the journey with him, but he didn’t. He simply trusted Jesus even though he didn’t see it happening.

He, in my mind represents the Christians spoken of in John 20:29…

**John 20:29 ( NKJV )****Jesus said to him, “Thomas, because you have seen Me, you have believed. Blessed *are* those who have not seen and *yet* have believed.”**

Notice that the nobleman ***“believed THE WORD that Jesus spoke to him…”***

You can place you trust in the Word of the Lord (The Bible)… In all the years it’s been around it has never failed….

* Historically – 100% accurate
* Archeologically – 100% accurate
* Prophetically – 100% accurate

With these odds you have absolutely nothing to lose… You can trust the Bible that you hold in your hands.

Let’s read the rest of our story…

Look at verses 51-54…

**John 4:51-54 ( KJV )**

**51. And as he was now going down, his servants met him, and told *him*, saying, Thy son liveth.****52. Then inquired he of them the hour when he began to amend. And they said unto him, Yesterday at the seventh hour the fever left him.****53. So the father knew that *it was* at the same hour, in the which Jesus said unto him, Thy son liveth: and himself believed, and his whole house.****54. This *is* again the second miracle *that* Jesus did, when he was come out of Judaea into Galilee.**

**Conclusion:**

This man not only believed that Jesus could heal his son, but he had enough faith to act on it. You ask, “How did he act on it?” When Jesus told Him “go your way, your son lives…” he obeyed and went home.

Are we obeying His word? That’s a good question to ask ourselves in every situation.

***\*\*\* Prayer and Invitation***