

## JESUS HEALS THE OFFICIAL'S SON

John 4:43-54

Key Verse: 4:50

"Jesus replied, 'You may go. Your son will live.' The man took Jesus at his word and departed."

In chapter 2, God blessed the wedding at Cana in Galilee. At the wedding, Jesus changed about 180 gallons of foot-washing water into sweet and delicious wine. In this way, Jesus blessed the wedding all over again. This event symbolizes that God wants to bless all men with joy and love and mutual respect and unutterable happiness, as he blessed [Adam and Eve](#) through their marriage in paradise. This was the first miraculous sign that Jesus performed. Today we want to think about the second miraculous sign that Jesus performed by healing the royal official's son. Of course, Jesus had performed many miracles when he went to Jerusalem first (2:23). But they were not based on the word of God. So the author, St. John, didn't say that those miracles were the second miraculous sign. However, Jesus' healing the official's son was definitely the Messiah's work to give eternal life. May God bless us to understand the spiritual meaning of the second miraculous sign that Jesus performed, having come from Judea to Galilee.

### I. A prophet has no honor in his own country (43-45)

First, the Samaritans' conversion (43). Verse 43 says, "After the two days he left for Galilee." In this verse, "After the two days" means Jesus' staying at the town in Samaria. When we review, the Samaritan woman's conversion was indeed amazing both to herself and to Jesus. Her [depression](#) was healed and her joy was restored. Her unbearable loneliness was gone and her joy was overflowing. Most importantly, when her love relationship with God was restored, her relationship with her townspeople was also restored. Her bondage of sin was taken away. She was free indeed, even to go back to all the townspeople and talk about Jesus. The Samaritan people, who abhorred her as a bad woman, listened to her when she told about Jesus and they believed in the Messiah. The Samaritans were overjoyed by the good news of great joy of Jesus. They invited Jesus to their town and asked him to stay two days. So Jesus went and stayed in a Samaritan village and taught them about the living hope in the kingdom of God. The gist of this story is that the despised and segregated Samaritans welcomed Jesus and believed in his words. Thus, they received eternal life. Not only did they receive eternal life, but also from their souls the living water gushed out and their souls rejoiced.

Second, the Galileans' miracle-seeking faith. Read verses 44-45.) Many Galileans saw that Jesus had performed miracles in Jerusalem (2:23-25). Surely Jesus passed by a street corner of Jerusalem. He saw a blind man begging, "Alms for the blind. Alms for the blind." Out of his compassion, Jesus opened his eyes. Surely there were many lepers on every corner of the city of Jerusalem. They were totally helpless and covered up their whole bodies with rags and made holes in the covering for their eyes to see. Surely Jesus healed many lepers. There were many beggars stretching their hands, begging for money. Surely Jesus gave each of them what he had. Jesus also preached the kingdom of God

from early morning to late night. The most surprising event was that Jesus cleared the temple (Jn 2:12-22). The temple was administered by ecclesiastical hierarchy. So ordinary people could not get into the temple without [paying](#) the tax. But Jesus went into the temple and drove out those selling cattle and sheep and the moneychangers. And he said, "Get these out of here! How dare you turn my Father's house into a market" (2:14-16). This event was more thrilling to the people. Probably, Galilean people who went to Jerusalem at the Passover time were more excited by Jesus' clearing the temple than by his performing the miracles. They should have seen Jesus as the Son of God through many miracles and through his sovereign act in the temple. But when Jesus came back to Galilee from a Samaritan village, the Galileans welcomed him, not as the Son of God or the Savior, but because he performed many miracles in Jerusalem. The Galileans had already forgotten completely Jesus' first miraculous sign that he had performed at the wedding at Cana in Galilee. They only remembered the miracles done in Jerusalem. This shows that they were extremely miracle-seeking people.

There was an old Christian. His son was, in essence, just like his father, very stubborn and rebellious and artistic and pleasure-seeking. His father was depressed after having several boxing matches with his son. In his frustration, he attended a witch woman's meeting. When he was sitting in the middle of the audience, the witch woman approached him, sprinkled some water on him, beat his forehead with her palm and said, "You will be a great man and your son will be also a great man in the future." Then his anger toward his rebellious son subsided. Unexpectedly, he experienced momentary euphoria. Also, his proud mind hidden in his soul was consoled. But after three days, he became very self-righteous. Unintentionally, he condemned his fellow Christians one by one, including his pastor. Soon, he began to speak in tongues and began to worship the witch woman. Then he and his wife left their church and joined the witch people's church. They began to have a false concept of the rapture. They believed that Jesus would come October 28th, 1992 at 9:00 p.m. But Jesus didn't come. Those who joined in this group lost all their savings. Many people become miracle-seeking because of their self-righteousness and laziness and demon possession. They want to blow their noses without their hands. The man and his wife did not become great. They only lost a lot of their hairs.

The Galileans were just like this self-righteous couple. They were all under the influence of demons. They wanted to be great and have a great fortune all of a sudden. But they had no idea to listen to the word of God through his Son Jesus Christ. So Jesus said, "A prophet has no honor in his own country" (44). When Jesus said this, the Samaritans who had listened to his words were in his mind. On the other hand, Jesus was very sorry that his own people were only miracle-seeking and they were living according to their sinful desires. What is worse, they hated to listen to the word of God. So Jesus felt that the Samaritans honored him, but his hometown people did not honor him. Jesus really wanted his hometown people to listen to the word of God and enter the kingdom of God. Usually, sinful human beings enjoy the word of God. But when they have to make a decision of faith or commit to the Almighty God, they change their minds and oppose Jesus.

Once Jesus visited his hometown in the power of the Spirit and spoke

to the people (Lk 4:14-30). The eyes of everyone in the synagogue were fastened on him. All spoke well of him and they were amazed at the gracious words that came from his lips. But when they had to accept the word of God from their hearts, they changed their minds and said, "Physician, heal yourself! Do many miracles here as you did in Capernaum." Soon they wanted to throw him down the cliff to destroy him. The Samaritans were happy when they received the word of God. But the Galileans were very unhappy, because they did not accept the word of God through Jesus. Accepting the word of God is a matter of life and death.

## II. The royal official's faith (46-54)

First, the royal official took Jesus at his word (46-50). Jesus was sorry and very painful because of his hometown people's unbelief. But a surprising thing happened. Look at verse 49. One of the royal officials of Herod Antipas, the tetrarch of Galilee and Perea, came to Jesus and said, "Sir, come down before my child dies." He was from Capernaum. Capernaum was 20 miles away from Cana. Probably the royal official's son was a one and only son and very dear to him. The official's joy was to look at his son once in the morning and to hear his son calling him, "Daddy." One day, suddenly, his son got a high fever and was dying. This royal official was a noble man of the time. Such men made their servants run when there was something to be done. But this man personally ran 20 miles and came to Jesus and humbly said to Jesus, who was known as the son of a carpenter of Nazareth, "Sir, come down before my child dies." His pleading sounds very appealing. It seemed that he could do anything to help his son get well. What did Jesus say to him? Look at verse 50a. "Jesus replied, 'You may go. Your son will live.'" It sounds very harsh to the royal official, who ran 20 miles to come to Jesus. What a surprise! Some can think that Jesus did not want to heal his son. But when we read the gospels, Jesus was never passive. He was always very active in doing something. Once Jesus, leaving behind the crowd of people, headed to Jairus' house to heal his only daughter (Lk 8:42). Once, Jesus met a blind man. But he had no medical tool. So he spit on the ground and made mud and applied it to the man's eyes (Jn 9:6). Thus, he healed the blind man and he could see. Why did Jesus speak in such a way to the noble man, "You may go. Your son will live"? It was to see if he had faith. How did he respond? The royal official took Jesus at his word and departed (50b). This is indeed amazing faith. What is faith? Faith is taking Jesus at his word. It is easy to take a classmate at his word. It is easy to take Uncle Sam at his word. But it is not easy to take Jesus at his word. But we must know that taking Jesus at his word is the beginning of Biblical faith. This faith gives man eternal life and the kingdom of God as his inheritance.

There are many ancestors of faith who took God at his word. Once upon a time, there was a man named Abraham who was 75 years old. But he had no son to carry on his name. Because of his no-son problem, he was very fatalistic. But he lived in this world because his wife was very pretty and a source of comfort to him. One day, Almighty God appeared to him and said, "I will make you into a great nation. I will make your name great and you will be a blessing" (Ge 12:2). It was indeed a ridiculous promise for Abraham to believe. It was because he did not have even one son, but God promised him that his children would be like a great nation. Wow! It sounds like a fantastic epic. It didn't sound

real to this fatalistic old man. But he took God at his word. After ten years, Abraham was discouraged because God did not give him a son. Then God visited him, took him outside and said, "Look up at the heavens and count the stars...so shall your offspring be" (Ge 15:5). Then Abraham took God at his word newly. Now the descendants of Abraham are more than a great nation. The descendants of Abraham cover the whole world, and their number is as many as the stars in the sky. Also, when Abraham took God at his word, he became a source of blessing.

Second, how to take Jesus at his word. As Jesus said in Mark 8:34, when we want to take God at his word or believe the promise of God, we must deny ourselves and honor God's word a little more than our own idea. We must also curb our sinful pride until we can listen to his word. Naaman was the commander of the army in Aram. He was a great man in the sight of his king. He was a valiant soldier and won victories in the wars. But he had leprosy. According to a Hebrew slave girl's advice, Naaman visited Elisha, a prophet and a man of bald head. General Naaman came with his men to Elisha's house for healing. But Elisha did not come out to see him. He only sent his servant to deliver the message, "Go, wash yourself seven times in the Jordan, and your flesh will be restored and you will be cleansed" (2Ki 5:10). General Naaman was angry at Elisha's behavior. At first, he refused to obey the prophet Elisha. But he battled with himself until he curbed his pride and went to the Jordan river to be cleansed. We can say that taking God at his word or believing the promise of God is a fierce battle in our soul. But we should not avoid this important battle.

There was a great famine in the time of King Ahab (1Ki 17:1). Elijah worked hard, but he had no food. God told him to go to the widow of Zarephath and ask her for food to eat. But the widow of Zarephath had only enough food for one meal. So she said to Elijah, "I don't have any bread--only a handful of flour in a jar and a little oil in a jug. I am gathering a few sticks to take home and make a meal for myself and my son, that we may eat it--and die" (1Ki 17:12). Elijah said to her, "Don't be afraid. Go home and do as you have said. But first make a small cake of bread for me from what you have and bring it to me, and then make something for yourself and your son. For this is what the Lord, the God of Israel, says: 'The jar of flour will not be used up and the jug of oil will not run dry until the day the Lord gives rain on the land'" (1Ki 17:13-14). No widow can listen to the servant of God when she has one meal left for herself and for her precious son. But the widow of Zarephath took Elijah the prophet at his word. Then God supplied necessary oil and food to eat together until the Lord gave them rain (1Ki 17:16). A widow took Elijah the prophet at his word, because she had God in her heart.

Let's think about Simon Peter. Simon Peter was a fisherman. He always had a night shift because fishing was possible only in the middle of the night. His temperament was very hot, because he was a man of the sea. He was like a rugged individualist described by Ernest Hemingway. One day he tried all night and caught nothing. Jesus said to him, "Put out into deep water and let down the nets for a catch" (Lk 5:4). Simon Peter was too tired to try again in vain. But Simon answered, "Master, we've worked hard all night and haven't caught anything. But because you say so, I will let down the nets" (Lk 5:5). Peter, a veteran fisherman, listened to Jesus, who was known as the son

of a carpenter of Nazareth. Then Simon experienced the power of God (Lk 5:6). Finally, he became the greatest teacher who ever lived in history.

Let me tell you another story. There was a Roman centurion (Mt 8:5-13). The Roman centurion was a Roman officer whose principle was "destroy and conquer." One day his servant was very sick. Unlike a Roman officer, he was very compassionate. He loved his boy servant like his only son. When he saw that his boy servant had a high fever and was breathing too frequently, he became helpless. So he came to Jesus for his servant boy's healing. Jesus was amazed by the Roman officer's compassion. So Jesus said, "I will go and heal him." But he told Jesus, "Just say the word, and my servant will be healed" (Mt 8:7-8). Jesus was greatly amazed by him.

When the royal official was on the way home, his servants met him with the news that his boy was living (51). When he inquired as to the time when his son got better, they said to him, "The fever left him yesterday at the seventh hour" (52). Then the royal official remembered Jesus' word. Because of his faith in Jesus' word, all his family members and his servants were blessed to believe in Jesus (53).

May God help us to curb our pride and take one word of God and have eternal life and the kingdom of God as our inheritance. May God help us to have one word of God when we humble ourselves before the word of God.