

Bible Stories for Adults

Jesus Heals the Official's Son

John 4:43-54

Opening

Gathering: What examples of faith have you witnessed of people trusting God beyond human reason?

Today's Focus: Jesus remotely healed the dying son of a father who showed his faith and trust in Jesus.

Key Verses: *The man took Jesus at His word and departed.* John 4:50b

Then the father realized that this was the exact time at which Jesus had said to him, "Your son will live." So he and all his household believed. John 4:53

Opening Prayer

Lesson

Jesus Begins His Ministry (*John 1*) = Don't read, have class answer, List on board

How did Jesus' ministry begin?

Luke 3:21-23 = Baptized by John at 30 yrs old, anointed for ministry by the Spirit

What was the first thing Jesus did after receiving the Spirit?

Luke 4:1-2 = Fasted and tempted in the wilderness 40 days (Israel in wild 40 yrs)

What happened when Jesus returned from the wilderness?

John 1:26-29, 35-36 = He was recognized and introduced by John the Baptist

How did these two disciples respond to what John said?

John 1:37-40 = Left John and followed Him

How did this begin Jesus' work with some who would later become His closest disciples?

John 1:41-45 = Called John, James, Andrew, Peter, Philip and Nathanael to follow

Jesus' Early Ministry (*John 2-4*) = Don't read, have class answer

What happened during Jesus' first ministry trip to Galilee? = *His disciples put their faith in Him*

John 2:1-3, 11 = He did His first miracle, changing water into wine at Cana

How long did Jesus spend in Galilee during this first trip?

John 2:12-13 = Just a few days, then went to Jerusalem for the Passover

Did Jesus do any miracles while in Jerusalem? = Met with Nicodemus, Jewish leader

John 2:23; 3:1-2 = Yes, many saw them and became believers

Why did Jesus decide to go back to Galilee?

John 3:22; 4:1-3 = The Pharisees were trying to show He was competing with John

What happened during Jesus' trip to Galilee?

John 4:4, 6-7, 28-29 = He talked with a Samaritan woman at Jacob's well (last week)

What resulted from this encounter? = Despised Samaritans believed before many Jews

John 4:39-42 = He stayed 2 days and many of the town became believers

No Place to Call a Home (*Luke 4:42-43*)

Why didn't Jesus stay in Sychar longer than two days? = This is why He traveled alot

Luke 4:42-43 = He was sent to teach throughout many towns, not just one

Did Jesus ever settle down in one place long enough to call it home?

Luke 9:58 = No, *the Son of Man has no place to lay His head*

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No Place Like Home (*John 4:43-44*)

Why did Jesus pass by His hometown of Nazareth as He came into Galilee?

John 4:43-44 = *A prophet has no honor in his own country*

How was this shown when Jesus did later visit Nazareth during this tour? = Next week's story

Luke 4:16, 28-30 = They tried to throw Him over a cliff for blaspheming

Had any other servants of God faced such rejection and hatred by their neighbors and friends?

Jeremiah 1:1; 11:21 = Jeremiah's hometown neighbors wanted to kill him

Genesis 37:19-20 = Joseph's brothers wanted to kill him for the dreams God gave him

1 Samuel 17:28 = David's brother, Eliab, hated him for thinking he could fight Goliath

Acts 17:5 = The Jews in Thessalonica wanted to kill Paul (Paul was a Jew)

Rejecting the Gospel (*Acts 13:44-51*)

What did Jesus warn about those who reject the message God sends to them?

Matthew 21:34-35, 40-41 = He'll give it to others who will take it and produce its fruit

How was Jesus' parable fulfilled after He left?

Acts 13:44-46 = Gospel was rejected by the Jews, so Paul & Barnabas took it to the Gentiles

How did the non-Jews (Gentiles) respond to the Gospel message?

Acts 13:47-49 = Many accepted it and were saved

How else did God use this rejection of His message to bring salvation to others?

Acts 13:50-51 = P&B were persecuted, caused them to spread the Gospel to others elsewhere

A Galilean Welcome (*John 4:45-46*)

Was it just Nazareth, or did people throughout Galilee reject Jesus?

John 4:45 = The Galileans gave Him a good welcome, they had seen Him in Jerusalem

Where did Jesus go first when he came into Galilee?

John 4:46a = Cana, where He had performed His first miracle, Nathaniel's home

How many other miracles had Jesus done in Galilee? = Had done miracles in Judea

John 4:54 = None, today's story gives us the second one - also in Cana, first remote

Had Jesus performed any other miracles elsewhere? = Yes, during His work in Judea

John 3:1-2 = Even Pharisees recognized that God had to be with Him

Official Contact (*John 4:46*)

How does John begin this story?

John 4:46b = A royal official in Capernaum had a very sick son

Who does tradition tell us this official was?

Luke 8:3 = Chuza, King Herod's household manager (Joanna was his wife)

A Father's Love (*John 4:47*)

What did this concerned father do when he heard that Jesus was in Cana, 20 miles away?

John 4:47 = He walked to Cana (>1 day) and begged Jesus to come heal his son

What example does David give us of the concern a parent has for a sick child?

2 Samuel 12:15-18 = David fasted and pleaded with God for Bathsheba's son to live

What warning does Jesus give us about the natural strong love a parent has for a child?

Matthew 10:37 = Family love is great, but love for Jesus should be stronger

What great Old Testament example do we have of a loving father with his priorities in order?

Genesis 22:2, 9-12 = Abraham would even sacrifice his only son Isaac for God

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Miracles (*John 4:48*)

How did Jesus feel about His miracles being seen as results rather than as leading to faith?

John 4:48 = He reprimanded people for needing signs before faith, official had faith first

Did Jesus do miracles when faith was already strong? = Also built faith in witnesses

Mark 5:25, 27-29, 34 = His miracles revealed and strengthened peoples' faith

John only records seven of Jesus' miracles. What purpose did he have for including these?

John 20:30-31 = *that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ ... and ... have life*

Did open hearts with the potential for faith need to be present before Jesus would do a miracle?

Mark 6:5-6 = Yes – otherwise defeated the purpose

Were any miracles given to those who had no faith in Jesus?

Matthew 12:38-40 = Jesus' resurrection after 3 days (the sign of Jonah)

What did Jesus say about those who witnessed a miracle and still didn't believe?

John 15:24-25 = They would be condemned as hating both the Father and the Son

Does this mean we should believe that any miraculous sign we see is from Christ?

Matthew 24:23-25 = No, there will be false christs who will do miracles to deceive

How do we know whether a miracle we see is from God or from Satan?

1 John 4:1-3 = Test the spirits – Satan doesn't acknowledge Jesus as God come down

A Faith Displayed (*John 4:49-50*)

Was the official offended by Jesus' rebuke about needing to see signs?

John 4:49 = No, his concern was for his child and he knew only Jesus could save him

Did Jesus recognize the faith that this official had?

John 4:50a = Yes, He told the man his son was healed and to go home

Would this man accept Jesus' word after a full day's journey and go back without Him?

John 4:50b = Yes, he went back without doubting Jesus' word

How does the definition of faith given in Hebrews fit this official?

Hebrews 11:1 = The only way he could go back without Jesus was by faith

Do we need to have this strong of a faith before God will use us in His service?

Judges 6:36-40 = Gideon doubted and made God perform two signs, God still used him

What happens when we faithfully trust God's direction as we serve Him?

Judges 7:2, 7, 12, 22 = He can do great things well beyond our limitations

So if God can still use us despite weak faith, why should we desire to grow in faith?

Matthew 17:20 = Because God and His tremendous power will be with us

What happens to our faith as we persevere and serve Him?

2 Thessalonians 1:3 = Our faith will grow more and more

A Faith Strengthened (*John 4:51-53*)

How was the official's faith strengthened as he walked back home?

John 4:51 = He learned that his son was healed

What more does the next verse tell us about the official's faith?

John 4:52 = He trusted Jesus so much, he even waited until the next day to return

How long had it taken for Jesus' word to work?

John 4:53a = The son was healed immediately, it was not gradual

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Faith of Our Fathers (*John 4:53*)

What impact did this have on the official's faith?

John 4:53b = It was further strengthened, his family's faith was also built

Can the strong faith of a parent really impact the faith of a child or family?

Genesis 18:18-19 = Abraham's family was blessed by growing in the faith Abraham directed

What responsibility do we have as parents?

Deuteronomy 4:9 = Teach our children what God has done for us, Build their faith

Is it our fault if our children reject the faith we try to pass on?

Ezekiel 18:20 = No, *The son will not share the guilt of the father, nor will the father...*

Who did Paul say was responsible for making faith grow?

1 Corinthians 3:5-7 = Our job is to plant the seed and water it; God will make it grow

Since God makes it grow, does He really need our help?

Matthew 9:37-38 = Yes, He needs us to work His fields

So, are we to plant the seeds, water them, cultivate or harvest the crop?

1 Corinthians 3:8-9 = Yes – We each are called to different tasks in His field

Are some of these different kinds of service more Godly than others?

1 Corinthians 12:4-7 = Triune God works different works through each of us to His good

Strength in Crisis (*Romans 8:28*)

What verses can we remember to help us emulate the official's faith when we encounter crises?

Romans 8:28 = ... *in all things God works for the good of those who love Him*

Philippians 4:19 = *God will meet all your needs according to His glorious riches*

Matthew 7:7 = *Ask & it will be given to you; seek & you will find; knock & the door ...*

Closing Prayer

Response - Consider and meditate on one each day this week

1. What type of welcome do I give those who come in service to God? (*John 4:45; Matthew 10:11-15; Acts 13:44-51; 2 Corinthians 8:22-24; 1 Timothy 5:17-18; Philemon 17-22; Hebrews 13:1-2*)
2. Who or what do I love more than God?
(*John 4:47; 12:25; Genesis 22:1-18; 2 Samuel 12:15-18; Matthew 10:34-39; 19:27-29*)
3. How much does my faith depend on God doing what I want Him to do? (*John 4:48; 20:24-29; Matthew 12:38-41; Luke 22:39-44; 23:8-11; Romans 8:26-28; 2 Corinthians 12:7-10; 2 Peter 3:8-9*)
4. When have I trusted God for something beyond my control and seen His miraculous power?
(*John 4:50; 1:49-51; Exodus 14; Judges 7; 1 Kings 17:7-16; 2 Kings 5; Hebrews 11*)
5. How have I influenced the faith of my children or other family members?
(*John 4:53; Exodus 10:1-2; Deuteronomy 4:9-10; 6:4-9, 20-25; Joshua 24:15; Proverbs 22:6; Acts 16:29-34; Ephesians 6:4; 2 Timothy 1:5*)

From Our Daily Bread, RBC Ministries

Romans 8:28 - how easily and how often this Bible reference rolls off our tongues! But perhaps we need to grasp more fully what this verse is really saying.

Randy Alcorn, in a book he has co-authored with his wife Nanci offers some insights on Romans 8:28. He quotes the NASB translation: *God causes all things to work together for good*. Randy points out that it doesn't say each individual thing is good, but that God *works them together* for good.

Recalling his boyhood days, Randy tells how he often watched his mother bake cakes. One day when she had all the ingredients set out -

flour, sugar, baking powder, raw egg, vanilla - he sneaked a taste of each one. Except for the sugar, they all tasted horrible. Then his mother stirred them together and put the batter in the oven. "It didn't make sense to me," he recalls, "That the combination of individually distasteful things produced such a tasty product."

Randy concludes that God likewise "takes all the undesirable stresses in our lives, mixes them together, puts them under the heat of crisis, and produces a perfect result."

Let's look beyond our immediate circumstances and remember that God has an ultimate good purpose.