

Sign Two of The Seven Signs - Jesus Heals a Royal Official's Son

John 4:46-54 Once more he visited Cana in Galilee, where he had turned the water into wine.

(Sign One, Jesus began his public ministry and essentially took his first step toward the cross.)

And there was a certain royal official whose son lay sick at Capernaum. 47 When this man heard that Jesus had arrived in Galilee from Judea, he went to him and begged him to come and heal his son, who was close to death.

48 "Unless you people see signs and wonders," Jesus told him, "you will never believe."

49 The royal official said, "Sir, come down before my child dies."

50 "Go," Jesus replied, "your son will live." The man took Jesus at his word and departed.

51 While he was still on the way, his servants met him with the news that his boy was living.

52 When he inquired as to the time when his son got better, they said to him, "Yesterday, at one in the afternoon, the fever left him."

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

54 This was the second sign Jesus performed after coming from Judea to Galilee.

Five Lessons on Faith and Believing God

FAITH LESSON ONE: Welcome Jesus and the work of the Holy Spirit.

John 4:43-45 After the two days he left for Galilee. **44** (Now Jesus himself had pointed out that a prophet has no honor in his own country.)

45 When he arrived in Galilee (a region, note a town or city), the Galileans welcomed him. They had seen all that he had done in Jerusalem at the Passover Festival, for they also had been there.

John 2:23 (Besides cleansing the temple) **Now while he was in Jerusalem at the Passover Festival, many people saw the signs he was performing and believed in his name.**

There was a spirit of belief in the region, unlike the spirit of unbelief Jesus experienced in his hometown. **John 4:46-47** Once more he visited Cana in Galilee, where he had turned the water into wine. **And there was a certain royal official whose son lay sick at Capernaum. 47 When this man heard that Jesus had arrived in Galilee from Judea, he went to him and begged him to come and heal his son, who was close to death.**

FAITH LESSON TWO: Believe that Jesus can and sincerely ask Jesus to do.

John 4:47 When this man heard that Jesus had arrived in Galilee from Judea, he went to him and begged him to come and heal his son, who was close to death.

FAITH LESSON THREE: Keep focused.

John 4:48 "Unless you people see signs and wonders," Jesus told him, "you will never believe."

- This comment was directed more toward the crowd than the official. (Back to this later.)
- The man was probably thinking, "Great, Jesus, I think I get it, but now back to my son..."

John 4:49 The royal official said, "Sir, come down before my child dies."

FAITH LESSON FOUR: Take Jesus at his word and do what he tells you to do.

John 4:50 "Go," Jesus replied, "your son will live." The man took Jesus at his word and departed.

FAITH LESSON FIVE: Believe God is answering even before you see the results.

John 4:51 While he was still on the way, his servants met him with the news that his boy was living. At first didn't see anything in the natural as far as a miracle or an answerer to his prayer.

But he went in obedience. As he was on his way – in obedience he heard of what God had done.

52 When he inquired as to the time when his son got better, they said to him, “Yesterday, at one in the afternoon, the fever left him.” **53** Then the father realized that this was the exact time at which Jesus had said to him, “Your son will live.”

Bold Next Step: In faith, I will ask Jesus for what I need, believe he can do it, and expect to see the answer.

They Asked for Signs and Wonders

Let's go back to **John 4:48**, since we are talking about the **Seven Signs** or miracles that proved Jesus as the Messiah and savior. The Official seeking healing for his son was totally unphased by Jesus' comment. “**Unless you people see signs and wonders,**” Jesus told him, “**you will never believe.**”

John 4:48. He believed Jesus and got a sign.

John 4:54 This was the second sign Jesus performed after coming from Judea to Galilee.

But wait, isn't it wrong to desire signs and wonders?

- When the Pharisees and teachers told Jesus, “**Teacher, we want to see a sign from you.**” Didn't Jesus say, “**A wicked and adulterous generation asks for a sign!**” **Matthew 12:38-39.**
- Later a second request for a sign in **Matthew 16:1-4**, received the same rebuke.

We need to realize that the first request for a sign came right after Jesus had just healed a demon-possessed man who was blind and mute. **Matthew 12:22 ...and Jesus healed him, so that he could both talk and see.** The result? **All the people were astonished and said, “Could this be the Son of David? Matthew 12:23** Yet the Pharisees demanded a sign? (vs. 38)

The second request for a sign came after Jesus had just fed the four thousand (**Matthew 15:32-39**).

Just what kind of sign were these Pharisees and Sadducees looking for?

The Pharisees were looking for some irrefutable sign, that could not be debated. Some sort of sign from heaven that would be incontrovertible proof that Jesus was the Messiah.

They were looking for a sign or miracle that Jesus couldn't fake.

- Maybe this blind person's healing recorded in Matthew 12 was staged?
 - Maybe the man wasn't even blind? Or maybe his blindness was psychosomatic?
- Maybe the feeding of the four thousand was due to some type of elusion? A slight of hand trick?
 - What if the people were exaggerating that story and it never happened that way at all?
- Even the raising of a dead person could not compete with a sign from heaven.
 - Who can be sure that if the person was really dead after all?

But some sort of cosmological sign in the heavens, that couldn't be faked. If Jesus would do that then maybe they would believe.

Truthfully, they weren't looking for a sign to convince them that Jesus was the messiah.

They were looking for a sign that was, in their opinion, beyond the capacity of Jesus to produce. Why? Because they did not want to believe.

What Jesus was rebuking is not a desire for signs, but the demand for signs from an evil and unbelieving heart.

Why Should We Believe and Ask for Signs?

1. Signs Bring Glory to God

The first miracle, water into wine, revealed Jesus' glory. **John 2:11** **What Jesus did here in Cana of Galilee was the first of the signs through which he revealed his glory; and his disciples believed in him.**

The healing of the lame man in **Acts 3** brought glory to God. Then **Acts 4:21-22** the Sanhedrin had to let Peter and John go free because they were afraid to punish them because of the excitement of the people who were glorifying God, not Peter or John, for what had been done.

Later Paul would say in, **1 Corinthians 2:4-5**, **My message and my preaching were not with wise and persuasive words, but with a demonstration of the Spirit's power, 5 so that your faith might not rest on human wisdom, but on God's power.** (This is the power that enables us!)

Jesus tells us in **John 14:13** **And I will do whatever you ask in my name, so that the Father may be glorified in the Son.**

2. Signs Result in Belief, Which Leads to Salvations

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

John 4:54 **This was the second sign Jesus performed after coming from Judea to Galilee.**

The healing of the nobleman's son not only demonstrates Jesus' power to heal, but it underscores the principle that He did not regard signs and wonders as ends in themselves. Rather, they were at the very least intended to bring the recipients of the miracle to faith in Christ.¹

Concerning the signs of Jesus, John concludes his account of the life of Jesus with these words...

John 20:30-31 **Jesus performed many other signs in the presence of his disciples, which are not recorded in this book. 31 But these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.**

3. Signs Authenticate the Work of Jesus

- After the resurrection of Jesus, Peter stood up and publicly declared in **Acts 2:22** **"Jesus of Nazareth was a man accredited by God to you by miracles, wonders and signs, which God did among you through him, as you yourselves know.**
- Jesus declared that he was the fulfillment of Isaiah's prophecy concerning the coming Messiah. **Luke 4:18-19** **"The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to set the oppressed free, 19 to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor.**
- In Luke 7 – John the Baptist sends his disciples to ask Jesus, **"Are you the one who was to come, or should we expect someone else?"** Jesus, who was right in the middle of performing miracle told the messengers. **"Go and tell John the things you have seen and heard: that the blind see, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, the poor have the gospel preached to them. (Luke 7:20-23)** Jesus was saying, "John the signs are your proof."

¹ Jack W. Hayford, Litt.D., Spirit Filled Life Bible NKJ (Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1991), p. 1581

- What led Nicodemus to seek Jesus out? How did Nicodemus know that Jesus was a teacher sent from God? **“Rabbi, we know that You are a teacher come from God; for no one can do these signs that You do unless God is with him.” John 3:2**

4. Signs Authenticate the Work of Jesus Through Us

- **Mark 16:17 and 20 And these signs will accompany those who believe: 20 Then the disciples went out and preached everywhere, and the Lord worked with them and confirmed his word by the signs that accompanied it.**

The signs and wonders seem to be a confirmation that God is at work, moving in the hearts and lives of people. Not to mention that signs and wonders will draw people in so that they can hear the gospel preached. It is the Word and Spirit working together as it should be.

- The disciples prayed that God would confirm their ministry with signs and wonders. These signs and wonders would also give them boldness when preaching the Word.

Acts 4:29-30 Now, Lord, consider their threats and enable your servants to speak your word with great boldness. 30 Stretch out your hand to heal and perform signs and wonders through the name of your holy servant Jesus.”

Bold Next Step: Every day this week, I'm going to pray Acts 4:30 and expect signs as God's enabling power to confirm God's word as I speak it with great boldness.