**THE NOBLEMAN’S SON**

***A Sick Son Healed in Capernaum***

***John 4:43-54***

Sunday School Lesson 2

*The Miracles of Jesus*

01/20/2019

**Introduction:** Not long after the wedding in Cana, the Lord went to Jerusalem to begin His earthly ministry. His first act was to cleanse the temple of those that were using it for a personal profit. When the Jewish leaders saw what He was doing, they asked for Him to show them a sign to prove His authority. This was the major issue there with the Jewish people. Their faith was only as strong as the signs that He would show them. In spite of this, Jesus still performed many miracles in Jerusalem that are not recorded in Scripture. There were many people who subsequently believed in His name, but Jesus would not yet reveal Himself to them fully. Thus, the people believed that Jesus had some type of power, but they did not believe that He was the Son of God. It was not long before the Pharisees began plotting against Jesus. Knowing their plans, Jesus then sought to return back to Galilee. Along the way, He met the Samaritan woman at the well. While the Jews would not believe unless they saw a sign, the Samaritan woman believed He was the Messiah based solely off of His teachings. As she told the people in her city, they all came to hear Jesus. Like her, they believed on Him as the Saviour based solely on His Word alone. After being there for two days, Jesus continued His journey back to Galilee. Jesus had told His disciples that a prophet hath no honour in his own country. He knew that the people of Galilee had limited faith just like those in Jerusalem. Nonetheless, this is where we see the second miracle recorded when Jesus meets a nobleman from Capernaum. Let’s observe some themes from the story of the nobleman and his dying son.

1. THE NOBLEMAN EXEMPLIFIED THE WEAK FAITH THAT IS ONLY STENGTHENED BY SIGNS AND WONDERS. (JOHN 4:48; MATTHEW 24:24; 2 THESSALONIANS 2:8-10)
2. **Notice that while the nobleman may have looked like other believers, the Lord observed the weakness of his faith (John 4:48).** Before speaking to the weakness of the nobleman’s faith, we can first give a minimal amount of credit to him for at least showing a glimpse of faith. He sacrificed his potential last hours with his son on the hope that Jesus could do something to help. His faith was, at the least, greater than the children of Israel in the wilderness and the Pharisees during Jesus’ day, as they both refused to have faith even with signs and wonders. Now, let’s observe the weakness of his faith. Although he came to Jesus just like many others would do, Jesus knew the heart of this man. He knew that his faith was weak. Had Jesus not performed a miracle, there is no doubt that this man would have never put his faith in Him. He had heard about the miracles that Jesus did in Judea. These miracles were so widely reported that they could not be denied. Even the Jewish leaders could not deny that Jesus performed miracles (They purported that these miracles were by Satan.). As we observed in the introduction, this man’s faith was not unique to him. He exemplified the faith of the Jews. The “ye” in verse 48 is plural. Our faith should be the cause of miracles, but many want it to be the other way around.
3. **Notice the dangers of a faith that operates solely on the observance of signs and wonders (Matthew 24:24; 2 Thessalonians 2:8-10).** The problem with faith that is based on the observance of signs and wonders is that it can be easily deceived. Jesus warned of this in Matthew 24:24. The disciples asked for signs of the second coming of Christ and the end of the world. Jesus told them that there would be many false prophets and false Christs that would show great signs and wonders in the last days. Many people will be fooled by these people just because they seem to have power. In fact, we can see this taking place today. There are many that are led into false teaching and false churches because of a perceived “power” that they see there. We must remember that Satan has the ability to manifest some power as well. It can never measure up to God’s power, but it is enough to deceive the unbeliever. When it seemed like Christ had been defeated on the cross, there were no doubt many who turned their back on Him. That’s because their faith was limited to the extent that they could observe His power.
4. THE NOBLEMAN RECEIVED AN ANSWER BECAUSE OF HIS IMPORTUNITY. (JOHN 4:49-50; LUKE 11:1-8)
5. **Notice that the nobleman did not have an answer for his weak faith other than to ask again more firmly (John 4:49).** As we mentioned last week, Jesus often gave a challenge in response to a request. This is what He did with Mary and with this nobleman. When the Lord challenged the nobleman’s faith, he did not have an answer to give back. This is most likely because he knew that the indictment against him was true. What could he say? Instead, the nobleman just further implored the Lord for help. We can see the heightened need in the firmness of his second request. He said, “Sir, come down ere my child die.” This was a man who was out of other options. Being a nobleman, it is likely that he tried all forms of expensive medical care first to regain the health of his child. In spite of this, he had been given the report from the doctors. His son would die if not for a miracle. He could not take “no” for an answer. In spite of the Lord’s rebuke, he was not going to be deterred. By this determination, we see the great care that the nobleman had for his son. He had been publicly rebuked by a Man from Galilee, but he was not concerned about his pride being hurt. He just needed an answer!
6. **Notice that Jesus gave an answer but no commendation for the man’s faith, showing the reason for the miracle (John 4:50; Luke 11:1-8).** After the man’s second request for the Lord’s help, Jesus gave the man the answer that he sought. He told him to go his way, as his son was alive!Notice what Jesus does not say, though. He does not commend the man for his faith, as Jesus often did. The man’s second request was not a result of his faith as much as it was his importunity. Jesus gave this example in Luke 11. Simply, it was the compassion of Jesus that led to this miracle. Jesus understood the man’s hurt. Jesus saw a grieving mother in Capernaum. He saw a family with a need. The man was rewarded more for his persistence. While persistence never supersedes faith in receiving an answer, we see that there are times where the Lord answers according to that persistence in spite of a weak faith.
7. THE NOBLEMAN BELIEVED THE WORD OF JESUS, BUT YET HE STILL DID NOT BELIEVE FULLY IN JESUS AS THE SAVIOUR UNTIL HE SAW THE MIRACLE. (JOHN 4:50-53)
8. **Notice the faith that the man had in believing Jesus’ Word, despite not being able to see his son (John 4:50).** When Jesus told the man that his son liveth, the nobleman had to decide what to do next. His request was for Jesus to make the day’s journey with him back to Capernaum to heal his son in person. Jesus had other plans though, and He did not need to go to Capernaum to give healing. The Bible says that the nobleman believed the word that Jesus had spoken unto him, and he went his way. I imagine that the nobleman left hastily to return home, so that he could see the condition of his son. He believed Jesus when He said that his son was alive, but he still wanted to see this for himself. If we’re not careful, we might assume that this meant that the man now believed on Jesus Christ, but remember what Jesus said. Unless the man saw a sign or wonder, he would not believe. The nobleman hadn’t seen a sign yet.
9. **Notice the man did not fully believe until he had validated the miracle (John 4:51-53).** As the nobleman was travelling home, his servants came to meet him. He knew that this meant that they had news regarding his son. Would it be good news or sorrowful news? The servants told him that his son liveth. Can you imagine the excitement, joy, and relief that the man felt? Surely, the first thing that he would do would be to give praise to God for Jesus Christ. Instead, his first response was to ask the servants when his son’s condition began to improve. Didn’t he already know the answer to this? This tells us one of two things. First, the nobleman may have thought that the timing was just a coincidence. That’s typical to how many people react when they receive a miracle from God. They have to prove it against logic and chance. Secondly, the nobleman may have thought that Jesus was just a prophet, but he wasn’t certain that Jesus was the one who had actually performed the miracle. Maybe Jesus just knew that his son had or would get better. When the man heard the timing, though, he FINALLY believed in Jesus Christ (vs. 53). Oh! How accurate was the statement that Jesus made regarding his faith!
10. THE NOBLEMAN SHARED HIS FAITH WITH THOSE WHOM HE CARED ABOUT. (JOHN 4:53)
11. **Notice that his whole house believed as well. (John 4:53).** The nobleman did not keep the situation a secret. It is likely that his family knew where he was going when he left the house. There was probably great discussion before his departure over what to do to try to save his son. The servants clearly knew where he was, as they were able to find him on his way back home. When the family saw the child’s health return, though, they had no idea what conversation the nobleman was having with Christ. They did not even know whether he had found Jesus or not. The Bible tells us that the whole house believed. This happened after the man realized that it was all Jesus’ doing. It’s clear that he then told his house all about his experience with Jesus. Through that experience, the rest of the house believed. He wanted them all to know that Jesus was truly the Messiah.
12. **Notice that the nobleman displayed a convincing faith (John 4:53).** In our last point, let’s observe the transformation of this man’s faith. At the start, his faith was not convincing. Although he had travelled a good distance and taken some risk to see Jesus, his faith was still reprimanded for being weak. Now, his faith was strong enough to convince every member of his house to put their faith in Christ as well. They believed via second hand information!

**Conclusion:** What kind of faith do we have? Is it reliant upon seeing miracles, signs, and wonders? How do we behave when we don’t get the answer that we are wanting? Does our faith waiver in those moments? We should be sure that our faith is genuine and based on God’s Word. The Samaritans were commended for how they believed just by hearing Jesus, while those closest to Him struggled to show real faith. We need to have a convincing faith. That’s how we are going to reach the lost with the Truth of the Gospel. Satan is actively leading people astray by showing them false signs and wonders. Let’s tell people about God’s Word!