



Sunday, January 4, 2026

John 4:43-54

Good morning and welcome to church this morning. It's great to see each and everyone of you. I trust that you and your family had a great Christmas and New Year's. We've certainly got the snow for it now, lol! Anyways, I'm excited to get back to the book of John this morning, so I'd like to invite you to turn with me to John chapter 4:43-54. If you're able to, I'd also like to invite you to stay for reading of God's word.

John 4:43-54

'43 Now after the two days He departed from there and went to Galilee. 44 For Jesus Himself testified that a prophet has no honor in his own country. 45 So when He came to Galilee, the Galileans received Him, having seen all the things He did in Jerusalem at the feast; for they also had gone to the feast.

A Nobleman's Son Healed

46 So Jesus came again to Cana of Galilee where He had made the water wine. And there was a certain [b]nobleman whose son was sick at Capernaum. 47 When he heard that Jesus had come out of Judea into Galilee, he went to Him and implored Him to come down and heal his son, for he was at the point of death. 48 Then Jesus said to him, "Unless you people see signs and wonders, you will by no means believe."

49 The nobleman said to Him, "Sir, come down before my child dies!"

50 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. 51 And as he was now going down, his servants met him and told him, saying, "Your son lives!"

52 Then he inquired of them the hour when he got better. And they said to him, "Yesterday at the

seventh hour the fever left him.” 53 So the father knew that it was at the same hour in which Jesus said to him, “Your son lives.” And he himself believed, and his whole household.

54 This again is the second sign Jesus did when He had come out of Judea into Galilee.

Context. Jesus has just left Samaria where He and His disciples saw an incredible revival of sorts. It all started with the woman at the well who was despised by her community because of her adulterous lifestyle. Jesus shows compassion and grace towards her and tells her things about her life that no one could have known unless they had been sent by God.

All of this leads her to believe that He is the Messiah. She runs back to her town and begins to share her story, and before long, people start believing as well. Jesus and His disciples then come into the town, Jesus begins teaching, and many, many more believe.

Now keep in mind - Jesus and His disciples are Jews, and this is a Samaritan town. Historically, Jews and Samaritans hated each other. You probably remember the story of the Good Samaritan, right? If so, what makes that story so powerful is that it's the Jewish man's mortal enemy - the Samaritan - who stops to help him. This juxtaposition is what makes the story so powerful. That same kind of shocking juxtaposition is happening here. Jesus and His disciples are ministering among their enemies, and a revival of sorts is breaking out.

They don't stay though do they? They're there for only a few days before Jesus makes it clear that they are going back to the region of Galilee - back to where it all started with the water into wine.

But it's different this time.

Jesus tells them plainly that a prophet is not honoured in his hometown. And interestingly, John tells us that the Galileans do welcome Him - but not because they recognize Him as the Son of God. They welcome Him because they remember the signs and wonders He performed in Jerusalem at the Passover feast.

This becomes a key theme moving forward. John is laying the groundwork for what real faith in Jesus looks like. And here's the irony: the Samaritans - the Jewish enemies - believe in Jesus because of the message He preached. But those closest to Him - His own people, His hometown - even after witnessing miracles and the supernatural, still struggle to see Him as anything more than a familiar hometown boy with extraordinary abilities.

And that right there is the contrast that John wants us to see: believing Jesus because of His word, versus believing Him only when He performs a sign. And in order for us to clearly see this contrast, He takes His disciples right back home - to the place where He is still viewed - by many - as Jesus, the carpenter's kid. And although it may seem strange for Jesus to go to a people that won't view Him for who He truly is, it was always a part of the plan right from the beginning. John already prepared us for this back in John 1:11 when he said that: 'He came to His own, and His own did not receive Him.'

Jesus, in His grace, mercy, and sovereignty, continues to offer Himself to His own - knowing that many will only accept Him if they see the signs and wonders. And that kind of faith - faith that only believes if Jesus performs the way we want Him to - is exactly what Jesus is about to confront next with the story of a desperate father and his dying son.

Jesus enters into the city area and this man approaches Him. Not just any man though, the text uses the word 'basilikos' which simply means that this was a royal official - someone high in ranks under King Herod. This man had power but his status was powerless to help his dying son.

So somehow this royal official hears that Jesus has come back into the region. He's likely heard the stories - about what happened in Cana, and about the signs and wonders that took place in Jerusalem during the Passover feast. And now, in his desperation, he goes looking for this Jesus.

But notice his intent. He doesn't come making a confession of faith. He doesn't come acknowledging Jesus as the Son of God - as Messiah. He comes because his son is dying. And when you are desperate, you reach for whatever hope you can find - and right now, this seems like his best chance.

Keep in mind the context of who this man is. He is a royal official under none other than King Herod - likely Herod Antipas - the same Herod who would later have John the Baptist arrested and ultimately executed. This man is part of a system of power that often shows hostility towards those of faith in Jesus Christ.

Yet his son is dying and he's out of options so in his limited faith, he finds Jesus and pleads with him to come to his house and heal his son. He doesn't order him like he would normally do with anyone else though - that kind of power is useless in this situation.

Notice now what Jesus says. This is key. This is everything for John.

Vs. 48b “Unless you people see signs and wonders, you will by no means believe.”

It seems to be a reaction by Jesus doesn't it? It sounds out of place and it sounds like Jesus is speaking out of frustration here. But this is not so. Jesus was simply clearly articulating the problem with many of the people in that area.

It seems to me that Jesus is testing him. The official is asking for a miracle for his dying son in an environment where people love to see miracles. But Jesus knows that whether this man's son is healed or not is only a symptom of a deeper problem with humanity, which is sin and separation from God.

So the official is desperate to see his son healed. But Jesus doesn't just heal him and then use that as a way to establish faith because that's not what biblical faith is. Hebrews teaches us that faith is the 'substance of things hoped for and the evidence of things not yet seen.' In other words, faith is trusting before the evidence is visible. Faith is believing the word before the promise is revealed. We can't put the cart ahead of the horse on this one.

And what Jesus does here is brilliant. He creates space for this man to exercise that kind of faith - by trusting His word before there is any visible proof. And when the promise is finally revealed, that faith is confirmed - not because the miracle created faith, but because the word that was spoken proved trustworthy.

Do you see what Jesus is doing here? He's creating space and opportunity for real faith to grow. Because ultimately that is the point. He's inviting this officer to see that He isn't just a man with the supernatural ability to provide food or restore health. He is the Messiah. And as the Son of God, Jesus Christ alone has the authority to save - not just from sickness, but from sin and death. Not just in this life, but in the life to come.

And look at the response of the official. He steps out in faith. Jesus tells him that his son will live - and the great act of faith here is not the healing itself, but that the man actually turns around and walks away from Jesus.

John says in verse 51 that, 'he believed the word that Jesus spoke to him' and went on his way. He leaves with nothing in his hands - only the words that Jesus has spoken. And all the while, as he makes that journey home, faith is forming in his heart. Trust is starting to taking root.

And when he finally arrives and sees his son whole and well, the faith that began with a word and was nurtured on the journey home, is now confirmed.

This is the beauty of real, true, and mature faith.

He believed the word that Jesus spoke, and that belief propelled him on a faith journey towards trust. Because trust is the point.

And I think if we were able to take a step back and look at this from Jesus perspective, what would begin to emerge is this beautiful journey of faith that starts with belief and matures into trust. Jesus isn't just healing a child here. He's teaching a man what real faith looks like.

And so we can see three closely connected realities at work: belief, faith, and trust. We all begin with belief, and the goal is for that belief to mature into trust. Faith is simply the journey between the two - it's what happens when belief is put into action.

Example: stool.

I've preached this concept before and whenever I talk about this, I like to use the example of a stool because I cannot think of another example that shows this better. Many of you have heard this example already and I will keep on using this example until I find a better one, which likely isn't going to happen!

At any rate, here is my preaching stool. The purpose of the stool is to support me when I sit on it.

Belief acknowledges that this stool is strong and that it will support my weight when I sit on it. Trust on the other hand is actually sitting on the stool. Trust makes the belief personal and says that I believe this stool is strong enough to support me so I will go ahead and sit on it.

And the journey from believing the stool to trusting the stool is called faith.

And faith is action.

Faith is the moment belief turns into action - when you step forward and begin to sit down. And trust is what happens when you finally rest your full weight on the stool because your belief is now

put into action through faith. This is exactly what happened with the official when Jesus told him that his son would be healed. He put the full weight of his trust in the words that Jesus spoke and by faith walked home to see the fulfillment of that belief.

And this is the reality for many professing Christians today. We often have no problem saying that we believe Jesus Christ died and rose again and is coming back one day. But the deeper question is this: how many of us have actually put the full weight of our trust in His promise? How many of us have surrendered ourselves to Him - not just for the afterlife, but for the here and now?

And quite honestly, for many of us that act of surrender is the walk home of the official. It's the place where faith is formed as we surrender our will to the Lords.

And notice this - that walk home wasn't random or abstract. It was strategic and planned. After all, in order to get to his destination, he had to take specific steps on the right roads and paths so as not to go off course. It was intentional.

And the truth is, we all have our own versions of that walk. Moments where belief has to turn into action in order for trust to be realized.

New Year's resolutions are really just modern day versions of that walk home - moments where belief is asking to be put into action. And for many of us, this time of year puts those moments right in front of us.

Every year around this time, people make New Year's resolutions. Lose weight. Get a better job. Be a better spouse. Be a better parent. All good things. All admirable goals. But the reason most of them don't last isn't for lack of desire - it's for lack of discipline. And discipline always requires strategy - a plan.

What's the plan to lose weight?

What's the plan to be a better spouse or parent?

What's the plan to get a better job?

And here's the thing - it's the same with following Jesus.

We say, "I want to grow closer to God."

We say, "I want my faith to deepen."

We say, "This is the year I take my walk with Jesus seriously."

All admirable. All good.

But without strategy - or a plan, it rarely lasts. Because as I've always said desire without discipline quickly fades because the flesh is weak.

Someone says, 'I'm going to start a regular devotional life this year.' What's the plan for that? What's your strategy? Morning or night? What book are you going to read? Do you get a devotional to accompany?

Someone says, 'I'm going to honour the Sabbath and be in church regularly.'

That's wonderful. But what's the plan for the mornings you don't feel like it? For the kids who don't want to go? For hockey season? For overtime pay?

Example: Calvin/lifeguarding lessons. Five consecutive Sundays in late January and February. And at the end of it, he could have his lifeguarding certificate and then he could put his resume in to get jobs for the summer.

Someone says, 'I'm going to fast this week.' I've thought about it every year when it comes to first week of January, but this is the year I actually do it.'

Great. But what's the plan when your flesh pushes back on day 2?

Someone says, 'This is the year I'm going to start giving faithfully. I've been sensing the Lord inviting me to live more generously and sacrificially - and this is the year I'm going to step into that.'

That's a beautiful step of trust.

But here's the honest question: what's the plan when unexpected expenses show up that month? Because that moment isn't a failure - it's an invitation. It's the space where faith either retreats back into belief, or moves forward into deeper trust in His provision.

And listen, I know a lot of this sounds incredibly challenging, but remember, I'm preaching to myself up here. You're just along for the ride. I am in the same boat as you. God is challenging me this year as much as he's challenging you. This is an 'us' invitation.

Because here's the truth:

Without a plan, it's hard to stick to the heart - because the flesh is weak.

So write it down.

Tell one trusted person.

This creates accountability.

That's not legalism - that's mature discipleship.

That's belief being put into action.

That's faith moving belief into trust.

And as we come to the communion table today, we're reminded of this:

Our trust doesn't rest in our plans - it rests in Jesus. He's the One who surrendered everything for us. And communion invites us, once again, to surrender our lives to Him.

Communion

1 Corinthians 11:23-29

'For I received from the Lord that which I also delivered to you: that the Lord Jesus on the same night in which He was betrayed took bread; 24 and when He had given thanks, He broke it and said, "Take, eat; this is My body which is broken for you; do this in remembrance of Me." 25 In the same manner He also took the cup after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in My blood. This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me."

26 For as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death till He comes.

Examine Yourself

27 Therefore whoever eats this bread or drinks this cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord. 28 But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of the bread and drink of the cup. 29 For he who eats and drinks in an unworthy manner eats and drinks judgment to himself, not discerning the Lord's body.'

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www.kingsviewchurch.com Sunday, January 4, 2026

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