



# One Page Sermon

By Pastor Robb McCoy

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Worship Every Sunday at 9:30 AM

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## John 4:43-54 Jesus heals a royal official's son

Jesus said, “For God so loved the world...” The world that God loved keeps expanding. Last week the world of God’s love expanded to the Samaritans. This week the love expands to include someone in King Herod’s employ. We are not sure if the man was a Gentile or Jewish, but as a royal official, he was part of the problem.

He comes to Jesus as someone who would not be trusted, but also as someone who would not need to inspire trust. He was a powerful man, connected to Herod Antipas and presumably the full weight of the worldly authority behind him. He came from Capernaum, a growing city on the trade route in Galilee. It was an important city within the territory which Herod Antipas ruled.

After spending two days in Samaria – a remarkable thing to begin with—Jesus has now returned to his home region of Galilee. He is in Cana, a small village, but one in which he had already performed one of the great signs and wonders. It is here that the royal official finds Jesus and asks him to come and heal his son.

After Jesus offers him an enigmatic response, the man replies simply, “Lord, my son is dying.” The royal official has presumably exhausted his resources in Capernaum. He has left his noble court and is now seeking help from the man his boss would one day soon help condemn. He is desperate, and is not interested in Jesus’ strange saying about seeing and believing. All he cares about in this moment is one simple face: My son is dying. Jesus, perhaps pulled back to reality and away from his esoteric question, tells the man his son lives and tells him to go home.

Then the man does something remarkable. He actually leaves. This is an incredible act of faith. He leaves. His son is dying, he is faced with a man he believes can heal him, and when this healer says, “Go home,” he just does it. He could have begged

for Jesus to come back with him. Heck, he probably could have forcibly compelled Jesus to come back with him.

Yet this man trusts. He believes even when he has yet to see. He believes in Jesus’ Word and walks away. I still marvel at this incredible act of faith. If I were in a similar situation, I’m not sure I would have had the same amount of faith.

I’m not sure I would have been able to just walk away. Go home? Are you serious? My son is dying. You need to come with me. You need to lay your hands on him. You need to prove to me that you’ve been effective. I’m not just walking away and trusting that everything will be all right.

Yet he did walk away. The son was healed. He never responded to Jesus’ enigmatic claim about belief and signs. We are left to ponder this relationship. Do we believe because of the signs or do we believe Jesus’ word? Do we believe what Jesus says or do we only believe because it seems like wherever Jesus goes the impossible becomes possible. Water becomes wine. A small lunch feeds a multitude of people. A man born blind is able to see.

Why do we believe? Because we have seen others healed? Because of the stories of miracles? Why do we trust in the words of Jesus spoken so long ago? This story invites us to wonder. It invites us to abide with Jesus a little longer. It even invites us to look back—as the man did on the road—and wonder when life with Jesus made a difference in our lives. When did a prayer or a conversation or what felt like a coincidence at the time—which one of those moments were actually moments of healing? Which of those moments were little signs and wonders that led us back to wholeness?