

THE NOBLEMAN

JOHN 4

Text: John 4:46-54

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⁴⁶ So Jesus came again into Cana of Galilee, where he made the water wine. And there was a certain nobleman, whose son was sick at Capernaum. ⁴⁷ When he heard that Jesus was come out of Judaea into Galilee, he went unto him, and besought him that he would come down, and heal his son: for he was at the point of death. ⁴⁸ Then said Jesus unto him, Except ye see signs and wonders, ye will not believe. ⁴⁹ The nobleman saith unto him, Sir, come down ere my child die. ⁵⁰ Jesus saith unto him, Go thy way; thy son liveth. And the man believed the word that Jesus had spoken unto him, and he went his way. ⁵¹ And as he was now going down, his servants met him, and told him, saying, Thy son liveth. ⁵² Then enquired he of them the hour when he began to amend. And they said unto him, Yesterday at the seventh hour the fever left him. ⁵³ So the father knew that it was at the same hour, in the which Jesus said unto him, Thy son liveth: and himself believed, and his whole house. ⁵⁴ This is again the second miracle that Jesus did, when he was come out of Judaea into Galilee.

Introduction:

I know that every man needs to possess a genuine faith in Christ for salvation. However, I want a faith that possesses me. I want to have a faith that is so strong it can hold me fast even in my darkest night of doubt and need.

That is the kind of faith the nobleman of John 4 needed. Most of us can expect to live about seventy years, according to statistics. But the statistical tables don't always work out with real life precision. For example, we expect to face the deaths of our parents someday. We don't expect however, to face the deaths of our children. The nobleman in our text did.

1. THE PLIGHT OF THE NOBLEMAN (46,47A)

John 4:46-47

⁴⁶ So Jesus came again into Cana of Galilee, where he made the water wine. And there was a certain nobleman, whose son was sick at Capernaum. ⁴⁷ When he heard that Jesus was come out of Judaea into Galilee, he went unto him, and besought him that he would come down, and heal his son: for he was at the point of death.

Here was a father with a serious problem. His son "was the point of death." As a nobleman, he had prestige and power. Without a doubt he had wealth. It may be safely assumed that the best medical attention had

already been given - yet in vain. Death is no respecter of persons; even the wealthy get sick and die.

A. The need he had

Isn't it amazing how infirmity draws people to Christ faster than prosperity does? Sometimes that is what it takes. As C.S. Lewis observed, "How hard it is turn our thoughts to God when everything is going well with us."

Innumerable people seldom think of Christ until tragedy knocks on the door. Someone has said, "Adversity is the Good Shepherd's black dog." This nobleman was brought to Jesus by trouble. The background of this man's faith in Christ was that he had lost faith in everything else. The illness of his son had tested his faith in the doctor's ability to heal his son, and in the sufficiency of his own resources to save him.

The son he dearly loved was at the point of death, and he was at the end of his resources. It was the bankruptcy of his own resources that paved the way for his faith in Christ. This man would have never experienced the power of Christ unless he had first experienced the poverty of his own soul. This man's plight was about to become the dark soil in which the flowers of faith would bloom and blossom.

B. The news he heard

Reports reaching this man brought to him hope. We are not informed how he heard; the news might have been brought by a friend or by a servant. The important thing is that he heard of Jesus.

Are people hearing of Jesus from you?

2. THE PLEA OF THE NOBLEMAN (47B-49)

John 4:47-49

⁴⁷ When he heard that Jesus was come out of Judaea into Galilee, he went unto him, and besought him that he would come down, and heal his son: for he was at the point of death. ⁴⁸ Then said Jesus unto him, Except ye see signs and wonders, ye will not believe. ⁴⁹ The nobleman saith unto him, Sir, come down ere my child die.

A. A grave request

There is a sense of urgency and seriousness in the nobleman's words. Oh, the need for urgency in our churches today. Urgency could be defined as the PRESSURE OF NECESSITY.

The nobleman made two mistakes in his plea of urgency:

1. He told Christ how to handle the need.

He attempted to inform the Lord what He ought to do, how He ought to do it, and when He ought to do it. Have you ever been guilty of instructing the Lord? Have you ever said, "Listen, Lord, for your servant speaks" instead of, "Speak, Lord, for your servant hears"?

2. He presented the need before presenting himself.

More concerned our health, our welfare, our children, our families, and our future than we are the will and glory of God.

How much better it would have been for him to simply lay himself and his problem at the feet of Christ and allow Jesus to handle it His own way.

B. A gentle rebuke

"Except ye see signs and wonders ye will not believe." What have these words to do with the nobleman and his dying boy? It has everything to do with him.

1. It is a revelation of Christ calmness.
2. It is worthy of His care to heal the boy, but it was for more needful that He should train and lead the father to faith.

3. THE PATH OF THE NOBLEMAN (50)

John 4:50

⁵⁰ *Jesus saith unto him, Go thy way; thy son liveth. And the man believed the word that Jesus had spoken unto him, and he went his way.*

All right, let us find out whether or not you will believe without seeing. You want me to come down to Capernaum. Well, I am not coming. It is not necessary for me to come. I don't have to be physically present to heal a sick child at the point of death. I just stay here and heal him. You go home. Your son lives!

A. "The man believed the word"

1. He heard, believed, obeyed, and rested on the word.
2. Had the man not believed Jesus, he would have stayed there still demanding for Jesus to come down and heal his son.

B. God's word was all the nobleman needed!

1. No need to hurry home.

Cana was only a few miles from Capernaum. He could have been home easily in four or five hours. If the healing took place at the seventh hour of the day, or

1:00 P.M., the official could have been home well before nightfall. But the man put such confidence in the Word of Jesus that he didn't return home until the next day. What great faith!

What a difference between the breathless rush to Cana and the quiet return from it.

A. The prayer which ceased

He stopped praying. Sometimes our praying becomes little more than an exercise in unbelief.

B. The peace which came

Went his way with nothing more than the word of Christ, and yet did he need anything more than that?

4. THE PROOF FOR THE NOBLEMAN (51-54)

John 4:51-54

⁵¹ And as he was now going down, his servants met him, and told him, saying, Thy son liveth. ⁵² Then enquired he of them the hour when he began to amend. And they said unto him, Yesterday at the seventh hour the fever left him. ⁵³ So the father knew that it was at the same hour, in the which Jesus said unto him, Thy son liveth: and himself believed, and his whole house. ⁵⁴ This is again the second miracle that Jesus did, when he was come out of Judaea into Galilee.

On his way home, he sees some of his servants hurrying toward him. Evidently they had news. Did his heart skip a beat as a flash of doubt surfaced in his soul? Did his heart leap within him as faith triumphant soared? What news could it be but good news? The servant meet him with the identical words of Jesus, "Thy son liveth."

Conclusion:

The nobleman began a faith that is in crisis. After meeting Jesus we observed a faith that is confident. Not long after we note a faith that is confirmed (no longer does he just believe the promise but now he believes the person). In the end we see a faith that is contagious. The nobleman trusted the word that Jesus spoke, and so should you and I.