



GROWTH GROUP WINTER 2019 – ONE ON ONE WITH JESUS

WEEK 2 – MARCH 17, 2019 - JOHN 4:43-54

GETTING TO KNOW ONE ANOTHER

1) Have you ever felt like a prophet in your own hometown? What did Jesus mean by that?

SETTING THE CONTEXT

Jesus has just spent two days in Samaria and is now on his way to Galilee. The people of Samaria had responded very positively to his message and many people had come to faith. John 4:42 tells us that the Samaritans said, “We have heard him for ourselves, and we know that this is indeed the Savior of the world.”

After this trip to Samaria Jesus goes back to Galilee. What is interesting is the response that he gets when he goes home. He does not receive the welcome that one might expect. Instead, Jesus tells his disciples that a prophet never receives honor in their hometown. This shouldn't surprise us too much since John 1:11 tells us that, “He (Jesus) came to his own, and his own people did not receive him.”

We read that the Galileans welcomed him, but this is a welcome that is based solely on the works he was doing and the miracles he had been performing. It was not a “true” welcome. They believed, but only in the miracles that he was working. They had not placed their “faith” in him. Jesus tells them that they “sign-seekers” but that their belief is not an authentic one.

Into this situation comes the royal official who probably had some connection to Herod's government. He is looking for a miracle because his son is dying. He has heard about Jesus and is hoping that Jesus will come see and see his son and heal him. It is interesting that he does not claim to have faith in Jesus or recognize any notion of sin. He simply wants his son to be healed.

The royal official continues to ask Jesus for healing and finally Jesus tells him to go back home because his son will live. The end of verse 50 says, “the man took Jesus at his word and departed.” As we discover his son was healed.

Jesus gives the royal official a gift. This healing is a gift of grace. He had told him his son would live and the royal official believed it and returned home. This royal official teaches us about having faith in Jesus and not just in the miracles. He trusted the word of Jesus and believed that Jesus would heal his son. He did not insist that Jesus come visit his son. He simply believed and began walking home.



EXPLORING THE TEXT

Read John 4:43-54

⁴³ 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, the Galileans welcomed him. They had seen all that he had done in Jerusalem at the Passover Festival, for they also had been there. ⁴⁶ 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. 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.

- 2) Why would Jesus keep going back to a place where he is not received with honor or respect? Do you think the "welcome" he received in Nazareth was genuine in light of what we read in verse 48?
- 3) Do you find yourself praying differently to God when you or your family or friends are going through a crisis? If so, what is different?
- 4) The royal official probably had some connection with Herod. He is not Jewish and he doesn't exhibit a belief in Jesus. Does it seem odd to you that Jesus would choose to heal his son? What does that teach us?
- 5) The official is persistent in his request and Jesus does answer his prayer. How do you handle it when you are persistent in prayer, but Jesus does not grant what you are praying for? What have you learned when prayers are not answered in the way you were hoping for?
- 6) Why do you think Jesus did a "long-distance healing" instead of making the journey to Capernaum? Does that teach us something?
- 7) Verse 50 says the royal official took Jesus at his word and departed. He believed that Jesus was going to heal his son. Has there been a time in your life when you could say that you experienced a "sign or wonder" from God? How often do you think about it? How has that impacted your faith?

BRINGING IT HOME

- 8) One of the issues this text presents is trusting in Jesus as a person and not just in the miracles that he can do. How do we do that? How can we move from trusting in "what" we want Jesus to do for us to actually trusting in "who" Jesus is?