

Faith is More Than Just Belief

Intro:

1. The Philippian Jailer was told to **believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved — you and your household.** - Act 16:31.
 - a. Is this “belief”, as we know it today, or is there more to it?
 - b. **The Great Encyclopedia Dictionary** = to accept as true or real, acceptance of the truth or reality of anything without certain proof.
2. Is this faith God wants you to have simply the acceptance of stuff?
 - a. **Example:** I believe God exists up there someplace.
 - b. **Example:** Jesus died on the cross for us & He was resurrected from the dead.
3. What is it about belief that makes it the faith God wants you to have?

John 4:46-54

I. v46-49 - Belief was Expressed in What Lord Jesus Could Do

A. Who was this person?

1. **Royal Official** (ἦν τις βασιλικός) = lit. a person associated with a king. He was probably from King Herod's court.
2. Although similar, it is probably a different event from the healing of the Centurion's servant found in **Matt 8:5-13 & Lk 7:1-10.**

B. What did he need?

1. The Lord's ability as a miracle worker.
2. **v46** - His son was badly **sick** (ἀσθενέω) = feeble, too weak to get out of bed.
3. **v47** - His son was close to death.
4. He really believed the Lord could heal his son!

C. The Lord was not happy with this type of belief alone! He said **Unless you people see miraculous signs and wonders you will never believe.** - v48.

1. The faith God is looking for is more than simply believing some truths about the Lord! **Jn 2:23-25 - Now while he was in Jerusalem at the Passover Feast, many people saw the miraculous signs he was doing and believed in his name. But Jesus would not entrust himself to them, for he knew all men. He did not need man's testimony about man, for he knew what was in a man.**
2. In order to have a personal relationship with the Lord, or anyone else, more than just intellectual belief is necessary!

II. v50-53 - Belief was Expressed in What Lord Jesus Said

A. Jesus said, **“You may go. Your son will live.” The man took Jesus at his word and departed.** - v50.

1. This person believed that if Jesus said it - that was good enough!
2. **v51-53** - But this was not just a blind faith - he still asked his servants to confirm it!

B. How do you begin developing the faith God is looking for?

1. Hear & study the word of God. **Rom 10:17 - Consequently, faith comes from hearing the message, and the message is heard through the word of Christ.**
2. Accept & obey God's word. **Jam 1:22 - Do not merely listen to the word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says.**
3. Develop the conviction that the word of God is true without needing certainty. **Heb 11:1 - Now faith is being sure of what we hope for and certain of what we do not see.**
4. Again - in order to have a personal relationship with the Lord, or anyone else, more than just intellectual belief is necessary!

III. Faith is a Commitment to Who Lord Jesus Really Is!

A. Who is Lord Jesus - really?

1. Jesus asked His disciples, **Who do people say the Son of Man is? - Matt 16:13**
2. Peter responded with the correct answer, **You are the Christ, the Son of the living God. - Matt 16:16.**

B. What were the implications of the servants' answer when the royal official asked about the timing of this healing? - v52-53

1. Capernaum was about 20 miles from Cana - a good day's journey when walking.
 - a. So the healing was long distance. Jesus didn't have to be present for it to happen.
 - b. **God is omnipresent - everywhere at the same time!**
2. The healing was instantaneous. **God is omnipotent - all powerful!**
3. He realized that only God could do these things!
4. This statement means that Jesus was God Himself - revealed in human terms that you & I could understand & appreciate!
 - a. Christmas celebrates this fact - **the Incarnation.**
 - b. It's upon the Good Confession, **Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the Living God (Matt 16:16) & Jesus is Lord of your life (Rom 10:9)** that you can be baptized!

C. So - the faith God is looking for establishes a relationship with the Lord as a person!

1. Does this mean your faith has to reach a certain maturity before the Lord will take you to heaven?
 - a. No. The thief on the cross simply called out in desperation! (**Lk 23:42-43**)
 - b. God takes you right where your faith is!
 - c. But He wants to begin molding you into His image! (**Col 3:9-10**)
 - d. Your life is in the process of faith development!
2. So - the questions you should be asking yourself become:
 - a. Have you come to know the Lord through the study of His word?
 - b. Have you come to know the Lord through living His lifestyle in person?
 - c. Have you come to trust the Lord with your life?