

BIBLE LIFE MESSAGES

Faith is More Than Just Belief

John 4:46-54

¹ The Philippian Jailor was told to ² believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved - you and your household. ¹ Is this "belief" as we know it today or is there more to it? ³ The Great Encyclopedia Dictionary defines "belief", "to accept as true or real, acceptance of the truth or reality of anything without certain proof".

Is this faith God wants you to have simply the acceptance of stuff? For example: "I believe God exists up there someplace." "I believe Jesus died on a cross for us and He was resurrected from the dead." ⁴ What is it about belief that makes it the faith God wants you to have?

Faith is more than just belief. This scripture from John, Chapter 4, verses 46 through 54 will help you to understand this. ⁵

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. When

¹ Acts 16:31.

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. “Unless you people see miraculous signs and wonders,” Jesus told him, “you will never believe.” The royal official said, “Sir, come down before my child dies.” Jesus replied, “You may go. Your son will live.” The man took Jesus at his word and departed. ² ₆

While he was still on the way, his servants met him with the news that his boy was living. When he inquired as to the time when his son got better, they said to him, “The fever left him yesterday at the seventh hour.” Then the father realized that this was the exact time at which Jesus had said to him, “Your son will live.” So he and all his household believed. This was the second miraculous sign that Jesus performed, having come from Judea to Galilee. ³

The first thing this passage tells us about this person's belief is in verse 46 through 49. ₇

² v46-50.

³ v51-54.

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

Belief was expressed in what Lord Jesus could do. ⁸

So, who was this person? ⁹ Verse 46 tells us he was a "royal official" ⁴, literally, "a person associated with a king". He was probably from King Herod's court. ¹⁰ Although similar, this is likely not the same events found in Matthew, Chapter 8, verses 5 through 13, or Luke, Chapter 7, verses 1 through 10. ¹¹

What did he need? ¹² He needed the Lord's ability as a miracle worker. ¹³ In verse 46 ⁵ his son was badly "sick" ⁶. This word means he was "feeble, too weak to get out of bed". ¹⁴ Verse 47 ⁷ describes that he was even close to death. This royal official really believed the Lord could heal his son! ¹⁵

⁴ ἦν τις βασιλικὸς.

⁵ v46 - And there was a certain royal official whose son lay sick at Capernaum.

⁶ ἀσθενέω.

⁷ v47 - 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.

But, the Lord was not happy with this type of belief alone. Verse 48 continues, **Unless you people see miraculous signs and wonders you will never believe.** You could imagine Jesus rolling His eyes as He said this. ¹⁶

The faith God is looking for is more than simply believing some truths about the Lord. In John, Chapter 2, verses 23 through 25, we read, **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.** ¹⁷ In order to have a personal relationship with the Lord, or anyone else, more than just intellectual belief is necessary!

The next thing the Bible tells us about this person's belief is in verses 50 through 53. ¹⁸

II. Belief was Expressed in What Lord Jesus Said - v50-23

Belief was expressed in what Lord Jesus said. ¹⁹ So, what did He say? We find it in verse 50, **“You may go. Your son will live.”** The man took Jesus at his word and departed. ²⁰ This person believed that if Jesus said it that was good enough! ²¹ But this was not just blind faith. In verses 51 through 53 ⁸ he still asked his servants to confirm it! ²²

How do you begin developing the faith God is looking for? ²³ First you hear and study the word of God. Romans, Chapter 10, verse 17, **Consequently, faith comes from hearing the message, and the message is heard through the word of Christ.** ²⁴ You, then, accept and obey it. James, Chapter 1, verse 22, **Do not merely listen to the word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what**

⁸ v51-53 - While he was still on the way, his servants met him with the news that his boy was living. When he inquired as to the time when his son got better, they said to him, “The fever left him yesterday at the seventh hour.” Then the father realized that this was the exact time at which Jesus had said to him, “Your son will live.” So he and all his household believed.

it says. ²⁵ Then, develop the conviction that the word of God is true without needing certainty. Hebrews, Chapter 11, verse 1, **Now faith is being sure of what we hope for and certain of what we do not see.** Again, to have a personal relationship with the Lord, or anyone else, more than just intellectual belief is necessary!

So, what is faith that establishes a personal relationship to God; one in which He is well pleased?

26

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

Faith is a commitment to who Lord Jesus really is! ²⁷ Who is the Lord Jesus really? ²⁸ Jesus asked His disciples, **Who do people say the Son of Man is?** ⁹ Peter responded with the correct answer ²⁹, **You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.** ¹⁰ ³⁰

⁹ Matthew 16:13.

¹⁰ Matthew 16:16.

Now notice verses 52 and 53, When he inquired as to the time when his son got better, they said to him, “The fever left him yesterday at the seventh hour.” Then the father realized that this was the exact time at which Jesus had said to him, “Your son will live.” What were the implications of the servants' answer when the royal official asked about the timing of this healing?

Capernaum was about twenty miles from Cana where this healing took place. It was a good day journey when walking. ³¹ So this healing was long distance. Jesus didn't have to be present for it to happen! God is omnipresent - everywhere at the same time! ³²

This healing was also instantaneous. God is omnipotent - all powerful! Only God can do these things! ³³

The servants' answer means that Jesus was God Himself! God revealed in human terms that you and I could understand and appreciate. ³⁴

Christmas celebrates this fact. The incarnation is a reality! Mary was an actual virgin who conceived Jesus by the Holy Spirit, not by husband Joseph! Jesus was, literally, the Son of God! ³⁵

It's upon the Good Confession, **Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the Living God ¹¹ and **Jesus is Lord ¹²** of your life, that you can be baptized! ³⁶ So, the faith God is looking for establishes a relationship with the Lord as a person! ³⁷**

Does this mean your faith has to reach a certain maturity before the Lord will take you to heaven? ³⁸ No! The thief on the cross simply cried out in desperation! ¹³ God takes you right where your faith is. ³⁹

But He does want to begin molding you into His image! Notice Colossians, Chapter 3, verses 9 and 10, **You have taken off your old self with its practices and**

¹¹ Matthew 16:16.

¹² Romans 10:9.

¹³ Luke 23:42-43 - “Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom.” Jesus answered him, “I tell you the truth, today you will be with me in paradise.”

have put on the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge in the image of its Creator. Your faith is in the process of faith development! ⁴⁰

So the questions you should be asking yourself become these. ⁴¹ Have you come to know the Lord through the study of His word? ⁴² Have you come to know the Lord through living His lifestyle in person? ⁴³ Have you come to trust the Lord with your life?

Faith is more than just an intellectual belief. It's a commitment!

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