

**“You Will Live”**

Today we are looking at the story of the healing of the royal official’s son. It is the second miraculous sign in the gospel of John.

Signs are very important to us. They show us the way. Where would we be without signs? If we did not have them we would have chaos; we would not know what to do.

Imagine if we did not have signs on our streets. We might not know what direction to go in, or about the sharp curve that lay ahead, or how fast or slow we should go. Without signs cars would be crashing into each other all the time.

Signs show us the way; they point us in the right direction and they keep us safe.

For John signs function in the same way. They are pointers to Jesus. He is “the way, the truth, and the life.” (Jn. 14:6)

There are eight major signs in this gospel that are meant to lead us to Christ. This story is the second miraculous sign in John. The first was when Jesus turned the water into wine in Cana of Galilee.

The story we are looking at today also occurs in Cana of Galilee. John’s gospel records Jesus ministering a lot in this area because he found the people to be more receptive to his ministry there.

Anytime Jesus was in Judea (the region where he was born) he was always getting into trouble or running into some kind of opposition, but in Galilee, according to John, the people were more receptive.

It always seems to be like that. Sometimes the hardest people to convince are our friends and family, or the people in our own hometown. Perhaps it is because they see all of our faults, or maybe it’s because “familiarity breeds contempt.”

Jesus, though he had no faults, certainly found this to be the case. “He came to his own, but his own received him not.” (Jn.1:11) That is why John tells us that Jesus left for Galilee, because “a prophet is **without** honor in his own hometown.”

So Jesus goes to Galilee for the second time and while he is in the little town of Cana he gets a visit from an unexpected guest.

The man is a royal official for King Herod, an unlikely candidate to come to Jesus for help. He was unlikely for a couple of reasons.

First, to work for Herod was to in essence, work for the Roman Empire- the occupying force of all Israel at that time. Because of this man's job he would have been despised by the average Jew. He, a Jew himself, would have been viewed as a traitor.

Second, both King Herod and Rome would later crucify Jesus. Herod would want him crucified because the Jews felt like he was usurping the Law of Moses and Rome would put him to death because his teaching was disturbing the peace in the empire.

So with all of this stuff in his background this man he comes to Jesus for help. His son was deathly sick and he had heard about the miracles that Jesus had been performing.

### **The Grace of Jesus Christ**

Jesus should not have helped this man. This Royal Official represented the forces that would later put him to death. But Jesus was not an "eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth" kind of guy, or a "you scratch my back and I will scratch your back" kind of person.

No, Jesus was a "cheek turner." And he came to save sinners, especially those who would do him harm. "Father forgive them for they know not what they are doing." (Lk. 23:34) That is what Jesus prayed for those who had crucified him.

So the first thing I would have you notice in the text this morning is the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ in dealing with this man.

This man was a sinner, a despised sinner by many, much like the Samaritan woman, and he was someone who could have easily been viewed as an enemy of Christ. Yet Jesus extended the mercy and grace of God to him when he healed his son. The point here is that Jesus came to save sinners. Our God is merciful and he extends his mercy to you, no matter what your condition, through his Son, Jesus Christ.

Now I want us to spend a few minutes looking at this man and his situation.

### **The Father's Despondent Situation**

I would describe his situation as despondent, or desperate. His son is close to death. He's tried everything and he has nowhere else to turn for help.

He has heard of Jesus, yet he knows that Jesus is not looked upon favorably by King Herod. He works for Herod so he knows that if he goes to him he could get into trouble. He takes the chance any way. He hurries he doesn't have much time. His son is dying. I can see him racing on his horse the twenty miles that lay between Capernaum and Cana in Galilee.

When he gets to Jesus he **begs** him to heal his son. He is desperate. He needs an answer **now**.

Jesus replies to the crowd around him, "You people wont believe unless you see miraculous signs." (v.43)

The Royal official said that is of no concern to me! “Sir, come down here before my son dies” (v.49)

So we see the desperate urgency of the father’s situation in the text. He has nowhere else to turn to but to Christ, which is, in essence, to turn to God.

### **The Father’s Step of Faith**

Let us now consider this man’s faith.

After the royal official had to told Jesus to come, Jesus replied, “You may go. Your son will live.”

That is probably not the answer this man wanted to hear. He wanted Jesus to come back with him to Capernaum. Yet Jesus said, “Go. Your son **will** live.”

Then the scriptures tell us something remarkable. “The man **took** Jesus at his word and he departed.” (v.50)

This royal official **exercised** his faith. He took Jesus at his word and he went.

That’s all he had to go on. He had Christ’s word (nothing more) and he **went**. He raced back to his home in Capernaum and while on his way there he was met by some of his servants and they told him that his son was well.

When the Royal Official inquired about the details he found out that his son began to get better at about the same time that Jesus had told him that he would live.(v. 5-53)

### **The Father and His Families Belief in the Savior**

Let us now look at the most remarkable thing in this text.

The most remarkable thing is not the desperate situation that this man faced, or the fact that the he trusted Jesus to heal his son, the most remarkable thing is that this man and his whole household came to believe in Christ as Savior. (v.53)

As I stated at the beginning of the message the whole purpose of the miraculous signs is to point us to Jesus. They are meant to lead us to faith in Christ. The miracles and healings are hugely important. I do not want to discount that. God loves everything about us and when we are physically broken God can bring restoration and healing. But as important and wonderful as that is, it is not the most important thing, nor is it the greatest thing.

The greatest miracle is the miracle of salvation. When you read a story like this the physical miracle should not make your jaw drop like the spiritual miracle. The miracle of salvation is what should amaze us.

In John's gospel he is constantly talking about how the world is a dark place, that most people reject Christ, and that the dead human heart needs to be "born again."

Spiritual rebirth is something that a person can not accomplish in his own strength. We can not save ourselves and we can not be born again apart from the work of the Holy Spirit in our lives.

So the greatest miracle in the story is the miracle of salvation. We are dead in our sins, yet by the grace of God the Father saves us in Jesus the Son through the gift of faith, wrought by the Holy Spirit. This is the greatest miracle because we do not deserve it and because it is the only one that reconciles us to God.

If this man's son was only healed, as good as that would be, what good would it be to him if he were not reconciled to God through the Savior? He was still going to die one day and when his day came he would die a lost man. Without his trust in the Savior he would repudiate the grace of God that had been given to him and he would receive the wage for his sin. Yet the text tells us that the whole family came to believe in Jesus. That's the greatest miracle because it is the one that gives us life with God, both in the here and now and throughout eternity at our deaths.

### **Application of the Text**

Let us now consider how this text might apply to our situation in life.

Today, what desperate situation do you bring to this place? What thing is going on in your life where you feel like that if something doesn't happen quickly, if something doesn't change soon, you will sink? You will go down. You will be defeated. Your world will fall apart.

What is going on in your life where you really need God to come through for you in a "big time" way?

Friend, I want to encourage you to bring your problem, whatever it is, to Jesus Christ this morning. Run to Jesus in your desperation and trust in him to fix your problems. Jesus can save you in the midst of your storm.

Do what the royal official did. Take Jesus at his word. That's all he wants. Trust him.

Jesus said in the gospel of Matthew that "if you have the faith of a mustard seed you can move mountains."

Perhaps God is testing you, through your desperate situation, by trying to teach you to grow through the exercise of your faith. All God wants you to do is to give him just a little bit, to take him at his word, so that He can go to work on your behalf.

What I have found to be true in my own life is the same thing that was true in the life of the Royal official.

I have faced situations before where I have been desperate. “Wigging out” because I felt like time was running out on me. It was “do or die situation” and then boom, in the last second, God comes through.

There is a lyric in a Newsboys song that talks about being found in the shallow grave and then in the “nick of time” God comes through to save us. Today will you believe God to come through for you in “the nick of time” whatever situation you may face?

Finally, I offer this word of exhortation.

I am particularly drawn to v. 50 of the text where Jesus told the man “Your son will live.”

I invite you to make those words your own. That’s why I entitled the message “You will live.”

My friend, if you trust in Christ you will live.

You will live in the here and now. Jesus said, “The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy, but I have come that you may have life and have it to the full.” (Jn. 10:10)

And you will live throughout eternity. Hear David’s prayer from our Psalm. “You will not abandon me to the grave, O’ God, nor will you let your holy one see decay.” (Ps. 16:10)

What I am saying to you is that if you are in Christ, if I am in Christ, it is going to be **ok**. You **will** live.

Brothers and sisters in Jesus Christ, we are not our own.

- We belong, body and soul, in life and in death, not to ourselves, but to our faithful Savior Jesus Christ, who at the cost of his own blood has set us free from the power of sin and the tyranny of the devil. Not one hair shall fall from our heads apart from the will of our Father in heaven. All things work together for the good of us and because we belong to Christ we can be sure that we will live with God, both now and throughout eternity. (Heidelberg Catechism Q.1)

Amen.