

INTRO

- Have you ever experienced or witnessed a miracle?

This series focuses on the 7 miracles John records as signs pointing people to faith in Jesus.

READ

John 4:46-54

Qu: what stands out from the text?

REFLECT & RESPOND

In our Western culture, we place a lot of faith in rationality, science and technology, often looking to ourselves as humans to be the saviours of our world's problems. Yet, for all the tremendous benefit they bring, the state of our world testifies that sometimes problems are beyond our fixing.

In this encounter with Jesus, we see the progression of the official's faith as he encounters his own hopeless situation. His journey highlights 3 progressive tensions and tests of growing faith we all experience.

1. Test of LONGING: desperation vs apathy

Despite his status, wealth and access to resources, this official's desperate need drove him to Jesus. Desperation always drives us somewhere. Sometimes, we are more apathetic to the things of God and only in desperation or crisis really pursue him. But we can and must cultivate longing for God way before the crisis.

Qu: how would you rate your longing/desperation for God? Do you want that to change? How?

2. Test of LIVING: word vs sign

After asking Jesus to heal his son, Jesus answered his request but not in the way he asked. Jesus wasn't going to go with him and physically perform the miracle. His word would

be enough. But would Jesus' word be enough for the official? "The man **believed the word** that Jesus spoke to him and **went** on his way" v50.

Qu: when it comes to activating your faith based on scripture, what has been helpful and/or hard?

3. Test of LOOKING: Person vs Power

We may come to Jesus wanting something from him, or be in a desperate situation, and that's okay. But ultimately, true faith in Jesus is to want Him, not just his power or what he can do for us. And that's what happened with the official: he and his household came to trust in Jesus (v53).

Faith in Jesus is not a formula, a certain belief, or even prayer we pray. It is an ever-growing trust in Jesus, which leads to confidence in committing our lives more fully to him—that's a relationship in which we experience LIFE in his name.

Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book; but **these are written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have LIFE in his name.** (Jn 20:30-31)

Qu: Share some of your desire/goals for 2023 as it pertains to your growth in faith, ministry and relationship with Jesus.

RESPOND & PRAY

- Spend time praying in response to the final question.
- Pray for greater hunger and urgency to see God move in and through our lives to the world around us in 2023.