

The Book of John - 26

Introduction: As we move into **verses 46-54**, we will be finishing out the last of the witnesses according to our general outline. We will be moving to a section in John where we will see **the coming rejection**.

III. The Coming Rejection of the Word 5-6:71

At the end of this chapter, chapter 4, John gives us the **final testimony** of the noblemen. We begin with this account in **verse 45**. The Bible states that the Lord arrived in Galilee, and the Galileans received Him.

John 4:45 *“45 Then when he was come into Galilee, the Galilaeans received him, **having seen all the things that he did at Jerusalem at the feast: for they also went unto the feast.**”*

The Word of God says **they had seen** what He had done at the feast. This is a reference to **John 2:23**.

John 2:23 tells us, *“23 Now when he was in Jerusalem at the passover, in the feast day, many believed in his name, when they saw the miracles which he did.”*

It was in that chapter that the Lord gives the first allusion to His resurrection. He states in **John 2:19**, *“19 Jesus answered and said unto them, Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up.”*

One expositor stated, “A man can never be led to believe in Christ *until* he is receptive to Christ. He *must be willing* to listen to the message of Christ.”¹ What does that mean for you and me? —Someone must be receptive to Christ.

I have been challenged recently as I study the messages to the churches in the book of Revelation. In the opening three chapters of Revelation, the Lord Jesus Christ gives John some specific messages for **seven churches**. The Lord shows in this vision and message, which we have recorded in God’s Word, that **He rules in the midst of His local churches**. He observes and is watching and taking note of all that goes on in His local assemblies. He further holds the messengers—I believe the pastors of those churches in His hand. These local assemblies are represented by candlesticks...intending, among other things, **to represent the influence that we are to have as a local church... we are to be light in this world**.

¹ Leadership Ministries Worldwide, *The Gospel according to John, The Preacher’s Outline & Sermon Bible* (Chattanooga, TN: Leadership Ministries Worldwide, 2004), 98.

It reminds us of the Word of the Lord in **Matthew 5:14–16**: “14 Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid. 15 Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house. 16 Let your light so shine before men, that **they may see your good works**, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.”

Sadly, as is recounted for the church of Ephesus, because Jesus is sovereign because this is His church, He can and will remove the lampstand of those local churches that do not heed His warning.

The Bible tells us in **Revelation 2:5**, “5 Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works; **or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick** out of his place, except thou repent.”



It is evident that these Galileans, **at this point, were willing to listen**. As the Gospel record of John progresses, we will see that the people, by and large, will become increasingly unwilling to listen. Another valid point that we can make here is **that it does matter how we live day to day and moment to moment**. You will notice that these Galileans **had witnessed** what the Lord had done at the feast. More to the point, unlike our omniscient Lord, **we never know who is watching us** as we go through our day-to-day lives.

People witness our manner of life.

People observe the way we speak.

People certainly **notice how it is that we treat one another**.

Notice further what the Bible testifies by way of introduction in **verse 46**.

John 4:46 “46 So Jesus came again into Cana of Galilee, where he made the water wine. And there was a certain nobleman, whose son was sick at Capernaum.”

We see the foundational connection between this passage and the wonderful truth that the Lord taught in **36-40**: that **our labors will have a profound effect on the future**. In **verse 46**, John first names the location where the Lord went, Cana of Galilee. The Bible tells us there was a certain nobleman whose son was sick. The word that is used here, translated as noblemen, is interesting. It is the word ‘βασιλικός’ Basilikos, which means royal or royal official—or petty king. In our text, I want you to understand that this nobleman was connected to the royal court, perhaps of Herod Antipas.

In His short 3 1/2 years, the Lord reached **all kinds of people**. We can see other examples of certain people in the high ranks of society in the Scriptures.

For instance, in **Luke 8:3**, *“3 And Joanna **the wife of Chuza Herod’s steward**, and Susanna, and many others, which ministered unto him of their substance.”*

Acts 13:1 *“1 Now there were in the church that was at Antioch certain prophets and teachers; as Barnabas, and Simeon that was called Niger, and Lucius of Cyrene, and **Manaen, which had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch, and Saul.**”*

This emphasizes the *whosoever* call of the Gospel. The Lord was not a respecter of persons. Though living at the top of the social ladder, the noblemen had needs that **the world could not meet**. Further, He was subject to the infirmity of our fallen state. One commentator stated this, “Eventually, the severe needs arising from accident, illness, disease, suffering, and death strike everyone. No one is exempt. One may be an official in government or even the king himself—it does not matter. The day eventually comes when every man needs help. The severe disasters of life are beyond any man’s control.”

Not only did **this nobleman have a need he could not meet**, but **verse 47** tells us something important.

John 4:47: *“47 When **he heard** that Jesus was come out of Judaea into Galilee, **he went unto him**, and besought him that he would come down, and heal his son: for he was at the point of death.”*

I wonder if the world sees you as the Christian to go to in their time of difficulty. The healing of the Noblemen’s son in this passage shows that **Salvation is by grace through faith**. How do we see faith exhibited in this passage?

We see from the beginning a faith that the Lord challenges in this man’s life to be purified.

1 Peter 1:7 tells us *“7 That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ.”*

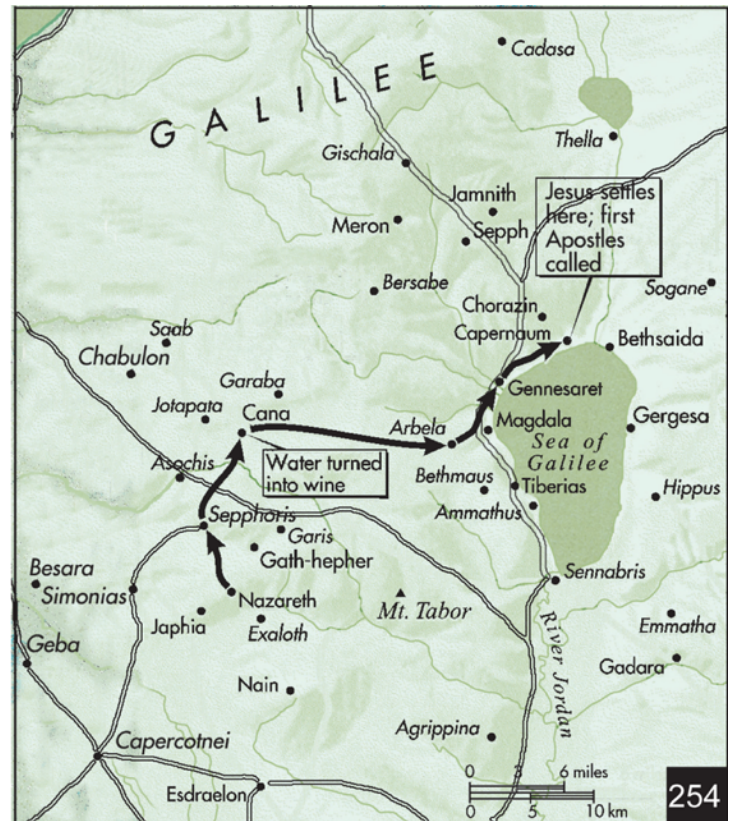
Based on the text, this man's faith was borne out of a **terrific need**. The most difficult people to reach in all the world, are those who believe they have no need. At first, this man's faith was based on the **testimony of others**. The Bible tells us, "*he heard that Jesus was come out of Judaea into Galilee*" (**Verse 47**). In that same verse we see that **He acted upon that message**.

To get a better understanding of this. Notice what the Bible tells us in **verse 46**. "*And there was a certain nobleman, whose son was sick at Capernaum.*"

At the beginning of that verse, the Bible tells us that Jesus had come into Cana. When we get down to **verses 51-52**, we realize, without even looking at a map, that this nobleman had to travel a distance to make his request to the Lord. This action of faith and request garners a response from the Lord. Notice what the Bible tells us then in verse 48.

John 4:48: "*48 Then said Jesus unto him, Except ye see signs and wonders, ye will not believe.*"

These words from the Lord are meant to **try this man's faith**. This man, as well as the crowd of people, needed to do the same. Are you willing to take God at His Word?



This is where the man now exercises **persistence** in His faith. Again, you and I should be grateful that God works **in our lives to try the validity of our faith**.

He stated in response to the Lord in **verse 49**, "*...Sir, come down ere my child die.*"

This is often presented in the Scriptures, a **progression of faith** in the individual first hearing and **then persisting**.

Biblical Examples of Persistent Faith:

The woman with the issue of blood. (**Matthew 9**)

The paralytic man who was carried by others. (**Mark 2**)

Zacchaeus climbing a tree. (**Luke 19**)

Blind Bartimaeus in **Mark 10**.

The woman of Canaan whose daughter was vexed with a devil. **Matthew 15**

You will remember that, similar to this account, the Lord had made a statement that to most would seem like a flat denial to help. (**Matthew 15:24**) But she persisted (**Matthew 15:25-27**) and worshipped the Lord, and the Lord consequently made the woman's daughter whole. Next, we see a challenge for this man to have a **deeper faith**. (We might describe it as a faith that is obedient, a faith that trusts in solely the words of the Lord.)

After this impassioned plea for his son, the Lord states, “*50 Jesus saith unto him, Go thy way; thy son liveth. And the man believed the word that Jesus had spoken unto him, and he went his way.*” (**John 4:50**)

We see that **this man’s faith was evidenced by His obedience**. We do not see any objection to the Lord’s statement, but rather the Lord gave a command, “*Go thy way...*” and the Bible says, “*...he went his way.*” (**vs. 50**) Lastly, there is a **confirmation** of this man’s faith.

The Bible says in **John 4:51**, “*51 And as he was now going down, his servants met him, and told him, saying, Thy son liveth.*”

I like what one theologian said, “No honest attempt at faith is ever a mistake.” Of course, the object of our faith is the Lord Jesus Christ, just as it is in this passage.

Notice in **verses 52 and 53**.

John 4:52–53 “*52 Then inquired he of them the hour when he began to amend. And they said unto him, Yesterday at the seventh hour the fever left him. 53 So the father knew that it was at the same hour, in the which Jesus said unto him, Thy son liveth: and himself believed, and his whole house.*”

Charles Spurgeon said this concerning this man’s faith. “After the inquiry, his faith was confirmed by each detail. Strengthened by faith and experience, he believes in Jesus in the fullest sense. What follows is natural; his family also believes.”

As we close out this chapter, we see the comment in **John 4:54**: “*54 This is again the second miracle that Jesus did, when he was come out of Judaea into Galilee.*”