

ENCOUNTER JESUS #9: John 4:43-54 WHEN THE ONES YOU LOVE ARE SUFFERING

Things rise & fall – economies, bank accounts, heroes sometimes our faith

The battle of faith is natural for the Christian, high pts and low pts. Our faith can be challenged as Satan scatters seeds of whispered doubts.

- **BIGGEST FAITH ISSUE IN TODAY'S CHURCH:** not the normal struggle, attack enemy. **WHAT HAVE YOU DONE FOR ME LATELY KIND OF FAITH**
 - o Steady stream of consumer messages – us in the driver seat/God celestial Santa Claus – veritable vending machine – built to do our bidding.

The faith that only lasts as long as the momentum created by the latest miracle.

MP: Real faith matures beyond being miracle dependent when it's anchored once and for all in the words of Christ and His gospel.

- messy story that creates a lot of questions

TAKE A BREAK FROM YOURSELF AND BRING OTHERS TO JESUS

THE MAN TOOK A RISK: royal official, on Herod's payroll –influence/stature – WISE ENOUGH TO HUMBLE HIMSELF – SON WAS IN NEED (**WHAT SHOULD NEED DO???**)

You're not too sophisticated to go to Jesus. **How many pple held back won't humble.**

- **Power Intercession – not just for your needs/others**
 - o **Intercession: holding up the other side of a burden so it's bearable.**

Wandering children, healing, strength in suffering, hope pain, courage fear, salvation
Instead of toiling and fixing and frustrating and complaining, start with praying. Bring people to Jesus, especially your loved ones.

James 5:16 Therefore, confess your sins to one another and pray for one another, that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous person has great power as it is working.

You can do more than pray after you have prayed but you cannot do more than pray until you have prayed. S.D. Gordon

- NOT JUST PRAYER – PEOPLE NEED THE LORD (**BOLDLY DIRECT THEM**)

RESIST MIRACLE DEPENDENT FAITH AND ANCHOR YOURSELF TO THE GOSPEL

Well Received by the Galileans – MIRACLE WORKER – MISSING THE POINT - herod

- YOU PEOPLE: You is plural – PEOPLE – Water>Wine – SIGNS JERUSALEM

MIRACLE JUNKIES: THE SHOW – AN EVENT – EMOTIONAL HIGH (**manufactured**)

- **Miracle Based Faith:** Not really faith – tree blowing in the wind - HOLD GOD HOSTAGE never anchored in his love – transactional relationship with God – failed faith when **MIRACLE DOESN'T HAPPEN**

abandoned faith because God didn't answer prayer. **TV STATION / STEVE**

ARGUE: book is built on signs so signs matter? Signs aren't the object of our faith. They lead us to Jesus. He is the object of our faith, the ultimate sign of our faith resurrection

- o Signs/Wonders/Miracles – point us to the CROSS AND THE RESURRECT

1 Corinthians 1:22 For Jews demand signs and Greeks seek wisdom, ²³ but we preach Christ crucified, a stumbling block to Jews and folly to Gentiles.

LIVE WITH A SENSE OF URGENCY

URGENT: I don't know about any of this my son just needs to be healed

- Urgency should drive us to Jesus. There's no URGENCY – prayer meetings cap.
 - o 9/11 - Great Recession: 2008 – prayer meeting 300-400ppl
 - o BOXING – ROUND ENDS – bell signifies 30 s left – FLURRY (end times)

Where's urgency – be with God's people, pray ppl in need, fast, invest kingdom

A.W. Tozer The complacency of Christians is the scandal of Christianity.

- Christ Moved Urgency of Man's Need....

WAYWARD NATION: hold truths **self-evident**? Gone days - gender based in preference not biology, schools focus advancing agendas not educating, marriage has been redefined, advancing is based on equality of outcome not performance

- o **HUMANITY IS SPINNING OUT OF CONTROL**

Sign #2: didn't need to be present – power transcends Space and Time

LET CHRIST'S WORD BE ENOUGH

Belief based on Jesus' word – alone – NO EVIDENCE NECESSARY WORD ENOUGH

John 6:68 Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life and we have believed, and have come to know, that you are the Holy One of God.

REAL MIRACLE: Whole house believed – in JESUS

- The purpose of answered prayer is always to lead people closer to JESUS

Go to the one who can really do something about it.

While the anchor of your faith is the gospel, answered prayer confirms your communion with God, your alignment with His Kingdom, and adds joy to your life.

You don't need miracles to believe, but they certainly feel good.