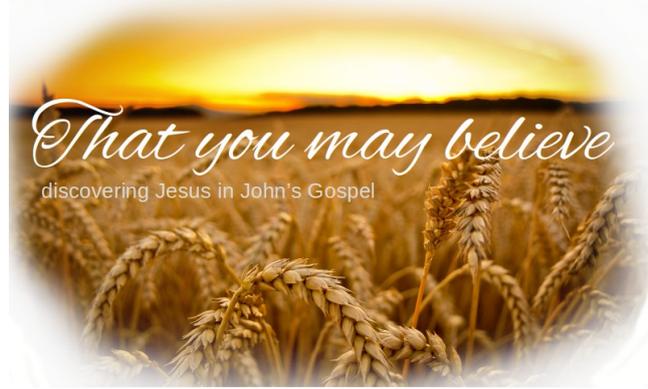


Week 3: Living as if...



“God does not give us everything we want, but He does fulfil His promises, leading us along the best and straightest paths to Himself.” Dietrich Bonhoeffer

There is a danger when you hear the gospel stories of Jesus performing another miracle, healing another sick person, feeding another several thousand people. It gets a bit, normal. After all it is what Jesus does, right? Actually, No. Jesus is not the Son of God because he can change water into wine or feed 5000 people or heal people with a touch of his hand. All of those miracles have significance, but they are just signs that point to something else. And that is what we need to see.

We are back in Cana, the place where we saw the first sign, but the circumstances have changed. There are lots of contrasts this week.

Read John 4:45-54

1. What has changed since the wedding in John 2:1-11?
2. What was it that caused the royal official to go looking for Jesus?
3. How did Jesus respond (v.48)?
4. How does that contrast with John's words in 20:31? Who is right and why?
5. If we treat the official's request as a prayer,
 - What did he ask for?
 - What did he hope for?
 - In his mind what were the options?
6. Did Jesus answer his prayer?
7. What do you imagine the official was thinking as he returned home?

Remember the story of Blondin? You can believe he could tightrope walk across the Niagara Falls pushing someone in a wheel barrow. It's a bit different if you are the person in the wheel barrow. There is a big difference between belief and trust.

The point of this sign is not that Jesus can perform healing miracles at a distance, or even that he has the whole world in his hands, as the old song goes. The official left, not knowing if anything had changed. All he had to go on was what he had heard about Jesus and what Jesus had said. So, at what point did the official believe in Jesus?

Deeper In

If we compare the request of the royal official with the prayers that we ask Jesus to help with,

- How are they similar? How do they vary?
- What is the point our prayer?
- What is the point of God's answer?

If the purpose of our prayers is to increase our trust and faith in Jesus, how does that help us understand the following verses?

- John 14:12-14
- Psalm 139:4
- Matt 6:25-34

Next Week: John 5:1-21 Carry on carrying your mat