

Nobleman's Faith

John 4:43-54



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FOCAL Read Responsively John 4:43-54 KJV Now after two days he departed thence, and went into Galilee. (44) For Jesus himself testified, that a prophet hath no honor in his own country. (45) **Then when he was come into Galilee, the Galileans received him, having seen all the things that he did at Jerusalem at the feast: for they also went unto the feast.** (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. (47) **When he heard that Jesus was come out of Judea 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.** (48) Then said Jesus unto him, Except ye see signs and wonders, ye will not believe. (49) The nobleman saith unto him, Sir, come down ere my child die. (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.** (51) **And as he was now going down, his servants met him, and told [him], saying, Thy son liveth.** (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.** (54) **This [is] again the second miracle [that] Jesus did, when he was come out of Judea into Galilee.**

Opening Prayer: Precious Father, we come to You and acknowledge that You are Lord. You are Lord whether we admit that or not, but we acknowledge You as Lord because we want to be under Your loving protection. You made the Heavens and the earth, and all the creatures in this beautiful

world around us. Lord, we love You and You alone. We praise You, and Your Beloved Son Jesus, by Whom we have been saved.

Lord we confess our sins before You, and ask that You remove the high places from our lives. Please forgive us the times we loved the gift more than we loved You, the Giver of the gift. We pray, dear Savior, that You will cast down any idols in our lives. If we have lifted ourselves up and loved ourselves more than You, break us, we pray. Help us to remember that life is not worth living unless You walk in the Garden with us in the cool of the evening. Help us to remember that You are our Peace, You are our Rest. We live because You live in us. You, dearest Jesus, are our Life, and our only Hope of Eternal Life. We praise Your Name forever!

We pray for those who are perishing, who do not accept You as Lord and Savior. We pray, dear Jesus, that Your Spirit will convict them of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment. Life is a gift from You, and Eternal Life is only available *through You*. We pray that You would convict those who are lost that today must be the day of salvation. Let no one leave this room we pray, dear Lord, without making peace with You by faith in Christ's Cross. Let everyone who leaves this place today be able to say with all the saints The Lord is my strength and my song, He has become my salvation. He is my God, I will praise Him, My father's God, I will exalt Him¹. In Jesus' name we humbly pray - Amen and Amen!

What type of faith do you have? Everyone has a *type* of faith. Even the evolutionist, the atheist, and the devils believe in something. Let's see what this text has to say about that thing we call *faith*.

1. The Faith of Nazareth - A Weak, Sick Faith

1 Exodus 3:15

FOCAL John 4:43-44 KJV Now after two days he departed thence, and went into Galilee. (44) For Jesus himself testified, that **a prophet hath no honor in his own country.**

Jesus had just been two days in Samaria. He clearly presented Himself to the woman at the well of Sychar as *the Christ, the Messiah Who had come to save the world from eternal punishment*. This woman accepted Jesus as the Christ. She recognized Him as *Lord*, and believed on Him for salvation. Because this lowly Samaritan woman believed on Jesus *enough to tell others about Him*, she caused a mighty revival to start in Samaria. This revival kept Jesus in that place for two additional days, then He headed northward toward Galilee.



Now, I want you to get a good picture of this². Jesus is moving northward from Judea. He's preached in Jerusalem, moved into and through Samaria - leaving a revival in His wake. But when Jesus gets to His home town Nazareth it is here that He testifies **a prophet hath no honor in His own country**. Mark talks further about this, and how Nazareth's perception of Christ caused that city to lose any blessing from God. We read:

Mark 6:2-6 ^{NIV} When the Sabbath came, he began to

2 above map from http://thetoryofjesus.com/images/maps/3_18gallilee.jpg

teach in the synagogue, and many who heard him were amazed. "Where did this man get these things?" they asked. "What's this wisdom that has been given him, that he even does miracles! (3) Isn't this the carpenter? Isn't this Mary's son and the brother of James, Joseph, Judas and Simon? Aren't his sisters here with us?" And they took offense at him. (4) Jesus said to them, **"Only in his hometown, among his relatives and in his own house is a prophet without honor."** (5) **He could not do any miracles there, except lay his hands on a few sick people and heal them.** (6) And he was amazed at their lack of faith...

Jesus passed through Nazareth, His home town, but because the people regarded Him as no more than a *mere man* He was unable to do any work in this area. A mere man - even a good teacher - has no power to do the miraculous.

These people grew up with Jesus and remembered Him as the *Carpenter's Son*. Though Jesus did miracles in Nazareth - not many, but some - they believed Him *more a man* than they believed Him Messiah. They said **"What's this wisdom that has been given him, that he even does miracles! Isn't this the carpenter?"**

When you believe Jesus Christ to be no more than a *mere man*, just a *great teacher* or a *wonderful preacher*, this level of faith is not sufficient to bring about the miraculous. To say that Christ is a *great moral teacher*

or to believe this with all your heart is just not enough. He was and is a great moral teacher. There was no sin in Him, nor will there ever be found sin in Him. Did He ever say anything that wasn't compelling, perfect, true?

Yes, Jesus Christ is the *Greatest Moral Teacher* Who ever lives, but to say this and to stop is to not only rob Him of glory, but it is to rob yourself of blessing!

You see, the hard heart that refuses to acknowledge Jesus as more than mere man is the heart that will always be unsatisfied. The Bible speaks of these sad creatures who are

2 Timothy 3:7^{NASB} always learning and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth.

The reason these people with the Nazareth mentality remain thirsty while those with the mind of the Samaritan woman are quenched is because the one will not acknowledge Christ as more than mere teacher - whereas the other will see Him as **Almighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace (Isaiah 9:6)**.

You can *never* come to the **knowledge of the truth** until you begin to acknowledge that the

Law was given by Moses, but grace and truth CAME by Jesus Christ (John 1:17).

If Christ is only a teacher then we could say that TRUTH came by Him - for there are many teachers who speak TRUTH - but it requires GOD to bring GRACE. You cannot be saved by acknowledging Christ as mere mortal man or mere great teacher. You must go *beyond* the Nazareth mentality to be blessed.

Only God can give Grace. Jesus MUST be more than the Nazareth mentality ascribes to Him, or else He is of little use to a lost people. God must lead us out of Egypt - Moses alone will not do!

Those who possess the Nazareth mentality often speak kindly of Christ, and lump Him in with other great moral men of ages gone by. Yet, as *C.S. Lewis* stated in his compelling book *Mere Christianity*:

"I am trying here to prevent anyone from saying the really foolish thing that people often say about Him [Jesus Christ]: "I'm ready to accept Jesus as a great moral teacher, but I don't accept his claim to be God." That is the one thing we must not say. A man who was merely a man and said the sort of things Jesus said would not be a great moral teacher. He would either be a lunatic -- on a level with a man who says he is a poached egg -- or else he would be the Devil of Hell. You must make your choice. Either this man was, and is, the Son of God, or else a madman or something worse You can shut him up for fool, you can spit at him and kill him as a demon; or you can fall at his feet and call him Lord and God. But let us not come up with any patronizing nonsense about his being a great human teacher. He has not left that option open to us. He did not intend to."

There is a reason that Satan and his fallen angels constantly attack the person of the Lord Jesus Christ - if

the world can continue to believe that He *was only a good moral man, an extraordinary teacher*- then the world will never see Him as either Creator or Savior. You see, man can create on a limited basis, and man can save on a limited basis. But *only Eternal God* can impart eternal life. Only the Almighty can make a change in a life that will be eternally significant.

In the novel *The Da Vinci Code* the author Dan Brown makes the following statement:

"Jesus was viewed by his followers as a mortal prophet ... a great and powerful man, but a man nevertheless. A mortal?"

This is what many people have come to believe. This is what those who possess the Nazareth mentality believe - Jesus is mere mortal. A mere mortal cannot save us. A mere mortal can teach us things, but only teach us imperfectly. You see, we are all flawed by our morality.

I read with amusement the other day that scientists have recently discovered a *tenth planet* which has been - up to now - undiscovered. Can you imagine, a planet reportedly *bigger than Pluto* that we have never seen! The following is quoted from the NASA site:

Illustrate "It's definitely bigger than Pluto." So says Dr. Mike Brown of the California Institute of Technology who announced today the discovery of a new planet in the outer solar system.

The planet, which hasn't been officially named yet, was found by Brown and colleagues using the Samuel Oschin Telescope at Palomar Observatory near San Diego. It is currently about 97 times farther from the sun than Earth, or 97 Astronomical

Units (AU). For comparison, Pluto is 40 AU from the sun.

This places the new planet more or less in the Kuiper Belt, a dark realm beyond Neptune where thousands of small icy bodies orbit the sun. The planet appears to be typical of Kuiper Belt objects--only much bigger. Its sheer size in relation to the nine known planets means that it can only be classified as a planet itself, Brown says."³

Now we're going to have to rewrite all the scientific textbooks! Why didn't we discover this tenth planet until now? The short answer is, *because we're not God*. Man is not God, and will never be God.

Man is mere mortal, and as mere mortal we are intrinsically flawed. We err. We falter. We fall. We die. We break God's Law. We live in a sphere that God calls time and sin. We are not gods, nor will we ever be gods. Yet Almighty God, He Who knows all things, prophesied between 701 to 681 BC that He would send the Savior through Israel. God said:

Isaiah 49:6 KJVA And he said, It is a light thing that thou shouldest be my servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob, and to restore the preserved of Israel: **I will also give thee for a light to the Gentiles, that thou mayest be my salvation unto the end of the earth.**

Some 700 years before the New Testament Scripture was ever formed Eternal God told us that

Jesus Christ would come and

Isaiah 53:3 KJVA He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: and we hid as it were [our] faces from him; he was despised, and we esteemed him not.

be despised and rejected. God knew that the Nazareth mentality would turn away from the Savior.

Some 700 years before the New Testament was ever written God said that Jesus would be wounded and beaten (**Isaiah 53:5**), that He would be dragged before false accusers and would remain silent (**Isaiah 53:7**).

Some 700 years before the New Testament was ever written God told us that Jesus would be crucified with criminals and buried in a rich man's tomb (**Isaiah 53:9, 12**). God would tell the Prophet Daniel some 530 years before the New Testament was ever written that (**Daniel 9:26**) the Messiah would be *cut off* and Israel destroyed because she would not accept Him as Savior. In fact, God would speak through the Prophet Micah (**Micah 5:2**) sometime between 750-686 BC and tell us that Jesus our Messiah was going to be born in Bethlehem - that's about 750 years prior to the giving of the New Testament. In fact, truth be told, Jesus was prophesied to come through the Tribe of Judah in **Genesis 49:10**, some 1400 years prior to the giving of the New Testament Scriptures.

3 http://science.nasa.gov/headlines/y2005/29jul_planetx.htm?list39638

You see, people with the Nazareth mentality, the Nazareth faith look for reasons to disbelieve Jesus. These people, people like Dan Brown and other so called *bright scholars* make light of Christ in their novels. Scientists mock Him - but

Beloved, who's more worthy of mockery? Men who would be gods, but who cannot find - with all of their touted technology - a planet larger than Pluto - or those who will not believe in the Christ Who was prophesied to come from ancient times?

Jesus Christ is not merely the carpenter's Son. He is Almighty God. If you will not see Him as such, you will be no more blessed than those who grew up around Him, the losers of Nazareth! How terrible to keep the Nazareth perspective on Christ! **Peter Kreft** wrote in his book *Fundamentals of the Faith*:

"Josh McDowell summarized the argument simply and memorably in the trilemma "Lord, liar, or lunatic?" Those are the only options. Well, then, why not liar or lunatic? But almost no one who has read the Gospels can honestly and seriously consider that option. The savviness, the canniness, the human wisdom, the attractiveness of Jesus emerge from the Gospels with unavoidable force to any but the most hardened and prejudiced reader. Compare Jesus with liars like the Reverend Sun Myung Moon or lunatics like the dying Nietzsche. Jesus has in abundance precisely those three qualities that liars and lunatics most conspicuously lack:

1. His practical wisdom, his ability to read human hearts, to understand people and the real, unspoken question behind their words, his ability to heal people's spirits as well as their

bodies;

2. His deep and winning love, his passionate compassion, his ability to attract people and make them feel at home and forgiven, his authority, "not as the scribes"; and above all

3. His ability to astonish, his unpredictability, his creativity. Liars and lunatics are all so dull and predictable! No one who knows both the Gospels and human beings can seriously entertain the possibility that Jesus was a liar or a lunatic, a bad man."

Jesus had to be more than mere Man. He had to be much, much more - or we are in desperate trouble!

2. The Faith of Galilee - A Selfish Faith

The second type of faith - a faith very prevalent in our churches today - is the Galilean Faith. The Galilean faith is the type of faith that comes to Christ for relief from a certain affliction or a certain desire. We read in our text:

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

We find our churches often filled with those who look to God for the satisfaction of *temporal things* - this has always been true. And there's truly nothing wrong with this! I like a *eating meeting* as much as the next person. Jesus often miraculously *fed His followers*. We've often read the stories of Jesus' compassion:

Matthew 14:14 KJV And Jesus went forth, and saw a great multitude, and **was moved with compassion toward them, and he healed their sick.**

Matthew 9:36 KJV But when **he saw the multitudes, he was moved with compassion on them,** because they fainted, and were scattered abroad, as sheep having no shepherd.

Matthew 15:32 KJVA Then **Jesus called his disciples [unto him], and said, I have compassion on the multitude, because they continue with me now three days, and have nothing to eat:** and I will not send them away fasting, lest they faint in the way.

Matthew 20:34 KJV So **Jesus had compassion [on them], and touched their eyes: and immediately their eyes received sight,** and they followed him.

Mark 1:41-42 KJVA And **Jesus, moved with compassion, put forth [his] hand, and touched him, and saith unto him, I will; be thou clean.** (42) And as soon as he had spoken, immediately the leprosy departed from him,

and he was cleansed.

Luke 7:12-13 KJV Now when he came nigh to the gate of the city, behold, there was a dead man carried out, the only son of his mother, and she was a widow: and much people of the city was with her. (13) And when **the Lord saw her, he had compassion on her, and said unto her, Weep not.**

The Gospels shout the words **Jesus had compassion!** Our Lord was compassionate, He loved people, He empathized with people, He identified with people. Because of this great love He *healed people*, He *miraculously fed people*, He caused the *blind to see*, and even *raised people from the dead* several times. God has compassion, Jesus has compassion, and this is the reason that the people in Cana of Galilee had such good wine on a certain wedding day.

But there is a danger, Beloved of God, in getting our eyes on the wine and *not* on the *One Who made the wine*. This was the Galilean mindset. They were busy looking at the wine, at the miracle, but they were not looking at Christ.

The Galilean faith will not save, and the Galilean mindset will keep you from being blessed. I have seen this so many times in this blessed ministry the Lord in His Grace has allowed me to have. People become sick. The doctor tells them that they have cancer, a blood disease, something fatal that will rob them of life. These people go to the hospital and, like the multitudes that followed after Jesus when He walked this earth, they

begin to beg Him for healing. They get their eyes on the healing, on the wine at Cana, on the restoration of life of a loved one - but they do not look at Jesus.

There is a movement in Christianity today that says that the Christian way of life is a life *free from suffering*. This movement teaches that the Christian will always be rich in monetary goods. That he will be on top of the world at all times. That the Christian will never suffer deprivation. This movement is wrong!

It is true that Jesus said:

Matthew 6:25-33 KJV Therefore I say unto you, Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. Is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment? (26) Behold the fowls of the air: for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feedeth them. Are ye not much better than they? (27) Which of you by taking thought can add one cubit unto his stature? (28) And why take ye thought for raiment? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin: (29) And yet I say unto you, That even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. (30) Wherefore, **if God so clothe the grass of the field, which to day is, and to morrow is cast into the oven, [shall he] not much more [clothe] you, O ye of little faith?** (31) Therefore take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink?

or, **Wherewithal shall we be clothed? (32) (For after all these things do the Gentiles seek:) for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things. (33) But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.**

But the same Jesus also told us:

Matthew 26:11 NIV The **poor you will always have with you,** but you will not always have me.

and,

John 15:18-20 NIV "**If the world hates you, keep in mind that it hated me first.** (19) If you belonged to the world, it would love you as its own. As it is, you do not belong to the world, but I have chosen you out of the world. That is why the world hates you. (20) Remember the words I spoke to you: '**No servant is greater than his master.**' [2] **If they persecuted me, they will persecute you also.** If they obeyed my teaching, they will obey yours also.

Jesus also told us to,

Luke 9:23 HCSB Then He said to them all, "If anyone wants to come with Me, **he must deny**

himself, take up his cross daily, and follow Me.

Luke 14:26-27 HCSB "If anyone comes to Me and does not **hate his own father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters--yes, and even his own life--he cannot be My disciple. (27) Whoever does not bear his own cross and come after Me** cannot be My disciple.

Jesus said this knowing that the Cross was a bloody, brutal, terrible thing. The problem with the Galilean faith is that it loves the wine more than it loves the Wine-maker. The Galilean faith focuses on the loaves of bread and the little fish multiplied, but misses the greater truth that God our Savior provided these things.

It is possible, dearly Beloved, to focus on the *good things* of life and miss the *best Thing in life*. To forget that - every one of those people Jesus healed, whether they were blind, leprous, had an issue of blood, or even - who like Lazarus - died Every one of these people *still died*.

Their mortal lives in time ended, and they stood before Jesus Christ to be judged. Those who knew Him as Savior and Lord left this life and moved into eternity, adopted of God, blessed forever. Those who did not know Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior - whether they

received healing or manna from Heaven - went to a place which the Bible says **their worm dieth not and the fire is not quenched (Mark 9:44-48)**. The greatest thing in life is not that you be fed or healed, but that you know Jesus Christ as both Lord and Savior!

3. The Faith of the Nobleman - A Saving Faith

FOCAL John 4:46-47 KJV 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. (47) When he heard that Jesus was come out of Judea 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.

Someone once asked me why God allowed suffering in creation. The short answer is, so that you will be drawn closer to Him. The Bible tells us that God often allows pain and suffering in the life of the believer to draw them closer to Him. We read:

Romans 5:3-6 KJV And not only [so], but **we glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience; (4) And patience, experience; and experience, hope: (5) And hope maketh not ashamed;** because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us. (6) For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly.

Suffering for a Christian is not a curse. Suffering for a Christian is a *wonderful chain* - not to bind us or weigh us down - but to draw us closer to our Lord!

God allows pain and suffering in the life of the unbeliever to lead them to a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ. This is what happened in the life of the **certain nobleman**. We don't really know who this man was. We just know that that his **son was sick at Capernaum** - a place not far from where Jesus was - and this man had heard about Jesus and the wine of the wedding feast. This son was very sick, we read **he was at the point of death**. If you, as a parent, have ever lost a child, you know this man's heart. If you don't, you can only imagine! I can see what this man was going through. He went to Jesus and asked Him to heal that child. Jesus said:

FOCAL John 4:48 KJV **Except ye see signs and wonders, ye will not believe.**

The man, without so much as a pause, begs the Lord to come where his child is. He says:

FOCAL John 4:49 KJV ... **Sir⁴, come down ere my child die.**

Now, here's something that our beloved King James text does not reveal - but we can see it revealed in the Greek

4 Greek G2962, κύριος, kurios, *koo'-ree-os*, From κύριος kuros (*supremacy*); *supreme* in authority, that is, (as noun) *controller*; by implication *Mr.* (as a respectful title): - God, Lord, master, Sir.

text. The man says to Jesus "Come, heal my little one", and Jesus says, "Unless you see signs and wonders you will not believe". But then the man says - and here's what the Greek text says:

LORD, come down lest my little one die!

Jesus is not referred to as SIR in John 4:49, but as LORD - the Greek *kurios*. This same word is used *687 times in the New Testament*.

For instance, it is used in **Matthew 1:20**, where we read:

... the angel of the **Lord {KURIOS}** appeared unto him in a dream, saying, **Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife: for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost.**

and in reference to John the Baptist's ministry, where we read:

Matthew 3:3 KJV For this is he that was spoken of by the prophet Esaias, saying, **The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord {KURIOS}**, make his paths straight.

It is used in the place where the Apostle we call *Doubting Thomas* saw the resurrected Savior and said:

John 20:28 KJV And Thomas answered and said

unto him, **My Lord {KURIOS} and my God.**

The same word was used when a heartbroken Peter said to Jesus:

John 21:17 KJV ... **Lord {KURIOS}, thou knowest all things;** thou knowest that I love thee. Jesus saith unto him, Feed my sheep.

As unrighteous men stoned Stephen he cried out,

Acts 7:59 KJV ... **Lord {KURIOS} Jesus, receive my spirit.**

That word KURIOS means not just *Sir*, it is not a mere term of respect. But throughout the New Testament this word is used of *Almighty God our Savior*. We are even told in:

Romans 10:9-11 KJV **That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord {KURIOS} Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.** (10) For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. (11) For the scripture saith, **Whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed.**

What this nobleman did was come to Jesus the healer, the maker of wine, the miracle man, the teacher - but as

he talked to Jesus he discovered to his joy that he was *talking to God*. This man started out asking Jesus to come and heal his child, but once he realized **Jesus Christ is eternal God in the flesh** he immediately departed. God does not have to go with me to heal my child. God can speak the word and heal my child - just as God can speak the word and put straight my life.

FOCAL John 4:50-51 KJV ... **Go thy way; thy son liveth. And the man believed the word that Jesus had spoken unto him, and he went his way.** (51) And as he was now going down, his servants met him, and told [him], saying, **Thy son liveth.**

This is why the man didn't keep begging Jesus to go with him. You see, he saw Jesus not as mere man, not as a mere miracle worker nor a provider of manna from God, but he saw Jesus Christ *as Lord*.

And as Lord he could believe the word that Jesus spoke.

If you are merely trusting in Jesus Christ as a good teacher (the Nazareth faith), or if your trust is based on the *good things* He can give you, then you have traded the best things for the merely good things. Jesus Christ came to seek and to save that which was lost. He came to adopt many children into God's Kingdom. He came to destroy the power of death, and to redeem those who lived under the shadow of death. Sooner or later every one of you will stand before the Creator and give Him a

reason as to why you should be allowed to enter into
Glory with Him. The only answer that matters is that you
know Jesus Christ as *both* Lord and Savior.

I pray that you have made that choice. Your eternity
depends on it!