

**Subject: *How Real Faith Grows***

**Scripture: *John 4:43-54***

In the Gospel of John the focus is always on Jesus. The spotlight is on who He is and what He does, and this is written to prove that He is the Christ so that we will believe in Him. John tells us his method and purpose near the end of the Gospel: **John 20:30-31**<sup>30</sup> *And many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book:*<sup>31</sup> *But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name.*

The question is whether you really believe in Christ. What does it mean to believe in Him? Is faith a one-time thing or is it ongoing? Is faith something that is static or growing? The important thing is this: is faith real or superficial? All faith is not saving faith. The Bible says even the demons believe in God and tremble, but their faith has not changed them. We are going to look at how this story unfolds and we will see how real faith in Christ grows.

### **THE STORY OF REAL GROWING FAITH:**

- **The places (vs. 43-46)**

The scene moves from Samaria to Galilee. The action takes place in two cities, Cana and Capernaum. Cana is where Jesus performed his first miracle at the wedding feast (John 2).

- **The plea (vs. 47)**

Apparently the official had used all the means available to help his son. He had money and influence to get medical help, but his boy was no better, and Jesus was his last hope.

- **The problem (vs. 48)**

Jesus did not rebuke this man, but he spoke to the crowd in general. People will not believe unless they see miracles. Faith in miracles may be a shallow, superficial kind of faith (see Jn. 2:23-25). They believed in Jesus as a miracle-worker, but not as the Messiah.

- **The persistence (vs. 49)**

The man kept on asking Jesus to come and help his son before he died.

- **The promise (vs. 50)**

Jesus told the official that his son would live, and he believed what Jesus said.

- **The provision (vs. 51-53)**

The boy was healed, and the official and his whole family believed and were saved.

- **The purpose (vs. 54)**

This is the second miracle Jesus did. All the miracles that John recorded show how people responded to Jesus. They either believed in Him or rejected Him. This story shows how one

man's faith grew. Real faith in Christ always grows and develops. Real faith must be in Christ, the right person. Real faith will not be denied or discouraged. Real faith takes the Lord at His word. Real faith trusts Christ not only for temporary things like healing, but for eternal salvation. Real faith has an influence on others.

### **THE STAGES OF REAL GROWING FAITH:**

- **Serious desperation (vs. 46-47)**

This man had a crisis and he needed Jesus to help. He had faith that Jesus could heal his son. His faith was real, but it was limited. He thought Jesus had to come to where the boy was about 15-20 miles away. He didn't realize that Jesus can heal from a distance. He didn't seem to realize that Jesus could even raise his son from the dead.

- **Steady determination (vs. 48-49)**

He would not be denied. We find a good example of this kind of faith in Matthew 15:22-28.

- **Simple dependence (vs. 50)**

This man's faith is growing. At first, he believed Jesus could heal his son in person. Now he believes that Jesus can heal him at will from a distance. He took Jesus at His word. Faith is simply taking God at His word (see Jn. 4:41-42).

- **Saving dedication (vs. 51-53)**

This man's faith was confirmed as he traveled back to his son in Capernaum. His servants met him along the way and reported that the boy was healed. He asked when he got better and knew it was the exact time that Jesus told him that he would live. As a result, the official and his whole family believed in Jesus as the Christ. He first trusted Jesus for his son's physical healing, but now he believed in Jesus for his own salvation.

How would you describe your faith right now?