

SIGNS

in the Book of John



The Sovereign King

Key idea:

Jesus is the Sovereign Lord over all Who calls us to embrace Him in humble faith for Who He is, not for what we want Him to do for us.

Key text:

John 4:43–54 NIV2011

After the two days he left for Galilee. ⁴⁴ (Now Jesus himself had pointed out that a prophet has no honor in his own country.) ⁴⁵ When he arrived in Galilee, the Galileans welcomed him. They had seen all that he had done in Jerusalem at the Passover Festival, for they also had been there.

⁴⁶ Once more he visited Cana in Galilee, where he had turned the water into wine. And there was a certain royal official whose son lay sick at Capernaum. ⁴⁷ When this man heard that Jesus had arrived in Galilee from Judea, he went to him and begged him to come and heal his son, who was close to death. ⁴⁸ “Unless you people see signs and wonders,” Jesus told him, “you will never believe.” ⁴⁹ The royal official said, “Sir, come down before my child dies.” ⁵⁰ “Go,” Jesus replied, “your son will live.” The man took Jesus at his word and departed.

⁵¹ While he was still on the way, his servants met him with the news that his boy was living. ⁵² When he inquired as to the time when his son got better, they said to him, “Yesterday, at one in the afternoon, the fever left him.” ⁵³ Then the father realized that this was the exact time at which Jesus had said to him, “Your son will live.” So he and his whole household believed. ⁵⁴ This was the second sign Jesus performed after coming from Judea to Galilee.

Key points:

1. Jesus’ third sign is the healing of the royal official’s son who was near death.
2. Even though the Galileans initially “welcomed” Jesus, He had indicated that a prophet has no honor in his own country, and He gave a stern rebuke to their need for signs and wonders.

3. Even though Jesus initially seemed to rebuke the royal official and the people of Galilee, He heals the young man - without even going from Cana to Capernaum!
4. Jesus consistently warns against a “faith” that seeks Him for signs and wonders, and for what He can do for us rather than for Who He is - the Son of God and Savior of the world.
5. The royal official is a picture of both humility and faith. He humbly comes to ask for help, does not take offense at Jesus’ rebuke, and completely trusts Jesus’ word.

Questions for discussion/application:

1. What part of Sunday’s text and teaching stood out most to me? Why?
2. Why does John tell his readers that Jesus had pointed out that a prophet has no honor in his own country? How does this relate to the very next statement that the Galileans “welcomed” Jesus?
3. How does the royal official demonstrate humility in this passage? Why is humility a precursor to true and lasting faith in Jesus?
4. What do I learn about Jesus from the fact that He heals the young man with just a word spoken from fifteen miles away - and the healing was immediate? What does this sign tell me about Who Jesus is?
5. Why does Jesus initially respond to the royal officials request with the words “Unless you people see signs and wonders, you will never believe.” Did this response surprise me? Why is this so important to Jesus?
6. Why is “welcoming” or “believing in” Jesus based on what He can do for me such a danger? Am I tempted to embrace and follow Him only if He gives me what I want or need? Do I love and follow Jesus for Who He is, or for the ways I hope He will help me get what I want?
7. How does the royal official demonstrate faith in this passage? Do I trust the bare word of Jesus? Does it have ultimate authority over my thoughts and desires? What competes with Jesus’ Word for ultimate authority in my life?
8. Whom can I pray for, share what I have learned, and invite to church this week?

Preview of next week: The Lord of the Sabbath (John 5:1-15)