

AUTHENTIC FAITH

John 4:43-54

We live in an increasingly superficial and confusing world. This is especially true spiritually. There are some who know about Jesus and may even claim to follow Him, but they really don't have authentic or true faith in Jesus. How do you know? What is the difference?

1. BEWARE OF A SUPERFICIAL FAITH IN JESUS – John 4:43-48

- The Galileans welcome Jesus home, but their interest in Jesus is superficial. They want signs and wonders. This welcome is not what it seems. Jesus says as a prophet He is not honored in His own home. Jesus was largely rejected by His own home area – Matthew 13:57,58; Luke 4:24.
- In contrast to the despised Samaritans who accepted Jesus' Word, His own people are not really receiving Him – John 1:11. Jesus rebukes all of the Galileans in general, not just the royal official. "You" is plural – verse 48.
- There is such a thing as superficial faith – John 2:23-25; John 6:2, 26, 30. Jesus wants us to believe in Him and His Word. Superficial faith is seen when people only want Jesus for what He can do for them to improve their lives or make them happy on their terms. Superficial faith is dangerous and scary as people may be self-deceived – Matthew 7:21-23. *"Jesus is not interested in satisfying crowds who want to be entertained. He is interested in sinners who feel their need and are prepared to take Him at His word."* – Mark Johnston.

2 AUTHENTIC FAITH BELIEVES IN JESUS AND HIS WORD – John 4:49-54

- The royal official from Capernaum probably worked for Herod Antipas, ruler of Galilee. Antipas is the Herod who kills John the Baptist and ruled from 4 B.C. to A.D. 39. This official came to Cana to seek Jesus to help his son who was deathly ill with a fever. It was 18 miles from Capernaum to Cana. Some identify this official as Cuza, Herod's steward, or perhaps Menaen, Herod's childhood companion – Luke 8:3; Acts 13:1.
- This royal official progresses in faith from desperation for help to believing the word of Jesus. True faith comes to Jesus. *"I was driven to such straits that I must of necessity go to Jesus; and if He had met me with a drawn sword in His hand, I would sooner have thrown myself upon the edge of His sword than have gone away from Him; for I knew Him to be my last hope."* – John Bunyan, *Grace Abounding to the Chief of Sinners*, 1600's. The official pleads for help and mercy. He addresses Jesus as "Sir" or "Lord." Jesus declines to go with him to Capernaum. But Jesus graciously assures this distraught father that his son will live. Jesus asks him to "put feet to his faith." True faith takes Jesus at His Word. People say "seeing is believing", but this man did the opposite – "believing is seeing" – Hebrews 11:1; John 11:40. True faith takes Jesus at His Word and acts on that Word - Matthew 8:8-10. *"in faith one must look to nothing but the Word of God. Whoever permits anything else to be pictured in his eyes is already lost. Faith clings to the naked and pure Word, neither to its works nor to its merits."* – Martin Luther, 1500's.
- True faith grows. The royal official's servants tell him his son's deadly fever was healed at the very time Jesus spoke His Word of healing. The royal official and his whole household become believers in Jesus. This is why the gospel of John was written – to lead people to true authentic faith in Jesus – John 20:31. This was the second sign chosen by John to reveal the glory of Jesus – John 2:11. Signs are meant to lead us to real faith in Jesus. True faith continues to grow and

deepen. This royal official already believed, but grows in faith and impacts his whole household to believe in Jesus. *“It is the character and nature of faith that it attracts other people, breaks forth and becomes active in love.” – Martin Luther.*

Concluding Applications;

- Are you really trusting Jesus and His Word?
- Is your faith seen in your feet and action?
- How is your faith in Jesus growing and impacting others?
- Do you delight in the Word of Jesus?