

Who is this Man Jesus?


Part 4

Healing from a Distance

TALKINGPOINTS WALKINGPOINTS

2020.4.26



A publication of , the adult discipleship ministry of Triangle Community Church.

Talk together about the glory of God's kingdom. —Psalm 145:11
Love the Lord your God and **walk** in all his ways. —Joshua 22:5

Questions for Reflection and Discussion

- Pastor Doug noted that for **most** things, we believe because of **others'** testimony, rather than first-hand experience (take, for example, the Apollo moon landing). What are some examples from **your** life?

Creating "God Space": "God Space" is where cynics, skeptics, and spiritually curious people can safely raise their questions, reservations, & doubts because we have listened well and demonstrated love in practical, authentic ways.

Who do you know who **rejects** Christianity or God's existence "because it can't be proven"?
Would you be willing to forward them the link to this week's sermon?

How do you think they would react to Pastor Doug's statement that we base our lives on **many** things that we **cannot** prove—so it's **not intellectually honest** to single-out Christianity or God?

- Review and role-play the logic of this: "Faith **starts with** rationality, but **moves beyond it** to trust".
- In John 4:50, Jesus told the man, "Go; your son lives." This man believed—without seeing!
Tell about a time when **you likewise** "took God at his word, with no visible proof of the outcome".

Tell about a time when you **failed to** do so. **What accounted for** those different responses?

- Pastor Doug spoke of "nominal" Christians. Look up "nominal" at Dictionary.com. What do you learn?
Were you ever "a Christian in name only"? Tell us about that. What changed? When, why, and how?

Saving faith is *notita* ("knowledge," i.e., acquaintance with the content of the gospel), **plus *assensus*** ("agreement," i.e., recognition that the gospel is true), **plus *fiducia*** ("trust and reliance," i.e., personal dependence on the grace of God alone for salvation; Romans 4:5; 10:3). Discuss this statement by theologian J. I. Packer: **"Without *fiducia* there is no faith, but without *notita* and *assensus* there can be no *fiducia*."**

Role-play explaining these concepts without theological jargon. Use the illustration of riding in a plane, sitting in a chair, crossing a bridge, or some similar daily experience.

Application-Challenge

- When you have a serious problem, do what this man did: **Go to Jesus.**
- Then, allow Jesus to answer you on his own terms.
- Finally, tell others what Jesus did for you.

Need help learning to trust God more?
Write to:
BiblicalHopeAndHelp@gmail.com

Sermon Summary

Key Text: John 4:46–54

We are in the midst of a series of messages from the book of John where we are trying to understand who Jesus is and why he came to earth. We are doing that by looking at what John calls the miraculous signs of Jesus. Jesus' signs were symbols of who Jesus was, in order to provoke faith with the result that we might have life in Jesus' name.

This miracle story involving the healing of the royal official's son is designed to tell us about the nature of faith. There are not "types" of people who become Christians; saving faith is for everyone. In this passage, we learn five things about faith and it's extremely important that we know all of them.

[1] Life-giving faith starts with a reason. It involves your thinking and rationality. Biblical faith is not opposed to reason, it's rooted in reason. The official had heard reports about Jesus' miracle-working power—he weighed them and believed them. He comes to Jesus because he has reason to believe that Jesus has the power to perform miracles. Faith may start with reason, but it must proceed beyond reason to become genuine trust. It has to become faith, knowing that: **(a)** few things can be proven absolutely, **(b)** most of the important things in life cannot be proven (such as the right person to marry or the righteousness of moral convictions), **(c)** you can only live in one of two ways—as if there is no God when there may be, or as if there is a God when there may not be.

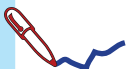
[2] Life-giving faith has to move beyond reason to trust. When Jesus heals the official's son from a distance, he is moving the man from a mere intellectual, rational belief in his power to a personal trust in his true identity. The difference between life-giving faith and mere intellectual assent is trusting your life. Nominal Christians believe intellectually that Christianity is true, but their belief is not changing how they live. Jesus wants us to not only have "assensus" faith, but "fiducia" faith.

[3] Life-giving faith grows beautiful and pure where precious metals do—in the furnace! Faith grows in perfection as we walk through the brokenness of life, or through the furnace.

[4] Life-giving faith saves by its object, not by its amount. It was not the official's faith that saved his son, it was Jesus' power that saved his son, and his faith connected him with that power. It's the object of your faith, not the quality or the strength of your faith that saves you. Pure faith is what connects you to Jesus Christ, no matter how small it may be.

[5] Real, life-giving faith comes to love Jesus for who he is, not just for the benefits he offers. Jesus desires that whether or not your prayers are being answered, you choose to love and trust him. None of us have perfect faith and none of us are deserving of Jesus' love, but out of his great and perfect love, he saved us. Jesus desires that we love him for who he is, because he is the only one who loves us perfectly, as we are.

Take One Step: What is one small, concrete step of obedience you will put into practice this week?



Talking To Others About This Week's Message

If a neighbor or friend at work asked you, "What kind of stuff do they talk about at your church?", how would you summarize the most important elements of this week's sermon and the key lessons you intend to apply to your life? Can you explain it in **plain language** anyone could understand?

Digging Deeper in Your Daily Quiet Time

*"Five Question Bible Study" (see page below) is a simple way to study any passage.
We can use it to explore saving faith...*

Monday— Knowledge is necessary, but not sufficient: Romans 10:14 & 1:32

Tuesday— Agreement is necessary, but not sufficient: John 3:2 & 9

Wednesday— Reliance is necessary: Philippians 3:2-9

Thursday— Saving faith starts with God: John 6:35-65

Friday— Salvation is for God's glory and our good: Ezekiel 36:22-32

Saturday— ***In preparation for worshipping your risen Lord tomorrow with your church family,*** study John 5:1-18.

Bible Text: _____

Date: _____



What idea particularly strikes me from this text? [Note in which verse(s) is it found.]



What question does this text raise in my mind—and how would **this text** answer it?



What about Jesus Christ—his character and/or his redemption—relates to this text?



What action must I take as a result of this text? Be concrete and specific.



With whom will I share what I learned from this text?