**SERMON OUTLINE**

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| **SERMON TITLE:** | Having Strong Faith |
| **SERMON REFERENCE:** | John 4:46-54 |
| **LWF SERMON NUMBER:** | #2245 |
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1. INTRODUCTION
	1. In our economy, money is the medium of exchange; but in the kingdom of Heaven, faith is the medium of exchange.
	2. Matthew 9:29
		1. What we receive from God is according to our faith.
			1. Not according to our friends.
			2. Not according to our family.
			3. Not according to our fortune.
			4. Not according to our feelings.
			5. Not according to fate.
	3. Not only do we need to possess faith, but what we need is for faith to possess us.
		1. We need a mighty faith because we have a mighty God.
	4. Doubt sees the obstacles, faith sees the way.
		1. Doubt sees the darkest night, faith sees the day.
		2. Doubt dreads to take a step; faith soars on high.
		3. Doubt questions, “Who believes?” Faith answers, “I!”
	5. We need a strong faith, not a weak faith.
	6. Today’s message will share from the Word of God a story about a man who had a weak faith.
		1. This man went from a superstitious faith to a strong faith to a saving faith.
		2. This man was a nobleman who had many resources.
			1. All of us, no matter our resources, have a problem that only God can solve.
		3. This man’s son was sick, and he wanted Jesus to heal his son.
			1. The dark soil of this problem was the soil in which the seed of faith would grow.
	7. Hebrews 11:6
		1. No matter how sacrificially we give, how circumspectly we walk or how faithfully we serve, if we are not believing God, then we are not pleasing God.
	8. The greater our faith, the greater glory God gets and the more pleased He is with it.
	9. By faith, man gives God pleasure; and by faith, God gives man treasure.
	10. John 4:46-48
		1. Jesus rebuked this man who was looking for signs and wonders.
	11. John 4:49-50
		1. In these Scriptures, we see signs and wonders in opposition with the Word.
		2. Jesus spoke to the man, and we see a transformation.
			1. Now, the man believed the Word.
		3. On one side are wonders, and on the other side is the Word.
	12. John 4:50-54
	13. In today’s message, we will see how to lay believing hands on the promises of God and have a strong faith.
2. the problem of a superficial faith (john 4:48)
	1. At first when this man met Jesus, his faith was almost non-existent.
		1. This man had a faith that was based on signs and wonders.
			1. His motto was “Seeing is believing.”
			2. He is dependent upon his five senses and not dependent upon the Word of God.
	2. This man had likely heard that Jesus had turned water into wine.
		1. John 4:46
		2. This was the first miracle that Jesus performed.
		3. Jesus knew that miracles, signs and wonders, are very little good in strong faith.
	3. We all want to see a sign, a wonder, a miracle.
		1. John 2:23-24
			1. The words “commit” and “believe” are the same word in the Greek.
			2. They believed in Jesus, but Jesus didn’t believe in them.
				1. This was superficial faith.
		2. John 2:24-25
			1. Jesus knew that these people were following Him because of the miracle.
				1. They didn’t have strong faith but superficial faith, almost superstitious faith.
				2. Many today, including Christians, ask for signs and wonders in order to believe.
	4. Jesus did perform miracles.
		1. He gave signs and wonders to authenticate His ministry.
		2. Acts 2:22
		3. John 20:30-31
			1. God did miracles to authenticate the ministry of Jesus, but the miracle was not for the miracle’s sake.
				1. The miracle was that we might believe on Jesus and have eternal life.
				2. Not that we might seek a miracle, but the Messiah; not a sign, but the Savior.
	5. The apostles also did signs and wonders.
		1. 2 Corinthians 12:12
		2. The apostle Paul had power to do miracles.
		3. God authenticated the ministry of the apostles with signs and wonders.
		4. Hebrews 2:4
			1. They did not have the power to do signs and wonders according to their own will.
			2. But because they were apostles and were setting the foundation of our faith, God authenticated their ministry with signs and wonders.
	6. What is wrong with seeking a sign?
		1. “*An evil and adulterous generation seeks a sign*.”
			1. Matthew 12:39
		2. It dishonors God.
			1. When we ask God to give us a sign or a wonder so that we can believe, it dishonors Him because we have His Word.
			2. 1 John 5:10
			3. John 20:25-31
				1. Thomas missed the blessing of simply believing the Word of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.
		3. It can be deceiving.
			1. Signs and wonders can easily deceive.
			2. The coming antichrist, the devil incarnate, will authenticate his ministry with signs and wonders.
				1. Matthew 24:24

If it were possible, Satan would deceive the very elect.

* + - * 1. 2 Thessalonians 2:9
				2. The antichrist will be able to make people think that black is white and good is bad.

He will have the ability to deceive.

* + - 1. The devil can do signs and lying wonders, and he will do them through his antichrist.
			2. Revelation 13:13-14
				1. This passage is speaking of the false prophet, who is the sinister minister of propaganda for the coming antichrist.
				2. This propaganda agent for the antichrist has the ability to do signs and wonders so that people will literally worship the antichrist.
			3. Don’t let some miracle worker, some sign-giver, some emissary from Satan deceive you.
			4. Matthew 12:39
1. the progression of strong faith (john 4:50-53)
	1. This man moved from a weak faith to a very strong, solid and substantive faith.
	2. There are progressive steps for moving from signs and wonders to the Word.
		1. Hear the Word of God.
			1. John 4:50
				1. The man heard the Word of God.
			2. Faith is not naming it and claiming it.
			3. Faith is not receiving from God what we want.
			4. Faith is accepting from God what He gives.
			5. This man was a nobleman, and he tried to tell Jesus what to do.
				1. John 4:49-50

The man told Jesus to come, but Jesus told the man to go.

* + - * 1. He was not to demand or command the Lord Jesus.
				2. He was to get a Word from Jesus.

Romans 10:14

Romans 10:17

* + - 1. If we want strong faith, we must hear the Word of God.
			2. Faith is taking God at His Word.
				1. If we are to have faith, then we must know what God has said.
				2. If we want others to have faith, then we must tell them what God has said.

Romans 10:14

* + 1. Believe the Word of God.
			1. John 4:50
			2. It is not enough to just hear the Word of God.
				1. If we don’t believe the Word of God, then we’re not going to have faith.
				2. We must believe the Word of God.
			3. Some people say that they cannot believe, but we can believe if we want to.
				1. 1 John 5:10
			4. The problem of unbelief is not an intellectual problem; it is a moral problem.
				1. The problem is not in the head but in the heart.
				2. What we believe is not contrary to reason; it goes beyond reason.
				3. Faith is a gift of God.
				4. If a person wants to believe, then God will enable that person to believe.

Romans 14:23

* + - 1. Faith is not seeing signs and wonders.
				1. Faith is a response to the character of God.
				2. When the Lord Jesus came to this Earth, He laid aside all of the glory, the splendor and the majesty that was inherently His; but He kept His deity.

Isaiah 53:2

* + - * 1. There was in Jesus Christ the grace, the glory and the fullness of God that when a person’s heart was right, he knew that Jesus was speaking with authority and his heart responded to Him.
			1. When our heart is right, our heart will respond to the Word of God in faith.
				1. Just like our eyes respond to light when our eyes are right, and our ears respond to sound when our ears are right.
				2. Our heart will respond to God when our heart is right.

That heart response is faith.

When God speaks through His Word, there is something in us that knows that it is true.

The Holy Spirit of God whispers “Amen” to our heart.

We can only preach truth, but the Holy Spirit of God imparts truth.

* + 1. Obey the Word of God.
			1. John 4:50-51
				1. The man did exactly what Jesus told him to do.
			2. This is the obedience of faith.
				1. Romans 16:26
			3. Real faith is belief with legs on it.
			4. James 2:26
			5. We do not have strong faith if we do not obey the Word of God.
		2. Rest in the Word of God.
			1. John 4:51-53
				1. This nobleman was approximately seventeen miles from his son.
				2. The nobleman could have gotten to his son in about two hours by chariot, but 24 hours passed and he had not gone home yet.

We don’t know the reason for the man’s delay, but he could have been resting in what the Lord had done.

* + - 1. Psalm 37:5-7
			2. The nobleman did not demand proof, and he didn’t speed home to see if his son had been healed.
				1. The rest of faith is the mark of real faith.
			3. We are to rest in the Lord.
				1. It is like the sun coming up.

We can’t hurry the sunrise, but we can’t stop it.

* + - * 1. We can’t hurry God, and we can’t stop Him.
				2. Isaiah 28:16
	1. We must hear the Word of God, believe the Word of God, obey the Word of God and rest in the Word of God.
		1. If we don’t, then we will be stampeded by all kinds of things.
		2. Don’t try to live by emotions, feelings, visions, dreams, signs or wonders.
			1. Signs and wonders had their purpose.
	2. God does still heal in answer to prayer.
		1. But this is not something that causes us to believe in Him.
			1. God doesn’t always heal the sick.
		2. It is not wrong to go to a doctor.
			1. Matthew 9:12
				1. In this passage, the Lord Jesus used a truth to illustrate spiritual things.
		3. When we are sick, we pray and then go to the doctor and do what the doctor tells us to do.
1. the provision of saving faith (john 4:53)
	1. The man believes now, not in a miracle worker, but in a Messiah.
		1. The man is born again; he believes in Jesus as His Lord and Savior.
	2. John 20:31
	3. Jesus did not come as a healer; He came as a Savior.
		1. Luke 19:10
	4. The Lord Jesus did not heal everyone.
		1. There were many sick people at the pool of Bethesda, but He healed just one.
		2. All of these miracles point to the greater miracle, which is the new birth.
	5. Trust in Jesus.
		1. Don’t put your faith in miracles.
		2. Suppose the nobleman’s son had been healed but never got saved.
			1. Then, he would have lived a few more years and died and gone to Hell.
			2. This is why so many people are seeking the wrong thing.
				1. Many people seek a sign and a wonder rather than seeking Jesus the Messiah.
2. CONCLUSION
	1. Why I follow Christ.
		1. There is no statistical evidence that fewer Christians die of cancer or other disease than non-believers.
			1. Therefore, I will not follow Christ for promised healing.
			2. I will not deny or dispute evidence of restoration of health.
			3. I will rejoice in the recovery of those from certain death.
			4. I will continue to pray for the healing of others.
		2. There is no evidence that Christians escape disaster and accident more than non-believers.
			1. Christians are equally affected by natural disasters.
			2. A bullet does not detour around the body of a believer.
			3. Therefore, I will not follow Christ for promised protection from disaster.
			4. I will not scoff at amazing survivals.
			5. I recognize that God’s will has and continues to be at work.
			6. I will pray for protection from wicked men and tragedy.
		3. There is no evidence that Christians are especially favored with prosperity.
			1. The rich often oppress the poor.
			2. Justice in this world is rarely perfect.
			3. Psalm 37:25
			4. We all know people with integrity who have not prospered.
			5. Therefore, I will not follow Christ for promised freedom from physical want or hope of affluence.
		4. There is no evidence that Christians have stronger personalities or fewer neurosis than non-believers.
			1. There is no bitterness like that of religious bitterness.
			2. Christians suffer under emotional and mental disabilities.
			3. There is no doubt that the Christians attitude and actions will be improved by his Christianity.
			4. But I will not follow Christ for any promise of personality enhancement or perfection.
		5. Why then follow Christ?
			1. In Jesus we behold the face of God.
				1. He is the everlasting truth; God in human flesh.
				2. In His life, death and resurrection I am reconciled to God.
				3. He has all power and goodness and we can trust Him in His promises.
				4. He is the one certain thing in an uncertain world.
				5. He is to be worshipped, not so that something will happen to me.

Something already has: God, through Christ, has reconciled the world to Himself; He saves us.

He is our justification.

* + - 1. We offer our lives to God, not to be healthy, wealthy and wise or to gain strength to do things for Him; but because He alone can claim us.
	1. Don’t look for some sign, wonder or miracle.
	2. Jesus is the Savior who lived, suffered, bled and died for us; and He rose from the dead.
	3. If you will trust Him, then He will save you and will keep you.
		1. Believe in miracles, but trust in Jesus.
	4. Do you know Jesus personally? If not, you can pray to Him today by asking Him to come into your life.
	5. Call upon Jesus today. Repent (turn) from your sins, and turn to Jesus. Ask Him to forgive you of your sins, and acknowledge Him as Lord of your life.
		1. Romans 3:23
		2. Romans 10:9-10
		3. Romans 10:13
		4. Acts 16:31
		5. John 3:16