

SERMON OUTLINE

SERMON TITLE: Having Strong Faith

SERMON REFERENCE: John 4:46-54

LWF SERMON NUMBER: #2245

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1) INTRODUCTION

- a) In our economy, the dollar is the medium of exchange; but in the kingdom of Heaven, faith is the medium of exchange.
- b) Matthew 9:29
 - i) 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.
- c) Not only do we need to possess faith, but what we need is for faith to possess us.
 - i) We need a mighty faith because we have a mighty God.
- d) We need a strong faith, not a weak faith.
- e) Today's message will share from the Word of God a story about a man who had a weak faith.
 - i) This man went from a superstitious faith to a strong faith to a saving faith.
 - ii) This man was a nobleman who had many resources.
 - (1) But like many of us, he had a problem that only God could solve.
 - iii) 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.
- f) Hebrews 11:6
 - i) 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.
- g) The greater our faith, the greater glory God gets and the more pleased He is with it.
- h) By faith, man gives God pleasure; and by faith, God gives man treasure.
- i) John 4:46-48
 - i) Jesus rebuked this man who was looking for signs and wonders.
- j) John 4:49-50
 - i) In these Scriptures in John, we see signs and wonders in opposition signs with the Word.
 - ii) Jesus spoke to the man, and we see a transformation.
 - (1) Now, the man believed the Word.
 - iii) On one side are wonders, and on the other side is the Word.
- k) John 4:50-54
- l) 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 SUPERSTITIOUS FAITH (JOHN 4:48)

- a) At first when this man met Jesus, his faith was almost non-existent.
 - i) John 4:48

- ii) 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.
- b) This man had likely heard that Jesus had turned water into wine.
 - i) John 4:46
 - ii) This was the first miracle that Jesus performed.
 - iii) Jesus knew that miracles (signs and wonders) are really very little good in strong faith.
- c) We all want to see a sign, a wonder, a miracle.
 - i) 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.
 - (a) This was superficial faith.
 - ii) John 2:24-25
 - (1) Jesus knew that these people were following Him because of the miracle.
 - (a) They didn’t have strong faith but superficial faith, almost superstitious faith.
- d) Jesus did perform miracles.
 - i) He gave signs and wonders to authenticate His ministry.
 - ii) Acts 2:22
 - iii) John 20:30-31
 - (1) God did miracles to authenticate the ministry of Jesus, but the miracle was not for the miracle’s sake.
 - (a) The miracle was that we might believe on Jesus and have eternal life.
 - (i) Not that we might seek a miracle but the Messiah, not a sign but the Savior.
- e) The apostles also did signs and wonders.
 - i) 2 Corinthians 12:12
 - ii) The Apostle Paul had power to do miracles.
 - iii) God authenticated the ministry of the apostles with signs and wonders.
 - iv) 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.
- f) Matthew 12:39
 - i) An evil and adulterous generation seeks a sign.
- g) What is wrong with seeking a sign?
 - i) 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
 - (a) Thomas missed the blessing of simply believing the Word of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.
 - ii) It can be deceiving.
 - (1) Signs and wonders can easily deceive.
 - (2) The coming antichrist will be the devil incarnate, and he will authenticate his ministry by signs and wonders.
 - (a) Matthew 24:24
 - (i) If it were possible, Satan would deceive the very elect.
 - (b) 2 Thessalonians 2:9
 - (c) The antichrist will be able to make people think that black is white and good is bad.
 - (i) He will have the ability to deceive.
 - (3) The devil can do signs and lying wonders, and he will do them through his antichrist.
 - (4) Revelation 13:13-14
 - (a) This passage is speaking of the false prophet, who is the sinister minister of propaganda for the coming antichrist.
 - (b) This propaganda agent for the antichrist has the ability to do signs and wonders so that people will literally worship the antichrist.
 - (5) Don't let some miracle worker, some sign-giver, some emissary from Satan deceive you.
 - (6) Matthew 12:39
- 3) THE PROGRESSION OF STRONG FAITH (JOHN 4:50-53)
- a) This man moved from a weak faith to a very strong, solid and substantive faith.
 - i) There are progressive steps for moving from signs and wonders to the Word.
 - b) Hear the Word of God.
 - i) John 4:50
 - (1) The man heard the Word of God.
 - ii) Faith is not naming it and claiming it.
 - iii) Faith is not receiving from God what we want.
 - (1) Faith is accepting from God what He gives.
 - iv) This man was a nobleman, and he tried to tell Jesus what to do.
 - (1) John 4:49-50
 - (a) The man told Jesus to come, but Jesus told the man to go.
 - (2) He was not to demand or command the Lord Jesus.
 - (3) He was to get a Word from Jesus.
 - v) Romans 10:14
 - vi) Romans 10:17
 - vii) If we want strong faith, we must hear the Word of God.

- viii) Faith is taking God at His Word.
- ix) If we are to have faith, then we must know what God has said.
 - (1) If we want others to have faith, then we must tell them what God has said.
 - (a) Romans 10:14
- c) Believe the Word of God.
 - i) John 4:50
 - ii) 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.
 - iii) Some people say that they cannot believe, but we can believe if we want to.
 - (1) 1 John 5:10
 - iv) 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.
 - v) What we believe is not contrary to reason; it goes beyond reason.
 - vi) Faith is a gift of God.
 - (1) If a person wants to believe, then God will enable that person to believe.
 - vii) Romans 14:23
 - viii) Faith is not seeing signs and wonders.
 - (1) Faith is a response to the character of God.
 - ix) Isaiah 53:2
 - (1) 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.
 - (2) 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.
 - x) 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.
 - (a) That heart response is faith.
 - (b) When God speaks through His Word, there is something in us that knows that it is true.
 - (i) The Holy Spirit of God whispers "Amen" to our heart.
 - (ii) We can only preach truth, but the Holy Spirit of God imparts truth.
 - d) Obey the Word of God.
 - i) John 4:50-51
 - (1) The man did exactly what Jesus told him to do.

- ii) Romans 16:26
 - (1) This is the obedience of faith.
 - iii) Real faith is belief with legs on it.
 - iv) James 2:26
 - v) We do not have strong faith if we don't obey the Word of God.
 - e) Rest in the Word of God.
 - i) 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.
 - (a) We don't know the reason for the man's delay, but he could have been resting in what the Lord had done.
 - ii) Psalm 37:5-7
 - iii) 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.
 - iv) We are to rest in the Lord.
 - (1) It is like the sun coming up.
 - (a) We can't hurry the sunrise, but we can't stop it.
 - (2) We can't hurry God, and we can't stop Him.
 - (3) Isaiah 28:16
 - f) We must hear the Word of God, believe the Word of God, obey the Word of God and rest in the Word of God.
 - i) If we don't, then we will be stampeded by all kinds of things.
 - ii) Don't try to live by emotions, feelings, visions, dreams, signs or wonders.
 - (1) Signs and wonders had their purpose.
 - g) God does still heal in answer to prayer.
 - i) But this is not something that causes us to believe in Him.
 - ii) God doesn't always heal the sick.
 - iii) Matthew 9:12
 - (1) It is not wrong to go to a doctor.
 - (2) 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.
- 4) THE PROVISION OF SAVING FAITH (JOHN 4:53)
- a) John 4:53
 - i) The man now believes, not in a miracle worker, but in a Messiah.
 - ii) The man is born again.
 - (1) He believes in Jesus as His Lord and Savior.
 - b) John 20:31
 - c) Jesus did not come as a healer; He came as a Savior.
 - i) Luke 19:10

- d) The Lord Jesus did not heal everyone.
 - i) There were many sick people at the pool of Bethesda, but He healed just one.
 - ii) All of these miracles point to the greater miracle, which is the new birth.
- e) Trust in Jesus.
 - i) Don't put your faith in miracles.
 - ii) 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.
 - (a) Many people seek a sign and a wonder rather than seeking Jesus the Messiah.
 - iii) We don't follow Christ so that we can escape disaster.
 - iv) We don't follow Christ so that we can be favored with prosperity.
 - (1) James 2:6
 - (a) Justice is rarely perfect in this world.
 - (2) Psalm 37:25
 - (3) All of us have known people of integrity who have not prospered.
 - v) We follow Christ because He is God in the flesh.
 - (1) In His life, death and resurrection, we are reconciled to God.
 - (2) Nothing can separate us from the love of God.
 - (a) Romans 8:39
 - (3) He is the one certain thing in an uncertain world.
 - (4) Jesus is the Savior.

5) CONCLUSION

- a) Don't look for some sign, wonder or miracle.
- b) Jesus is the Savior who lived, suffered, bled and died for us; and He rose from the dead.
- c) If you will trust Him, then He will save you and will keep you.
 - i) Believe in miracles, but trust in Jesus.
- d) Do you know Jesus personally? If not, you can pray to Him today by asking Him to come into your life.
- e) 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.
 - i) Romans 3:23
 - ii) Romans 10:9-10
 - iii) Romans 10:13
 - iv) Acts 16:31
 - v) John 3:16