

But He's Not Your Genie in a Bottle

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[0:00] I invite you please to take your Bibles and go to John chapter 4 if you would please the gospel of John chapter 4 if you're visiting with us need a Bible or you left your cell phone at home probably a good thing that you did so it's not ringing while I'm preaching just kidding there's a Bible in the chair in front of you they remember the New Testament so go to the back page 74 in that black Bible and turn in front of you John chapter 4 page 74 in that black Bible John chapter 4 we're gonna finish the chapter today verse 43 to 54 again John 4 43 to 54 let me read and then we'll jump in and after two days he went from there into Galilee for Jesus himself testified that a prophet has no honor in his own hometown therefore when he came to Galilee the Galilians received him having seen all the things that he did in Jerusalem at the feast for they themselves also went to the feast therefore he came again to Canaan of Galilee where he made water wine and there was a certain royal official whose son was sick at Capernaum therefore he hearing Jesus had come out of Galilee and Judea into Galilee went to him and was requesting him to come down and heal his son for he was about to die therefore Jesus said to him unless you all see signs and wonders you will never believe the royal official said to him

Lord come down before my child dies Jesus said to him go your son lives the man believed the word which Jesus spoke to him and he left and going down his servants met him saying that his son was alive inquired of them the hour when he began to get better they said therefore to him yesterday the seventh hour the fever left him so the father knew that that hour into which Jesus said to him your son lives and he himself believed and his whole household this is again a second sign that Jesus did after he had come out of Galilee out of Judea into Galilee as a kid I watched every single

Bugs Bunny cartoon that there is and I think I watched them probably about a hundred times so I for some I just know them by heart it's kind of sick the great part is my kids like to watch them too now when they were sick they were like remember these Bugs Bunny I'm like absolutely of course there's amongst a plethora of Bugs Bunny cartoons one of them was Bugs Bunny was a genie you know I dream of a genie with light brown hair from the 1937 song never mind I mean Ward would know that there's Ward okay and as a kid I was wanting to find a genie and be granted the three wishes right yeah as a kid you wanted that oh what are you going to be my three what did I wish for as a kid you know that's not the real world even though we wanted to be like that you want to be granted three wishes and what has happened is our culture has influenced us to think that way about God to think of God that way that he's our genie and I would add especially our American culture and the drive within the prosperity gospel false teaching that false doctrine from hell from the devil himself trusting Jesus will give you money he's our genie who should give us stuff

I mean if you really love me you would do this for me you would grant me my three wishes that is infiltrated into the church that is infiltrated into Christianity that is infiltrated into our lives and John in his gospel is calling his readers come receive Jesus come believe into Jesus know Jesus trust him and today he's going to show us come receive Jesus but he's not your genie in a bottle come believe in Jesus but he's not your genie he's not your slave he is not your genie in a bottle yes Jesus will satisfy you yes he is our thirst quencher yes the father's food is so satisfying but he's not your genie those statements walk us back through chapter 4 where Jesus is talking to the Samaritan woman

Jesus is going to satisfy you he'll quench your thirst and then in verses 27 to 42 the father's food is to do with his will it's satisfying it's a good food but just be careful that we don't go down the road thinking that God is our genie he's our slave we are called to believe into or receive Jesus for who he is not in merely what he gives to us we trust him we trust him not just his gifts he is no genie he's the Messiah God for crying out loud he's the Savior of the world may we glorify and trust Jesus not

for the wonders he can give to us but because he's so wonderful so will we take him at his word even when he doesn't give us the things that we want in this life job spouse children a nice retirement good health a sure future grandkids a home a loved one to come to Christ fill on the blank do we trust him taking him at his word

[7:31] I was challenged with that this week in my own personal life I'm going to take Jesus at his word even when he doesn't give me the things that I want or the things that you think you should have as I said may we glorify and trust Jesus not for the wonders he can give to us but because he's so wonderful awesome lovely great is he not the only God who's worthy of our total praise even when he gives us no sign isn't he worthy of our praise when our requests go unanswered when you don't get what you want isn't he still worthy of praise this is why the prosperity gospel is so dangerous to our spiritual growth and to the true gospel come to Jesus because he'll give you money as Don Carson says miracles cannot compel genuine faith so true you know as John completes this part of the beginning of Jesus ministry here in the end of chapter 4 he fills it with huge contrast and irony the contrast between this

Samaritan reception and Jewish or Galilean rejection and the irony of a father who prays for his son with the father who gave his son so as we jump into this passage I want to encourage you in this way let this message allow God's spirit to work in your heart to reveal the true nature of your faith the motivations behind your trust in God and your willingness to take him in his word if you miss anything don't miss this statement that the spirit will work in your heart and may he reveal what is the true nature of your faith may he reveal what are the motivations behind your trust in God and may he reveal your willingness to take him at his word to those three aspects revealing the nature of your faith the motivations behind your trust in God and your willingness to take him at his word I'll show you that slide again at the end of the service so you'll have that but notice how it begins as with Jesus the genie not the savior Jesus the genie not Jesus the savior verses 43 to 45 after two days he went from there into Galilee this is the two days he stayed with the Samaritans it takes us back to chapter 4 verse 3 when Jesus was coming out of Judea he's going back home home well home is Nazareth well yeah but the home area is Galilee you know like you're you're down in Phoenix or you're you're out Tucson or you're away when you come to the Verde Valley that's home I mean home might be Cottonwood or Clarkdale or whatever but the Verde Valley this is your home right the area that's the idea Galilee is home so he's coming back home and notice verse 44 for Jesus himself testified that a prophet has no honor in his own hometown speaking of hometown Jesus didn't get much honor there and that word for it explains what's going to follow for he testified a prophet has no honor in his own country with his own people Jesus was not honored versus here's the contrast the Samaritans who believed into him in Samaria there was abundant fruit they unashamedly trusted in Jesus with the total open hearts he's the Messiah what do they say we've come to know he's the savior of the world verse 42 what about the Jews they would only believe in him if he gave them a good show give us some good signs

Jesus come on possess us buddy so he said at one time not recorded here that a prophet has no honor in his own hometown and there's the contrast those who we would think would reject him believed him to be the savior of the world Samaritans versus his own people you would think that the Jews would have received him uh-uh he came to his own but his own rejected him chapter one this is striking but look at verse 45 therefore when he came to Galilee the Galileans received him have he seen all the things he did in Jerusalem at the feast for they also themselves went to the feast they saw all the things all the signs that he did in Jerusalem at the feast the cleansing the water to wine there's probably other signs he did but John just gives us seven they saw and they were intrigued but instead of responding they rejected him because he wouldn't do things for them that's what

[13:46] Jesus is going to mean when he says that in verse 48 he's going to bring that out unless you all see signs and wonders you will never believe we'll believe in you as long as you say your wish is my commitment I dream of Jeannie for all of you like 45 and older all you less than 40 year old sorry you have no idea what I'm talking about she's like 90 years old now isn't that weird that's creepy anyway sorry we got digress got sidetracked they would only believe Jesus insofar as he would give them their wants and their self desires it was a faith that desires a cure not because of who Jesus truly is there's the challenge it's a magical belief as opposed to worshipping

Christ for who he is listen to what one writer says quote it was dependent on the wonder arising from their sight of the signs not on the realization that Jesus was indeed the Christ the savior of the

world the very acceptance of him was in its own way a rejection end quote what was their motivation pure self interest wow me do something for me give me something then maybe I'll believe in you their intentions were shallow showing they misunderstood the true identity of Jesus and why he had come give us a God who will give us the selfish pleasures of our hearts that's the God of the

American church we want a God who's going to give us the selfish pleasures of our heart we got a really good conservative in office really good conservatives in congress that's the kind of God we want what if God doesn't want to give you that you still going to trust him what if God doesn't want to give you the selfish pleasures of your heart you ever thought about that and notice unfortunately for example look at the example in verses 46 to 48 this guy is the example therefore verse 46 he came again to Cana of Galilee that's where he made the water wine the first sign a certain royal official whose son was sick at Capernaum he wasn't of royal blood but he was an official serving Herod Antipas some say he was a

Gentile we don't know that but he's being used as an example of this shallow faith of this do stuff for me faith he's the example because notice verse 47 therefore he hearing that Jesus had come out of Judea into Galilee went to him and was requesting him to come down and heal his son for he was about to die he merely went to Jesus because he heard that Jesus came and could probably heal his son found Jesus begging him to heal his son because death was imminent the father searched for life so he turned to Jesus who is the source of life yet not really realizing he is the source of life it was only a believe that was motivated by getting his son healed because look at how Jesus describes everything in verse 48 this is key therefore

Jesus said to him and he's directing it towards him but he says unless you all you don't see it in the English but it's plural in the Greek unless you all or if you're from the south y'all unless you all see signs and wonders and you can't see this in the English but it's literally never believe unless I do things for you you'll never believe unless I give you a miracle you'll never believe unless I give you your desires of your heart you'll never believe he's linking this official to the larger group of his own people all of them use Jesus for their purposes not because of who Jesus truly was is serve us according to our own self interest Jesus criticized a belief that was motivated and based upon the witness sign instead of the object of the witness himself not to mention a belief that stemmed from wrong motives

[19:06] Jesus rejected the kind of belief this official initially displayed and he saw right through him and before dealing with his problem he dealt with the larger problem his own either rejected him or believed in him only in so far as he would fulfill their fascination for miracles or politics the Jews were very happy to believe Jesus to be the Messiah come kill these stupid Romans so we can rule the world that's how they viewed Jesus be that Messiah for us Jesus destroy the Roman empire so the Jews can rule the world as long as you fit our political agenda we will not believe in you it's such a challenge for us may we glorify and trust

Jesus not for the wonders he can give to us but because he's so wonderful awesome lovely and great do you need to trust Jesus today have you turned from your sin to trust in the Lord Jesus Christ do you need to repent and trust in him have you turned from your sin and put your hope in the Lord Jesus he died for sinners he rose from the dead repent and trust him there's the gospel come to him with humility and be saved is he not the only God who's worthy of our total praise even when he gives us no sign isn't he worthy of praise when our requests go unanswered when we don't get what we want Jesus the genie not

Jesus the savior here's the example but then notice what happens now in verse 49 to 54 now he becomes more than a genie verse 49 the royal official said to him lord says sir should be lord kurios come down before my child dies his desperation turned into a prayer a prayer to Jesus begging him to heal notice heal his child this is an affectionate term heal his child before he died the belief the request had changed no longer just a miracle please please he had come to the place where he realized Jesus was his only hope and the only hope for his son he was stripped of everything and now this belief is now beginning to morph and change into something deeper stronger

I'll tell you it's when God strips you of everything precious to you is when you will choose one of two options you either cry out to God in dependence or you'll harden your heart and say no God will strip you of everything that you hold so dear he'll strip you of everything that's precious to you and then he'll say okay what are you going to do are you really going to trust me in this and you either cry out in dependence I'm going to trust you or you say harden your heart and say no I'm not going

to trust you forget you that's what I'll do and that's what Jesus does look at verse 50 Jesus said to him go your son lives reminds us about John's sub theme in his gospel Jesus is a life he gave life he gives life life is only found in him so would this royal official truly believe in the royal king the real royal king true king

Jesus commanded he spoke life and it happened look at what the man does the man believed in the word that Jesus spoke to him and he went he believed the word from the word his belief went from shallow superficial fluffy faith to true solid sound faith believing just the very word of Jesus we only need the word of God as our collateral to demand or expect anything more from God makes him into your genie we only need his word and if we demand or expect anything more from him then we're making him into our genie we're making him into our slave look what happens verse 51 going down his slaves met him saying his son lived even before he reached home his servants came to him and told him your son lives the exact word

[24 : 56] Jesus used by the way wonderful news but even more important verse 52 he inquired of them the hour when he began to get better therefore they said to him yesterday the seventh hour the fever left him what was the exact time when did it happen and with total certainty it was at the seventh hour that's 1 p.m.

that was the time he suddenly got better verse 53 the father knew that that hour in which Jesus said to him your son lives the exact time Jesus said your son lives and it not only confirmed the healing of his son but this confirmed the unique identity of the son who was sent by the true father notice the irony there and it showed that God was so gracious to this man Jesus was so gracious to this man and then look how he responds the end of verse 53 and he himself believed and his whole household now his belief it became deeper stronger truer sure and then he led his household to do that same belief true belief in

Jesus is ready to share with others about who God truly is so let's respond to our Lord the way this man responded God stripped him of everything precious to him to bring him to the point where he said it's all about you oh God I'll trust you no matter what you got to get to that place I got to get to that place we got to get to that place it's all about you I'll trust you no matter what that's hard isn't it in 54 this is again a second sign Jesus did coming out of Judea into Galilee of course Jesus did more signs but this served as a second sign a connection to John's purpose in writing this gospel these are a person may believe that

Jesus is the Christ a person may believe who he is not what he'll give you you know our thinking about God can be shaped by our context our opinions our imaginations and our desires our thinking about God it can be shaped by our context opinions that we have our imaginations and our desires it can be shaped by that and it's this thinking that makes God into who we selfishly want him to be for us no may we come to Christ and who he is not in what we want him to be may our belief be firm in his person and work not resting on inappropriate objects which is inappropriate motivated faith inappropriately motivated faith that's what that is no trust him and his word so when we take him at his word even when he doesn't give us the things that we want in this life job spouse you want children a nice retirement good health a sure future you want grandkids you need a home a loved one to come to

Christ fill in the blank do we trust him and do we take him at his word God I told you I was going to put this up for you again at the end of the service that this message would allow this message let this message allow God's spirit to work in your heart and reveal the true nature of your faith the motivation behind your trust in God and your willingness to take him in his word you know the great part about this is we're going to fail in this but that's why Jesus had to die that's why Jesus had to die because you know what what does Paul say if we're faithless he remains faithful because he can't deny himself that's a good thing isn't it we can rest in his grace even when we sin and want him to give us the things of our heart and desires that we want and that's the only reason why we're even believing in him

[30 : 12] I was reminded of the song by Laura Story that song Blessings the word here in John 4 reminded me of that some of the lyrics she says we doubt your goodness we doubt your love as if every promise from your word is not enough that's a good line she she says when friends betray us when darkness seems to when we know that pain reminds this heart that this is not our home and then this part this is key what if my greatest disappointments or the aching of this life is the revealing of a greater thirst this world can't satisfy it's revealing a greater thirst that I should have for

Christ only Jesus truly satisfies us even without the benefits that he gives us because he's not our genie would you pray with me tough message father we are praying that you by your spirit from the word that was preached in this 35 minutes whatever the spirit of God you'll work in our heart reveal the true nature of our faith reveal the motivations behind our trust in you oh God we pray you reveal our willingness to take you at your word and father we know we've fallen short you know there's times where we yes we doubt your goodness we doubt your love because we don't believe every promise from your words enough

Jesus thank you for dying for that for us as your people what did the man say help her unbelief help her unbelief give us your grace to trust in you show us grace show us Christ and we confess you as we just sang Jesus Christ your Lord no matter the circumstances no matter where we're at in life give us your grace to live this way I encourage you this time just a few moments a minute or two and yeah we'll sing sing two songs we'll pray just take this minute or two and fill your mind with truth fill your mind with the word as the message was being preached and

God was speaking from his word maybe it was revealing just some things in your heart to acknowledge that and confess that and repent and proclaim the gospel thanking Jesus that he died for that fill your mind let your heart and your mind ponder and fill it with truth this time between you and the Lord would you do that now please just a few moments » Let » stop there Thank you.