

PM John 4:46-54 Jesus' Second Sign

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Preacher: Mr Allan Thomson

[0 : 00] Well good evening again, it's nice to be back with you this evening for a time of evening worship. Just a few intimations to be made just as we come to God.

Next, I'd just like to say thank you for the hospitality that has been shown to us. You'll know who you were, but the cakes were lovely that they were given to us this afternoon.

Thank you very much, no need to name you, but thank you for your hospitality and thank you for all your kindness that you've shown to Ruth and myself when we've been here today and in the past. Some intimations for this incoming week then. This Wednesday at 7 o'clock is the prayer meeting and Bible study and that will be led by Robert Dale.

And then next Lord's Day at 11 o'clock in the morning and 6pm, the speaker expected will be Douglas Cranston. Now one other intimation that we made this morning today, as you know, as a free church is a day of prayer called bye-bye the General Assembly.

[1 : 13] In the face of the coronavirus pandemic, we're all encouraged to give time to prayer during today and other days, no doubt, calling on the Lord in this pandemic time.

A disease that is global, is national, is local, is local, and therefore we ought to pray for all of those areas.

So later on in the service, two of our men will give prayer for that specific need in this day of prayer. Just to also, just to bring you the greetings of the Christians who meet at Downvale Church, they are remembering you in prayer and they send their greetings to you all.

The psalmist would say in Psalm 8 these words, O Lord, our Lord, how majestic is your name in all the earth!

You have set your glory above the heavens. Out of the mouths of babes and infants, you have established strength because of your foes to still the enemy and the avenger.

[2 : 32] When I look at your heavens, the work of your fingers, the moon and the stars, which you have set in place, what is man that you are mindful of him, and the son of man that you care for him?

You have made him a little lower than the angels, and crowned him with glory and honour. You have given him dominion over the works of your hands, and have put all things under his feet, all sheep and oxen and all the beasts of the field, the birds of the heavens, and the fish of the sea, which passes, whatever passes along the paths of the seas.

O Lord, our Lord, how majestic is your name in all the earth! Let's come to that same God, that majestic God in our opening praise.

We're going to turn to Psalm 95 in the Scottish Psalter. We're going to sing to God's praise verses 1 to 6. O come, let us sing to the Lord.

Come, let us, everyone, a joyful noise make to the Lord, to the rock of our salvation. Let us, before his presence come, with praise and thankful voice, let us sing psalms to him with grace, and make a joyful noise.

[4 : 04] The Apostle Paul tells us that we are to make melody in our hearts, and so we can do that even in this time of COVID-19. We might not be able to sing out but in our hearts, let us sing to the Lord.

Psalm 95 verses 1 to 6. O come, let us sing to the Lord.

Come, let us, everyone, a joyful noise, sing to the Lord.

All our salvation. Let us be born in presence, come with praise and thankful voice, let us sing.

Let us sing to the Lord. To Him with praise And with a joyful voice For God, a great joy And great day Above all gods He is There's all the earth Are in His hand The strength of Him is His To Him the saints He belongs For He was safe in Him

[6 : 17] That right and also Come in His hands His hope and mercy O God, let us Let us Come in Let us Come in With all And on our knees Before the Lord Our Maker Our Maker Let us Let us Come in Let us Let us Let us Let us Let us Let us Let us

Call And Foul Let's Let us Let us Let us Let us Let us Let us Let us we come into your presence again at this evening time.

We thank you that we have reminded ourselves in the words of Psalm 8 that you are the majestic God, the high and lifted up one, the one who is enthroned in heaven far above all other beings and things.

And Father it is to you our God and Father that we come this evening to meditate upon, to praise and to worship as your creatures and many of us as people who have been saved by your sovereign grace.

Father the psalmist would ask that question, what is man that you are mindful of him? But Father we are thankful that you the majestic God, the great God, the eternal God, the one who has no beginning and no end, the one who has always existed.

[8 : 43] Have condescended to sinful human beings like yourself and revealed yourself, revealed your glory and revealed your grace and your mercy to us.

Father we give you thanks that you have stooped as it were from the very throne room in heaven and in your son the Lord Jesus have come down into this earth and lived a life, a sinless life, a life that we could and have never, could never have lived.

your son has come so that we might be forgiven and that we might be forgiven and that we might enjoy fellowship that was broken by the entrance of sin into that first garden in Eden.

and that's creatures we come to worship you to sing to sing to pray to you to hear your word.

and those of us who have been saved by your grace we come to worship you as our Father and as our God and as our Saviour and as the one who has been so kind to pardon us Father we remind yourselves that even though you are so high and lifted up you are interested in your creatures interested in people like us no matter who we are no matter how rich, how poor how educated or uneducated we thank you that you are interested in your creatures you are interested in sinners those who don't deserve your grace and your mercy but you have come in your Son to redeem and to ransom and to save we thank you that your Son was the one who would come to seek and to save that which was lost and Father we have to confess before you that we were lost in our sin and without hope and without you in this world but we thank you that you came you condescended into our world to rescue people like ourselves

[11 : 34] Father why you as a great God should do that we just do not know but we are so thankful that you have and we owe you our life and our being and our worship and that's one of the reasons why we have come into your presence this evening to worship you and to praise you and we only ask that what we do might be acceptable or accepted in your sight that everything that we do might bring to your name praise and honour and might be fitting Father we need even you to help us to do that we need your Holy Spirit to come and to presence himself with us in our hearts and speak to us through your word as your word hopefully will exalt Christ so Father as we come we ask that you might give us ears to hear and wills to obey what your word calls us upon to do

Father we ask these things in Jesus name Amen Now our second praise item is taken from Psalm 46 Psalm 46 and the first five stanzas of that Psalm the Psalmist says these words God is our refuge and our strength in straits a present age therefore although the earth remove we will not be afraid though hills amidst the seas be cast though waters roaring make and troubled be yea though the hills by swelling seas do shake a river is whose streams do glad the city of our God the holy place wherein the Lord most high hath his abode God in the midst of her doth dwell nothing shall her remove the Lord to her a helper will and that right early prove these five verses to God's praise Psalm 46 from the Scottish Psalm time God is our ready to come our saints they say it's our present age therefore although he has we rose he to him but ■■■ his The sea's the past, O waters roared in great, And troubled thee, In all the hills, Thy swelling sins to shake,

A river is true, Seen to hide the city Of our God, The holy grace pray, The Lord most high, As it is the most, God in the midst of heaven, That Lord most well, Not■■■ermach shallVideo.

The Lord subvert, And he ilereth christ, Thank you.

[16 : 13] Now before I ask William Kenyon and Robert Dale to pray in the light of the call to prayer, we're going to read our Bible reading this evening. It's taken from John's Gospel again.

John's Gospel and chapter 4. John's Gospel and chapter 4. And we're going to be thinking this evening of the second sign that John tells us of that Jesus performed in John's Gospel. We're going to read, however, to get connection with that in John 4 verse 39. John 4 verse 39. The Lord Jesus has been travelling north and south in the early chapters that are recorded for us in John's Gospel.

And he's now travelling up, back up north. And he's going to come back to the city that we were in this morning in Cana of Galilee. But on the way he goes through a region called Samaria. And he meets this woman in Samaria. And has a conversation with her. Let's read there from verse 39.

[17 : 26] Pick up the story from there. From that city, many of the Samaritans believed in him. Because of the word of the woman who testified, He told me all things that I have done.

So when the Samaritans came to Jesus, they were asking him to stay with them. And he stayed there two days. Many more believed because of his word.

And they were saying to the woman, It's no longer because of what you said that we believe. But we have heard for ourselves. And know that this one is indeed the saviour of the world.

After the two days, He went forth from there into Galilee. For Jesus himself testified that a prophet has no honour in his own country.

So when he came to Galilee, the Galileans received him. Having seen all the things that he did in Jerusalem at the feast, for they themselves also went to the feast.

[18 : 43] Therefore he came again to Cana of Galilee, where he had made the water wine. And there was a royal official whose son was sick at Capernaum.

When he heard that Jesus had come out of Judea into Galilee, he went to him and was imploring him to come down and heal his son.

For his son was at the point of death. So Jesus said to him, Unless you people see signs and wonders, you simply will not believe.

The royal official said to him, Sir, come down before my child dies. Jesus said to him, go, your son lives.

The man believed the word that Jesus spoke to him and started off. As he was now going down, his slaves met him, saying that his son was living.

[19 : 54] So he inquired of them the hour when he began to get better. Then they said to him, Yesterday at the seventh hour, the fever left him.

So the father knew that it was at that hour in which Jesus said to him, your son lives. And he himself believed and his whole household.

This is again a second sign that Jesus performed when he had come out of Judea into Galilee. And then just finally again over into John 20, the verses that we read again this morning.

John 20, John gives us the reason in these two verses why he has written his gospel. He's written his gospel so that we might believe.

And John says in John chapter 20, verse 30 and 31, Therefore, many other signs Jesus also performed in the presence of the disciples which are not written in this book.

[21 : 11] But these have been written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in his name.

Amen. And may God give us good understanding of his written and inspired words. Now at this time I'm going to ask William and then followed by Robert to come and to pray in the light of the call to prayer for the COVID-19 situation.

Thank you. Heavenly Father, as we've heard already this evening, you are holy and righteous and Lord of the heavens, Lord of this earth, Lord, you are sovereign over all the matters of man.

Lord, we as we've come into this time of pandemic, we know so many people are suffering. Lord, we think of especially our brothers and sisters at this time, those elderly, those who are confined to care homes, for those who are feeling lonely at this time.

Lord, may they be finding all their help and their strength and everything they need in you. Lord, we pray that they would be so thankful for the salvation that they have, that forgiveness of sins, that conscience cleanse, all of their sins washed away, that they would seek to share their faith with those round about them as best they can.

[23 : 07] Lord, we pray for those unbelievers in a similar situation, those who are lonely and afraid. Lord, please help this time to impress upon their hearts the brevity of life, how quickly things pass

by and, Lord, how man is just a breath.

It's like the grass or the flower that fades. Lord, help them in these days to be pricked of conscience and through your word to be brought to faith in Jesus Christ.

And we know, Lord, that we as the church have the responsibility of bringing your gospel to as many people as we can.

And, Lord, may this time of coronavirus make us and give us that extra zeal to speak more openly about the faith we have, the truth of the gospel.

And so, Lord, we pray for our nation at this time and we pray for the world over. Lord, in places and in countries where they don't have health care that we have and people who are really suffering in their health and even perhaps in a lesser way the business is failing.

[24 : 36] Lord, we pray that such a pestilence would have that effect that would drive men and women to you and that the church will be ready to give an answer and give the remedy that the Lord Jesus Christ is willing to forgive all who come to him in repentance and faith.

So, Lord, we commit this time to you now to forgive us of our sins. In Jesus' name. Amen. Our Father, we continue to cry out to you concerning this pandemic.

Lord, we look around the whole world and we see that there is suffering in every part of the globe. we pray not only for our own nation but for the nations of the world and especially we would pray for those poorer nations that are less well equipped to cope with hospitalisations than we are here. We pray, Lord, though, for our own nation not merely for relief from the suffering but for a spiritual awakening.

Lord, there is so much suffering and we would bring before you all kinds of people who have had their lives turned upside down.

[26 : 13] We've read this evening of a man seeing his sons severely ill and how many families have gone through that traumatic experience of having loved ones who are ill and being fearful that they might die and how many have actually had to face bereavement.

How many are still suffering with long COVID? How many are cut off from relatives by all the regulations, especially in the care homes?

Lord, we think of Charnwood Lodge locally, brought home to us so vividly with six deaths there, and more ongoing cases reported to be there.

Oh Lord, our God, in the midst of all these sufferings, we pray for your merciful help for those who are, as it were, going under in these situations, that though the waters come up to their neck, they may realise that there is a rock in which they can find perfect safety, and that even though death should come, yet if they're trusting in Christ, there is yet hope beyond.

We pray too for all those lesser but still serious sufferings that people have. lost their jobs or whose businesses have collapsed, for the many whose plans have been turned upside down, or many have had all their normal pleasures taken away from them.

[28 : 07] For some, perhaps it's as if the wine of this world has been turned into water. Oh gracious God, even in these situations, we pray still that you would draw near to those who suffer, and show them that way of pure joy, which lies in Christ alone, and is not dependent on the pleasures of this world.

We do pray for our brethren, and for the churches of God, we too have our own particular kind of suffering. even tonight, as we've listened to a psalm, psalms being sung, delightful though it was, yet how we would love to be able to sing out the praises of our God, and we feel ourselves restrained and restricted, and restricted in our fellowship with one another, unable to give the hospitality that we would like.

Lord, we long for an end to these things. We pray especially for our brethren in Wales at this time, once again forbidden to meet together. But Lord, amidst all of these tales of woe, Lord, we know that there's a much deeper woe, and that is our sin.

Lord, we know that you are sovereign, and even this little virus, it is acting at your sovereign direction. And whilst many would hesitate to speak of judgment, yet Lord, we know that at the very least, all this should cause a chastening, it should cause reflection, it should cause people to think about their latter end.

And we see so little repentance. We know of one and another, a few who have thought about the things of God.

[30 : 06] We rejoice in that, and we pray that they may come to faith, but how many have not, how many have just continued and even entrenched themselves in their sins.

Oh, Heavenly Father, have mercy upon Scotland, have mercy upon this whole country, have mercy upon this world, to awaken us from our sins, to shine forth your light into our gross darkness, darkness, to grant that there might be life where at present there is only spiritual death.

Grant us, Lord, also here in this church and our brethren up at Downvale that we may have the privilege of sharing the precious gospel even in these difficult times.

Show us how, Lord. Grant us that we may be bearers of light in the midst of the darkness. that we ask in Jesus' name. Amen. Amen.

Now, before we come to God's word, our next note of praise to God is found in Psalm 116. Psalm 116.

[31 : 21] We're just listening to prayers and those prayers are sent to God. The psalmist says, I love the Lord because my voice and prayers he did hear.

Isn't that amazing? That the God, the majestic God, would listen to our prayers. I, while I live, will call on him who bowed to me his ears.

Verse 5 says, God, merciful and righteous is, yea, gracious is our Lord. God saves the meek. I was brought low, he did me help afford.

O thou my soul, do thou return unto thy quiet rest, for largely low, though, for largely low, the Lord to thee his bounty hath expressed.

We'll sing to God's praise these seven verses from the Scottish Psalter again, Psalm 160. I love the Lord because my voice and prayers meet in tears.

[32 : 43] God, in right, I live, will call on him O world to me is here.

Of death the course and sorrows did the heart become the trout, the wings of the heart to call on me I weep and trouble found.

Upon the name of God the Lord that did I call and say deliver deliver thou thy song O Lord I do thee humbly pray God merciful and righteous is me gracious is thy heart but saves the me I was brought whole he did me have a heart

O thou my soul to thou return unto thy body and rest O Lord we call the Lord to thee his mountain of this rest amen thank you, now could you turn back with me if you have your Bibles it would be good to have them open hopefully at John chapter 4 where we read just a moment ago and we read in John 20 because it's at the end of his gospel that John tells us as we have seen the purpose of him writing his gospel it is that people might know fully who Jesus Christ is we read these words let me read them again in John 20 verses 30 and 31 therefore many other signs

Jesus also performed in the presence of the disciples which are not written in this book but these have been written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ the Son of God and that believing you may have life in his name now this morning I say to you that there are a number of specific miracles in John's gospel seven of those miracles are recorded in his gospel John refers to them not as miracles but as signs because they direct us they point us they signpost us to who Jesus really is that's John's aim in the whole of the gospel the miracles for John are much more than mere acts of power but are signposts to the identity of who Jesus is that's the purpose they are meant to strengthen the believer's faith in who Christ is now tonight we want to look at the second of the signs the healing that we have recorded here in John 4 of the nobleman's son but we need to understand a bit of the background before we come to verses 46 and on and that's why we read in John 4 verses 39 about the Samaritan encounter that Jesus Christ had with the woman at the well in a place called Sychar

[37 : 31] Jesus was travelling north from Judea through Samaria on his way back to his home region of Galilee he has just spent a few days in a town called Sychar in Samaria in an area with people who were the outcasts of the Jewish religion the Samaritans that group of people were loathed and hated by the Jews because while they worshipped God they didn't worship what the Jewish believed to be the one true and living God and the Lord Jesus has a conversation with one of these women from Samaria with a single individual woman at a well and she comes to believe in who Jesus Christ is and then through her being saved and coming and coming to faith in Christ many come and hear and listen and believe on Christ look at verse 39 that we read many of the Samaritans from that town believed in him verse 41 and because of his words many more became believers verse 42 we no longer believe just because of what you told us in reference to the women now we have heard him for ourselves and we know really that this man

Jesus Christ the Messiah is the saviour of not only the Jews but of the Gentiles and even of the Samaritans so he's the saviour of the world and Jesus encountered a tremendous acceptance and response and success from his encounter in Sychar and in Samaria many believed and accepted who he was that was the Samaritan response and so he stayed there we're told in verse 43 for two days and then he leaves to go further north to his home territory of Galilee and he's on his way back to his home territory but verse 44 tells us an interesting thing there is a very sort of difficult and much debated discussion about this verse but it tells us an interesting thing that the Lord Jesus was deliberately heading to Galilee his home area to a place where he was not expecting a good response because Jesus says these words he says for Jesus himself testified that a prophet has no honour in his own country he didn't expect to be treated or received well by his own people in Galilee they know him they know who he was brought up there they were familiar with him they were familiar with who he was he was the carpenter's son but as we know that expression familiarity sometimes breeds contempt but John interestingly tells us in verse 45 that he actually got a good reception this time when he came look at what he says so when he came to Galilee verse 45 the Galileans received him they welcomed him having seen all the things that he did in Jerusalem at the feast for they themselves also went to the feast see unlike the Samaritans the Galileans received him and welcomed him but they only received him and welcomed him because he had performed miracles and signs up in Jerusalem you see the Galilean acceptance as it were or receiving of Christ was very different from the acceptance that he received from the Samaritan women and the Samaritans you see when the Lord Jesus came to Galilee the Galileans expected to be entertained by the Lord Jesus Jesus offered to them entertainment and problem solving that's why they were interested in him the Galileans weren't seeking Jesus as a saviour they weren't recognising him as the Messiah the son of God but only as a person who was able to perform signs and do wonders and perform for them a miracle someone that they could use someone that would entertain them they were welcoming Jesus so that he could do something for them and they were anticipating him doing something their own boy as it were come home do something for us show us your stuff like you did at

Jerusalem at the feast earlier in John's gospel they're interested in him but for the wrong reason their interest is purely selfish and self centred you know that's true even today people can be interested for the wrong reasons interested in Jesus Christ for what he can do for them rather than who he is and what he demands of them but then Jesus encounters and makes his way up to Cana in Galilee we're back where we were this morning verse 46 back to the place where he performed his first sign the turning of water into wine and he's confronted by this nobleman this royal official he was probably a senior member of

King Herod Antipas his staff this man is in a desperate condition for his son is lying sick near to death back up in Capernaum about 16 miles away the bible tells us he's at the point of death verse 47 he's heard of Jesus Christ and he comes and verse 47 tells us he implores him he begs him to come and heal his son who's close to death this man has left his son in Capernaum and travelled these miles to ask Jesus the miracle worker to come and perform a miracle for him on his son he you know we thought in prayer of people who have experienced being close to death and experiencing death just now in

[45 : 26] COVID 19 in any congregation at some point somebody is bound to have had a son who is close to death and who maybe passes away who can understand the anguish of a parent with a child who's at the point of death and so this noble man understandably in one sense comes to the Lord Jesus please will you heal my son he has this great need and he wants Jesus to fix it for him but just as we saw this morning in Jesus response to Mary Jesus response to this man is quite unusual too there's a rebuke in here look at what he says in verse 48 here's a man who's in desperate need desperate plight his son's lying close to death 16 miles away he's made a journey and

Jesus response is quite unlikely he says unless you see signs and wonders you will not believe why was Jesus apparently so stern and dismissive with the man well I submit to you that he responded this way because this man had come in an act of idolatry he was viewing Jesus simply as a means to an end the nobleman's precious son was about to die so the nobleman wanted Jesus to fix the problem and that might be very very understandable and I'm sure it is very understandable but the nobleman's purpose in finding Jesus was not to worship him or to recognize him as the Messiah or the son of

God and the one who can give him eternal life but he just wanted simply Christ to fix his son he wanted to use God and that's a very common thing even today isn't it people who reject God somehow somehow very often want God to fix it for them when they're in a plight and when they're in a problem they're not interested in salvation as this man wasn't interested in salvation and the real identity of Jesus Christ he wasn't interested in who Jesus was he was only looking for a solution and a way out and he came to Jesus and Jesus rebuked him and he rebuked all those around who were listening because Jesus really says to them unless you all all you people that are listening he says see signs and wonders you will not simply believe in me you see Jesus was rebuking the Galileans in the presence because like the nobleman they too weren't interested in him theologically they were only interested in him pragmatically and he rebuked them because they didn't care who he was but only for what they could get out of him and they were focused on the signs themselves and not the saviour you see the value of any sign as we spoke to the children this morning there's no value in the sign itself the value in the sign that we look at is what they represent what they tell us who they direct us or what they direct us to and so these people were focused on the signs and the miracles and the wonder workings of Jesus rather than who he was and as we've seen already in

John's gospel Jesus performs signs so that people will believe in him as the son of God and as the Messiah the one who can bring us eternal life and he wanted the Jews his own people to believe in him in the same way that the Samaritans had for his word and for his word alone but the royal official isn't put off is he look at verse 49 he listens to the Lord Jesus and he says sir sir come down before my son my little one it really means dies I don't know how old this little son was but he's a little one come and touch him come and heal him please you can imagine him begging imploring the

[50 : 59] Lord Jesus please come come to Capernaum and touch my son heal him raise him up and you know the amazing thing the gracious thing is that even although Jesus was disappointed at least by the nobleman's request in his mercy he healed the man's son he healed the child from a distance and solely by the power of his word solely by the power of his spoken word Jesus didn't lay hands on the boy nor did he even go that six those 16 miles to Capernaum where the boy was to the nobleman's house instead he simply declared in verse 50 look at what he says go your way your son lives and the son was healed the man took

Jesus at his word and departed that was the nobleman's request come and heal my son please but look at his response he had faith in who Jesus was he realized at that moment I'm sure that Jesus didn't have to be there in Capernaum to perform the sign to perform the miracle he believed in who Jesus was and he simply trusted him implicitly and he obeyed that's why we sung this morning and we'll sing later on at the end of our meeting to trust and obey we saw that in the first sign this morning Mary said whatever Christ says do it this man trusted and obeyed he believed in who Jesus was and trusted he rested upon who Jesus was and what Jesus had said and when the nobleman learned that his son was healed at the exact hour that Jesus had spoken these words he and his entire house believed in Jesus you know the nobleman came I'm sure he came hurriedly to the Lord Jesus he certainly came humbly because he referred to the Lord Jesus as sir this nobleman this high ranking person humbled himself to come and ask Jesus but as you read between the lines as you read the narrative 16 do the maths 16 miles 3 miles an hour maybe walking maybe running if the man had run back home he would have been back there in 5 or 6 hours but the

Bible tells us that it was the next day that he was at home because the narrative goes on and talks about yesterday at this hour. In other words, what that tells me was that this nobleman didn't rush home to see if his son was alive.

He went home confidently in what Jesus had done. He went home leisurely. I'm sure with a peace in his heart because he had believed the word of Jesus. He didn't have to rush home. He knew that the miracle or the sign had taken place and he had come to faith in Christ.

[55 : 22] And just as the Lord Jesus has had his encounter with the Samaritan woman and that faith expanded to other people believing when the nobleman went home and told his household they believed also.

That faith grew. Verse 53, the entire household believed in who Jesus was. That story, this story took place 2,000, 20 years ago.

I wonder is it any different today? Is our generation any different from the Galileans? Are you and I any different from the nobleman?

Is the church any different? You see, the generation that Jesus was speaking to the world in which he lived sought for a sign.

That generation sought for a sign. Our generation seeks for a sign. The nobleman sought for a sign. Maybe you want God to do something for you before you will believe.

[56 : 49] You want God to prove himself to you. You might want God to perform something for you. People so often look for something that will satisfy them.

Something that will solve their problems. How often have we heard as we speak to people well if there is a God what's he doing for me? What's in it for me?

What do I get out of believing in God? What can religion or God do for me? You see the self-centeredness of it? And I'm sure some of us those of us who are believers have encountered speaking to people about God's word and about God and about the gospel and encountering these words.

Well if God did this for me then I would be able to trust him. If God shows me this or that then I will believe.

If God gets me out of this predicament then I will trust him. Then I'll know he's real. Then I'll be able to trust him.

[58 : 09] That's all what the Bible calls really sign-seeking isn't it? You know no sign or miracle ever saved anybody.

No sign or miracle ever gives us faith or belief. You know you can see the greatest miracle or the greatest sign and still not believe.

Why do I say that? Because the Bible tells us that Jesus says even if one rises from the dead what a sign that would be. You'll still not believe he said to a man one day.

If you had stood beside the Red Sea when God opened the Red Sea for the children of Israel to walk through I used to think boy that would be great wouldn't it? Just to be there and to see that well I would never not believe in God again.

But in a matter of days those who had seen that and who had walked right through the middle of the dry ground were grumbling. and not believing in God.

[59 : 24] You see the world tends to want to use God like the Galileans. But you know it's not just the world that might do that.

The church sometimes seeks signs also don't they? You see Jesus' rebuke here to the nobleman for sign seeking was not primarily directed at the world at large but to the church of his day to the Jewish generation who should have known better his fellow Jews.

Jesus Christ was speaking to the leaders of his day verse 48 you are seeking signs unless you see signs you will not believe.

And Jesus was rebuking them for seeking a sign rather than seeking himself. And the spirit of the world that I've just alluded to seeps into the church so often and seeps into our thinking doesn't it? And we become self-centered and we want God to perform for us and to help us and to get us out of a hole so often. And we become consumers in our church rather than worshippers.

[60 : 52] What do I mean by that? Well so often we come perhaps as Christians to our churches and we expect the church to meet our felt needs.

It's got to meet our needs it's got to be relevant to us. Is the worship meaningful to me? Do I like the singing? Do I like the praise? And we only accept what pleases us or works for us.

David Wells the well-known Christian says we have turned to a God that we can use rather than to a God we must obey.

We have turned to a God who will fulfill our needs rather than to a God before whom we must surrender our rights. I wonder have we become like the nobleman?

Are we coming to God so that we can use him? Profit from him? A God who we only look to when we want our problems fixed in life?

[62 : 09] A God who works for us? Well John records his signs to force our eyes away from the signs themselves in order to see the Saviour and so that we might seek God himself.

He calls us to see Christ as God the Son. Why did Jesus perform the sign? Why did he heal the child?

Well the answer again like the first miracle or sign that he performed the answer is that in performing the second sign at Cana Jesus displayed again who he really was. He healed that child with his mere word and at that very moment at one o'clock at the seventh hour the child was well. He had healed with his word alone and only God can do that. Only God can bring life into that existence bring things into existence by his spoken word and Jesus made it clear absolutely clear to that whole audience that he was the Son of God but I think this sign also proved that Jesus is the giver of life.

[63 : 42] He saved this life even though this boy was on the brink of death. By performing this sign Jesus declared to all that he had come to bring life to those who are close to death.

I was speaking to my wife this afternoon about this very thing. As you get older you realise that most of your life is behind you rather than ahead of you.

When you're younger you think you're immortal you think that life's going to go on and on and on but you know the fact of the matter is whether we like it or not whether we believe it or not we are all close to death.

No one knows what a new day may bring forth. In healing the nobleman's son Jesus was not giving in to the pragmatic demands of a father but rather demonstrating the powerful spiritual reality of who he was and is and what he came to do.

Jesus granted life to this little one so that everyone who witnessed this sign might see the real Jesus.

[65 : 11] He simply said to the man go your way your son lives. So are you like the Samaritans this evening or the Galileans?

Are you following him for who he is trusting in his word obeying his word or are you looking to Jesus as a means to an end?

Are you seeking the signs rather than focusing on what you really need which is a saviour? We all need a saviour. That's our greatest need.

the Samaritans heard and believed that he's the saviour of the world. The nobleman realised at that seventh hour at one o'clock who Jesus was.

He trusted and obeyed and he went on his way believing. May God help us to trust and obey in the saviour the only saviour who is Jesus the sufficient one.

[66 : 31] May God enable us all to trust in him. Let's pray together. Father we thank you for your son the Lord Jesus. We thank you that he came to live a life that we could not live.

to die a death that we deserved because of our sins. We thank you that he performed these signs that we have thought a little about today to show us that he is a saviour that he can meet all our needs and the greatest being the forgiveness of our sins.

Father we ask whoever we are this evening whether we are believers in the Lord Jesus Christ or not that we might come to the Lord Jesus and trust him and obey him.

it's the way that you have designed us to be to worship you to live for you to be in fellowship with you and we can't do that without your son.

We thank you that he's gone to the cross and he's taken the punishment that was due to people like ourselves. We ask that you might give us the faith and the trust to believe in him each day of our lives.

[68 : 08] Father help us to see the beauty of Jesus and may the beauty of Jesus be seen in us.

We ask this in Jesus name and for his sake and for his glory. Amen. Now we're going to sing just in closing and for the sake of time I think if we can well we will just do four verses of the hymn that we sung this morning already because I think it's appropriate when we walk with the Lord in the light of his word what a glory he sheds on our way while we do his good will he abides with us still and with all who will trust and obey trust and obey for there's no other way to be happy in Jesus but to trust and obey we'll sing four verses if we can William instead of the full amount to God's praise thank you and when we walk with the Lord in the light of his heart for the glory he sheds on our way love to his good will be a life with heart still and with all who will trust and obey trust and obey for there's no other way to be happy in

Jesus but to trust and obey not a shadow and lies not a cloud in the skies but his life with these eyes in the way not a doubt or a fear not a sign or a tear there's a mind only trust and obey trust and obey for there's no other way to be happy in Jesus but to trust and obey not a love that we bear not a sorrow we share but to love we don't which we remain not a grief not a loss not a proud not a

cross but if we trust and obey trust and obey for there's no other way to be happy in
Jesus but to trust and obey hearts together and prove the delights of his love I shall hold on the
altar we lay for the favor he shows and the joy he he shows but for them who will trust and obey
trust and obey for there's no other way to be happy in Jesus but to trust and obey okay let's
conclude with benediction father we would ask that we might be able to trust and obey you in all our
life through all the changing scenes of life now unto him who is able to keep us from falling and to
present us faultless and we ask that the blessing of that same
God the God almighty the father the son and the holy spirit might rest upon us all now and
forevermore amen a we in