



43 Now after two days he departed thence, and went into Galilee. 44 For Jesus himself testified, that a prophet hath no honour in his own country. 45 Then when he was come into Galilee, the Galilaeans received him, having seen all the things that he did at Jerusalem at the feast: for they also went unto the feast. 46 So Jesus came again into Cana of Galilee, where he made the water wine. And there was a certain nobleman, whose son was sick at Capernaum. 47 When he heard that Jesus was come out of Judaea into Galilee, he went unto him, and besought him that he would come down, and heal his son: for he was at the point of death. 48 Then said Jesus unto him, **Except ye see signs and wonders, ye will not believe.** 49 The nobleman saith unto him, Sir, come down ere my child die. 50 Jesus saith unto him, **Go thy way; thy son liveth.** And the man believed the word that Jesus had spoken unto him, and he went his way. 51 And as he was now going down, his servants met him, and told him, saying, Thy son liveth. 52 Then enquired he of them the hour when he began to amend. And they said unto him, Yesterday at the seventh hour the fever left him. 53 So the father knew that it was at the same hour, in the which Jesus said unto him, Thy son liveth: and himself believed, and his whole house. 54 This is again the second miracle that Jesus did, when he was come out of Judaea into Galilee. (John 4:43-54)

Jesus made a fair division of His attentions throughout His ministry. We are examining in this devotion His second miracle that He wrought following that of the Wedding feast at Cana of Galilee. But there were two very significant events that interceded: 1) The midnight visit of a Jewish member of the Sanhedrin, Nicodemus, whom Jesus led into the path of truth and light; and 2) the out-of-the-way trip Christ made to Sychar to see to the soul of a certain Samaritan Woman whom He knew He would meet at Jacob's Well in the heat of the day. One was a Jew and the other was not. Jesus came for us all – black, white, yellow, or red. He leaves no one out of His covenantal promise unless they choose to reject Him.

The Wedding at Cana of Galilee was likely one of common folk of common means. After all, they had invited the wife of a carpenter, the carpenter's son, and a number of others from the common walks of life such as fishermen who were disciples of Jesus. But the Grace and Mercy of Christ is not limited to the Jews, or to the poor, but to the Gentiles and to the wealthy and powerful also as is demonstrated in His second miracle at Cana. By the way, wouldn't you love to spend some time at Cana and walk

those same roads that Christ walked?

Jesus has returned from Jerusalem by way of Sychar in Samaria (and Jacob's Well). He had spent two days at Sychar where all received Him with joy. He always seemed to have greater honor in the distant travels than at home in His own hometown. As Jesus Himself said: **"A prophet is not without honour, save in his own country, and in his own house."** (Matt 13:57) It seems to me that many miracles of Jesus were more celebrated for their physical benefit to men than for the spiritual worth and revelation that they supplied. So, as it is written, *"For the Jews require a sign, and the Greeks seek after wisdom."* (1 Corinthians 1:22) It is often the dire circumstances of life, and of the moment, that compels us to faith – when no other possibility exists to satisfy a desperate need, our attention is focused on high to the God of Mercies and Miracles. Though our Lord was without honor in His own hometown of Nazareth, such was not the rule at every place in Galilee. It is likely that word went abroad with unencumbered facility once He had turned six large pots of water into wine – *"Aha, here is a worker of miracles who holds command over the material elements!"* But even greater than the sovereignty Jesus exercise over the material universe is that which He possesses over life itself as we shall see in this second miracle.

The Gospel text provides an example of victorious faith over the curse of Eden. Faith is the crown jewel of our religion and, without it, there can be no reconciliation to God. Our souls would remain in the dark abyss and our bodies wracked with every sore and boil without the Balm of the Faith of Gilead. The Gospel is a fitting benediction to that overcoming faith described in both the Collect and the epistle for today.

God would have us, I believe, to learn 1) that 'believing faith' is a faith that will draw down the miraculous powers of heaven; 2) Faith believes where evidence does not appear. *"Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. For by it the elders obtained a good report. Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear."* (Heb 11:1-3); 3) Faith must have a vehicle upon which to move – hearing; 4) Faith compels us, in our dire need, to draw on the smallest morsel of faith to satisfy that need; and 5) Our proper response to faith is immediate and without delay or procrastination. Its urgency is compelled by love.

Cana has been blessed with the first miracle of Christ, and a land that lends itself, by faith, to one miracle shall receive more. *"So Jesus came again into Cana of Galilee, where he made the water wine."* This is the city at which Jesus, in due regard for the high esteem in which He holds the first institution of God at Eden, honored the same estate by turning six large, stone vessels full of water into wine. It was a divine tribute to Marriage as an institution. Now, Christ, in His second miracle, will pay tribute to the blessed fruit of marriage – the child! The miracle would issue from Christ at Cana, and find its fulfillment in Capernaum, in the healing of a young boy.

There was a nobleman with connections to the power of the ruler whose son was deathly ill at the point of death. There was no earthly hope for the son so insidiously had the fever possessed his small frame. *"And there was a certain nobleman, whose son was sick at Capernaum."* Capernaum was some sixteen miles from Cana; however, that was a good day's travel in the time of Jesus. The nobleman had, without doubt, sought after every remedy, treatment, and physician at close hand who might improve his son to no avail. He had, most likely, expended every resort. When hope faded as a distant star on the horizon, suddenly, there came news of the coming of the man called Jesus coming out of Samaria into Cana of Galilee. He may have been present at the first miracle of

Jesus at Cana, but not likely in my thinking. Certainly, he had heard of the miracle for it was voiced abroad in the area. Suddenly, that fading star of hope became, to our nobleman and loving father, the Bright and Morning Star! Hope often gives birth to the primitive germination of faith, and so it was for this nobleman.

47 *“When he heard that Jesus was come out of Judaea into Galilee, he went unto him, and besought him that he would come down, and heal his son: for he was at the point of death.”* He had not seen Jesus previously in all likelihood, yet, when he heard that Jesus was coming, hope gave over to the early yearnings of faith – there was Light breaking over the distant landscape! *“So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.”* (Romans 10:17) Perhaps the nobleman had heard at the lips of a single, or many, witnesses. But SOMEONE had told him of Jesus and His coming. How sad that many have not had the benefit of hearing that Jesus has come, and will come again! I might add that ALL are at the very point of death without Christ. The need is great to carry the Gospel into every dark corner.

It was the elemental tug of faith that impelled action on the part of the distraught nobleman and father. Such a faith crosses all lines of class and stature – the poor as well as the rich and powerful. There comes a moment in the lives of great men such as General Naaman of Assyria whose leprosy made wreckage of his life, to the poor blind Bartemaeus whose hope hinged on the miracle he besought from a man he could not see outside the gates of Jericho. When all hope is abandoned, there remains only faith to rekindle its warm light. So, desponding of all possibility of an earthly cure, the nobleman now latched onto the Fountainhead of all Hope and Healing in that early touch of faith that suddenly penetrated the fortress walls of his heart. Here we see a man of great influence begging a favor of a poor itinerant carpenter! Does this make sense? No, it doesn't make a bit of worldly sense, but the actions of heaven are not dictated by worldly intelligence. Life and death matters (which are the concern of Heaven) breach all lines of royal propriety and academia. No time for role-playing when his son is at the very point of death! So he begs mercy from an unlikely source, but the only Source of life and miracles. What may seem unlikely to the world may make perfect sense with God.

How would the itinerant Master receive the nobleman of stature? He makes a very telling statement of fact. He is not questioning the nobleman's faith, but EXPOSING it as a contrast to the lack of faith that abounded among common men. 48 *Then said Jesus unto him, **Except ye see signs and wonders, ye will not believe.*** This man had not seen signs and wonders as many of the latter multitudes had seen, yet still did not believe. This man had not seen, yet believed still! That is the faith that begets miracles and the favor of God! This approach is very like a father telling his precious little daughter, with tongue in cheek, “Surely you do not want this candy treat – you are just pretending!” Jesus already knew the heart of this nobleman. He would have those who listened to his pleas to know his heart of faith as well. There is no discouragement or rebuff that will quench the light of earnest faith.

The gentle rebuff of Christ in no way diminishes either the faith, or its kindred, perseverance, of the nobleman. His nobility of character comes to light in his manner of responding to Christ. It is as if he knows that Christ will not deny him. His faith has told him this. 49 *“The nobleman saith unto him, Sir, come down ere my child die.”* “Please, Lord, let us not mince words – my son will die if you do not come down!” He knows Jesus well enough in his heart of faith that He will not slam the gates of mercy on a child – and He never has done so! He spoke out of faith but not out of mature spiritual knowledge. He believed that Jesus must personally come to where his son was to heal

him, but faith and divine power knows no distance.

Having exposed the child-like faith of this nobleman to the multitude gathered, Jesus speaks again, 50 *“Jesus saith unto him, **Go thy way; thy son liveth.** And the man believed the word that Jesus had spoken unto him, and he went his way.”* If the man did not understand before that Jesus need only say the Word, and not come personally to heal his son, he knew it now from the lips of Jesus whom he believed explicitly. The nobleman had no need of pressing his point further...mission accomplished! He immediately believed the word of Jesus and went on the trip back to his son at Capernaum. God will give this man CONFIRMATION of his faith in a most delightful way. Faith of the believer is ALWAYS confirmed in due time. We may be facing challenges that appear to have no end other than tragedy, but clinging to that morsel of faith that has been planted in our hearts; we believe the impossible...and the impossible comes to pass!

The servants of the nobleman have been standing a sorrowful watch over the man's son whom they most likely loved more than even the nobleman himself. Suddenly, they noted his perilous fever had broken and the boy was well – as well as he had ever been! In amazement, they ran along the road to Cana to tell the nobleman. 51 *“And as he was now going down, his servants met him, and told him, saying, Thy son liveth. Then enquired he of them the hour when he began to amend. And they said unto him, Yesterday at the seventh hour the fever left him. So the father knew that it was at the same hour, in the which Jesus said unto him, Thy son liveth: and himself believed, and his whole house.”* Note here, again, the direction the man was traveling. He had experienced a mountain-top experience with the Savior. Any direction we take after being with Christ in either presence or prayer is down again to the valleys in which we must move and labor. When told that his son lived, he inquired of the time of his improvement for the sake of confirmation of his faith. The journey from Cana to Capernaum was at least a day's travel. When told that the son recovered the previous day at the 7th hours (1 P.M.), the nobleman was not surprised but rejoiced in the confirmation of that small kernel of faith that had brought him face-to-face with Jesus. I hope you, too, have had that kernel of faith that has brought you face-to-face with Jesus. After that encounter, that kernel will grow into a hundredfold, an even untold harvests of souls.

We must not dismiss the results of the faith of the fathers for the children. Remember Zaccheus whose was saved with his whole household at his faith in Christ. See here how the noblemen believed AND HID WHOLE HOUSE (including servants). We have the promise of God that our children shall not depart in old age from that righteous path wherein the fathers walked if they are trained up in the nurture of the Word of God. One of the imperatives of baptism is to raise the child according to the promises of God, and that child shall confirm the faith of the parents in due time. What a glorious and loving Lord we have in Christ!