

## John 4B (2014)

- What is the proper response to becoming a disciple of the Messiah?
  - That's the question John explores in the second half of chapter 4
    - The chapter starts with the Samaritan woman at the well
    - She was a woman who lacked access to truth of God
    - She was trapped in a false religious system
  - But on this day, she came to understand that Jesus was the Messiah
    - And through this encounter, the Lord gave her the gift of faith
    - And by her faith, she has been transformed
  - Her spiritual transformation was similar to that of Nicodemus and the disciples of Jesus
    - Just as with this woman, those Jewish men were living in darkness until the moment the Light of the World enlightened their hearts
    - Now being Jews, we might expect that those converts would have set the standard for how to be a disciple of the Lord
    - Surely a Pharisee would be a strong witness for Christ among his peers in the Sanhedrin
    - Surely the disciples of Jesus would be the first to reach out to the lost with a testimony of the Messiah
    - And the last person we might expect to set the standard as a follower of a Jewish Messiah would be a Samaritan woman
- But as we saw in v.27 last week the disciples didn't react properly to finding Jesus speaking to the Samaritan woman at the well
  - They refused even to address her
    - Of course, they had no idea that the woman had accepted Jesus as Messiah
    - They're weren't privy to their conversation

- So if they didn't know she had learned that Jesus was the Messiah, is it too much to expect that they might have considered this woman a likely candidate to follow Christ
- Instead, they continued the Jewish practice of shunning Samaritans, including this woman
- Seems they haven't got the idea yet
- Ironically, the Jews had every advantage with respect to the truth of Messiah
  - They had the prophets, the covenants, the Temple service
  - They had the full counsel of God's word
  - And most of all, they had the Messiah born in their midst
  - Yet they have no sense of mercy and charity to their fellow man
  - So Jesus has His work cut out for Him with these guys
- Meanwhile, the Samaritan woman ignores these men and their prejudice
  - She might have wondered why the Messiah was bothering with such poor disciples
    - But regardless she has more pressing things to attend to...

[John 4:28](#) So the woman left her waterpot, and went into the city and said to the men, [John 4:29](#) "Come, see a man who told me all the things that I have done; this is not the Christ, is it?"

[John 4:30](#) They went out of the city, and were coming to Him.

- The woman says nothing to the disciples and simply leaves
- But she is so excited to leave, that she forgets her waterpot at the well
- John includes this detail to demonstrate her urgency and excitement
- But there is also a great symbol in her absentmindedness
  - A moment earlier she had been defending this well and chastising Jesus for offering a better source of water

- And she had even mocked Him for not having a bucket to draw water
- But when Jesus offered her the living water He promised, she found it so exciting that she had no need for the other water
- Just as Jesus had promised
- She leaves to enter into the city of Sychar and immediately found the leading men of the city
  - Consider the courage that this required
    - The men of the city would have been sitting in the city gate on a normal day of business
    - This woman would have had brought her tattered reputation into that public place with probably few if any friends to support her
    - Just entering the city gates would have provoked stares and perhaps mocking comments
  - Nevertheless, she doesn't let these things stop her
    - This is quite a contrast to the disciples
    - That group of Jewish men couldn't bear the thought to talk to a single Samaritan woman about the Messiah standing next to them
    - This shamed woman is willing to run right to the leaders of the city and declare the arrival of a Christ that no one had yet even seen
    - Faith leads us to do crazy things
    - Formulaic religion just leads us to conform to human expectations
- The most comical part of the woman's testimony is the way she highlights her own sordid past as proof of her claims
  - She points to the fact that this stranger could name her sins so specifically as her proof that Jesus was Messiah
    - As we said last week, this was the turning point for this woman's heart

- Her deeds were brought into the Light, but there was no condemnation!
- So now she neither worries about them being a matter of public discourse
- What a relief it must have been for a woman living the kind of life she was living
- That's the impact of Christ in our hearts...He removes the guilt for our past sins and takes away the burdens
- In the past, this woman may have entertained thoughts from time to time of the Messiah's arrival
  - But I assume that possibility didn't leave her feeling very optimistic
  - More likely, she was terribly worried at the prospect of what His arrival would mean for her
  - Given her sinful past, she might have assumed it would be a bad day
  - And that concern was the source of her guilt
  - But now that she has encountered grace, she can confidently and joyfully announce the good news to others, despite her shameful past
  - Such is the power of the Gospel
- Perhaps it's her insistence, or her bravery or just her lack of shame, but something caused the leaders to take her claims seriously...seriously enough to follow her to the well
  - The leaders of the city go out of the city to investigate the woman's claims
    - And as the Samaritans make their way to Jesus, the Lord is still sitting at the well with the disciples
    - They had brought Him food as He requested

[John 4:31](#) Meanwhile the disciples were urging Him, saying, “ Rabbi, eat.”

[John 4:32](#) But He said to them, “I have food to eat that you do not know about.”

[John 4:33](#) So the disciples were saying to one another, “No one brought Him anything to eat, did he?”

[John 4:34](#) Jesus said to them, “My food is to do the will of Him who sent Me and to accomplish His work.

[John 4:35](#) “Do you not say, ‘There are yet four months, and then comes the harvest’? Behold, I say to you, lift up your eyes and look on the fields, that they are white for harvest.

[John 4:36](#) “Already he who reaps is receiving wages and is gathering fruit for life eternal; so that he who sows and he who reaps may rejoice together.

[John 4:37](#) “For in this case the saying is true, ‘ One sows and another reaps.’

[John 4:38](#) “I sent you to reap that for which you have not labored; others have labored and you have entered into their labor.”

- I like to imagine Jesus seated by the well, perhaps in the shade of small tree nearby
  - And the disciples have brought Him bread, maybe a piece of fruit, perhaps some salted fish
    - But Jesus isn’t interested in eating
    - He’s disappointed in them and it shows on His face
    - And the disciples are concerned not understanding what’s bothering Christ
    - So they urge Jesus to have some of the food
  - Jesus responds by teaching them a lesson using food as an example
    - He says he has food they don’t know about
    - Immediately, we’re made aware that Jesus is talking about something spiritual again
    - We know this because we know Jesus hadn’t received any food while He’s been at the well
    - But naturally, the disciples assume He’s talking about physical food
  - Here’s another of those “passing in the night” conversations

- They asking one another if one of them gave Jesus food earlier, and of course no one did
- These guys are missing Jesus' point, of course, just as the Samaritan woman did a moment earlier
- Funny how the Samaritan woman was too busy looking down her nose at Jesus to understand His conversation
- And now the disciples, who were too good to talk to a Samaritan woman, are equally clueless
- The Jesus takes pity on them and explains the meaning of His comment
  - Jesus says that His food is to do the will of the One Who sent Him
    - Obviously, we know Jesus is speaking of doing the will of the Father in Heaven
    - How is obeying the Father a "food" for Jesus?
  - Well, consider that this conversation was coming on the heels of the earlier one with the woman
    - In that conversation, Jesus redirected the woman's thoughts away from satisfying her flesh's need for water
    - And toward her spirit's need for living water
    - Jesus wasn't denying that the body needs to drink water
    - But He did want the woman to put satisfying her spiritual needs ahead of satisfying her physical needs
    - It should have been more important for the woman to find a source of eternal life than to spend time keeping her physical body alive
  - Likewise, Jesus isn't denying the need to feed His physical body with food
    - He's asking the disciples to think about spiritual priorities ahead of physical priorities
    - They had been so focused on eating that they hadn't even considered the possibility of reaching this Samaritan woman with the message of the Kingdom

- So Jesus is teaching them a lesson about priorities in life
- The first priorities of life must be spiritual priorities
- And specifically, pleasing the One Who calls us into service must be our first priority
- For Jesus, the highest priority was accomplishing the work of the Father, and this was all the satisfaction Jesus needed
  - He wasn't even willing to delay obedience for the sake of a single meal
    - He hadn't stopped at this well to get a drink or to get food
    - He stopped here to reach a Samaritan woman
    - And through that contact, Jesus anticipated reaching an entire community with the Gospel
    - This was the work the Father sent Jesus to do, and He wasn't going to get distracted
  - But the disciples have their priorities backward, it would seem
    - Jesus tells them not to say that the harvest is still four months away
    - Instead, they needed to serve God with a mindset that the harvest is continually ready, speaking of a harvest of men and women
    - Interestingly, the Samaritan people customarily wore solid white robes as a sign of their spiritual purity
    - So as Jesus spoke these words, the disciples might have been able to look up and see a "field" of white walking toward them
    - As the men of Sychar made their way out from the city to meet Jesus
- In v.36 Jesus says the harvest has already begun, that is the message of salvation is already going out into the world
  - The reaping of this harvest is the responsibility of Jesus' disciples
    - These men and all believers who come after them are responsible to assisting in the harvest
    - We receive those the Lord is saving

- We proclaim the Gospel
- We baptize those who believe
- We disciples all who confess so they may return to the field and harvest still more
- That is the labor of a disciple in the world, but these disciples haven't internalized that responsibility as yet
  - That's a shame, because a disciple that fails to serve in the field is sacrifices wages, Jesus says
  - Notice in v.36 that Jesus says a reaper will receive wages for their service
  - We know these wages to be eternal rewards for serving
  - We're like workers picking up fruit in the field, except that this is eternal fruit
- Jesus says there are those who sow and those who reap, and in this context both refer to disciples
  - It's similar to the analogy Paul uses in 1Corinthians when he said that He planted and Apollos watered
  - The idea is that we each take part in the process of reaping in different ways
  - But in the end we will all have a chance to rejoice together over the resulting rewards
- Jesus sums up the Lord's expectation by saying that He expects that our cycle of sowing and reaping is to continue in a selfless fashion
  - Jesus quotes a saying that one sows and another reaps, meaning that both roles are required for either party to benefit from the labor
    - It was easy for the one harvesting to be motivated by their work, since they were anticipating eating the harvest
    - But those who reaped the harvest should share it with those who earlier planted the seeds
    - It was harder for the one sowing to be as motivated since the harvest is four months away



- But if both the planter know they will share in the harvest, than neither has excuse to work hard
- So it is in serving as a disciple and ambassador in the world
  - We might think that since we have secured our salvation, there's no reason to work hard for Christ
  - But no Christian is free to take a pass in the work of the Gospel
  - Jesus reminds us that we were all brought into faith through the work of another who worked selflessly to ensure a good harvest
- In fact, all disciples reap a harvest they didn't plant, including the ones seated around Jesus at the well
  - Others had labored before them as God called and equipped
  - Those others were the OT prophets including John the Baptist
  - They were also the faithful men and women in Israel who guarded the word of God and taught it to their children
  - They were priests and rabbis with true hearts to teach the people about the coming Lord
- Clearly, Jesus is chastising the disciples for their apathy for sharing what they know about the Messiah with the world
  - We might be tempted to cut these guys some slack, since they haven't been following Jesus very long
    - Just how much experience would Jesus expect these men to have by this point?
    - Well however little time these disciples have spent with Jesus, it's still an eternity compared to the brief encounter the Samaritan woman had
    - And yet we see what she's accomplishing as a disciple of Jesus

[John 4:39](#) From that city many of the Samaritans believed in Him because of the word of the woman who testified, "He told me all the things that I have done."

[John 4:40](#) So when the Samaritans came to Jesus, they were asking Him to stay with them; and He stayed there two days.

[John 4:41](#) Many more believed because of His word;

[John 4:42](#) and they were saying to the woman, "It is no longer because of what you said that we believe, for we have heard for ourselves and know that this One is indeed the Savior of the world."

[John 4:43](#) After the two days He went forth from there into Galilee.

[John 4:44](#) For Jesus Himself testified that a prophet has no honor in his own country.

- Just the simple testimony of this woman was enough to draw out a large crowd from the city
  - All she told them was that Jesus had the ability to know her innermost secrets
    - Not the most compelling testimony, at least not in earthly terms
    - Nevertheless, it was enough to bring out this crowd
    - Of course, their interest in coming as a result of the prompting of the Holy Spirit
    - Which is the whole point to why Jesus can say the harvest is white
    - Even when we don't know exactly what to say or how to say, it matters not because the Lord is capable of taking even the most meager testimony and using it to change a heart
- Notice that the people who came out to meet Jesus believe in what they hear
  - And they tell the woman that their faith in Messiah is no longer based solely in her testimony
    - Instead, they now see for themselves that the word of Christ testify to His claims
    - They are convinced by Jesus Himself
    - The woman played an important role as God chose to use her
    - But in the end, the truth of Jesus' claims don't rest in the credibility of His disciples

- He is self-evidently true, and He is more than capable of making Himself known to anyone who seeks Him
- These details remove any objections we might offer for refusing to serve as an obedient disciple
  - We know from chapter 3 that saving faith is a product of new birth accomplished by God in the heart of man
  - And yet the Lord calls disciples to follow His example of living to serve and please the Master Who called them
  - That work involves sharing a testimony of Jesus with the world
  - But in the end our testimony merely brings someone to an encounter with Christ, and in that encounter Christ makes Himself known
- Even though the result lies in God's power, it still hold out the potential for an eternal reward for us
  - So we have no reason not to place the Lord's priorities above our own
  - That's why Jesus tells His disciples not to worry about earthly things
  - Focus on a heavenly food
  - Don't feed your flesh, serve the Lord
- I imagine the disciples would have been amazed to see a friendly crowd of Samaritans approaching Jesus at the well
  - It was beyond their comprehension to think that their rabbi could unite Jew and Samaritan in this way
    - Remember, two years later in Jesus' ministry the disciples offer to call down fire from Heaven to destroy Samaritans who refused Jesus accommodation
    - So as dramatic as this moment must have been, it didn't settle the issue in their hearts
    - In fact, in the book of Acts we still see evidence of that prejudice in chapter 8 as Peter and John travel into Samaria to verify Philip's ministry

- The apostles were surprised to see Samaritans accepting the truth of Jesus as Messiah, even though this scene had happened already
- Interestingly, the people remark that Jesus is the Savior of the world
  - Only John uses this phrase, and it reflects his desire to expand on what had already been written in the earlier Gospels
    - By the time John wrote his Gospel, the world had come to realize that the good news of the Messiah's arrival was intended to reach far beyond the nation of Israel
    - It was intended to reach into Samaria
    - And more than that, it was to reach Gentiles as far away as Rome and Tarsus
    - But when the earlier Gospels were written, that truth was still emerging
  - Now by the end of the first century, it was clearly evident
    - So John makes a point to emphasize that Jesus wasn't just a Jewish Savior
    - He was the Savior for all nations, for the whole world
- Jesus ends up staying in the area two days at the request of the Samaritans
  - And as a result of being there, even more believe John says
    - Normally, Samaritans wouldn't even allow a Jew to stay in the area overnight
    - But now, these people are encouraging Jesus to stay with them
  - The power of the Gospel to change hearts is on full display
    - These people, inspired by their leaders, are now worshipping in Spirit and Truth
    - And these Samaritans stood in marked contrast to the Jewish leaders in Jerusalem who discounted Jesus in favor of their own dead, religious system
- So after two days Jesus sets out to return to the Galilee
  - The Galilee was the northern most part of Judea

- It was largely considered a backwater region
- Jews in Jerusalem held it low regard
- Later in John's Gospel we'll here the Pharisees dismiss Jesus as Messiah by saying that no prophet ever arises out of the Galilee
  - Which was actually untrue
- Nevertheless, the Jews in Jerusalem were self-important, elitist and privileged
- Which is exactly why Jesus spent most of His time ministering in the soft hearts of the Galileans
- In v.44, John quotes Jesus testifying that He had no honor in his own country
  - The Greek word for "country" can also mean home city
  - And by the context, we know Jesus was referring to Jerusalem
  - Jerusalem is the home city of the Messiah in the sense that the throne of David was in that city
  - Jerusalem is the place the Messiah is rule and reign over the people of Israel
  - And one day, He will
  - But for now, Jesus is moving back to the Galilee where He will find a very different reception

**John 4:45** 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.

- The Galileans received Jesus warmly back into their region
  - And they did so because they had likewise traveled into Jerusalem for the feast of Passover
    - As we said in an earlier lesson, all make Jews were required to travel to Jerusalem for the feast of Passover
    - So like the Jews in Jerusalem, these Galilean Jews saw the miracles Jesus performed in the city over the week of Passover

- And they haven't forgotten how impressive His teaching and miracles were
- In fact, they have probably been waiting for Jesus to make His way back home
- This explains why Jesus spent so much time in this region early in His ministry
  - He went where He saw the Spirit working, for that was His mission
  - And conversely, He went to Jerusalem to die, for that is where the prophets were killed
- And now that Jesus has returned, He returns to His healing ministry

**John 4:46** 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.

**John 4:47** 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 he was at the point of death.

**John 4:48** So Jesus said to him, "Unless you people see signs and wonders, you simply will not believe."

**John 4:49** The royal official said to Him, "Sir, come down before my child dies."

**John 4:50** Jesus said to him, "Go; your son lives." The man believed the word that Jesus spoke to him and started off.

- Jesus returns to Cana, for as we said, Cana seems to be the city Jesus moves Himself and His earthly family as He began His ministry
  - John's mention of Cana serves as a bookend to the start of Chapter 2
    - Between these two mentions of Cana, we find John's's only description of Jesus' early ministry
    - So what did John want his readers to understand about Jesus' early ministry?
  - The two conversations John highlights between Jesus and Nicodemus and the Samaritan Woman neatly sum up those early months
    - Among the Jews of Jerusalem, there was suspicion, dismissal, and ignorance of Jesus' identity
    - Later this would turn to outright hostility

- And while a few like Nicodemus come to faith in the Messiah
- For the most part, Jesus is not well received among the Jews in Jerusalem
- But among the outcasts, the Samaritans, the poor, the Gentiles...Jesus finds a ready and receptive audience
  - And they return time and again to Him seeking His word and His healing power
  - This in a nutshell explains why Jesus spent most of His years in earthly ministry in the northern region rather than Jerusalem
- As He returns, He is met by a royal official in need of healing for his dying son
  - A royal official would mean some someone who is in service to a king
    - And in this time and place, that would have to mean someone who served Herod Antipas, the self-appointed King of Judea
    - It's unclear whether this man was Gentile or Jewish, though Jesus' comments in v.48 seem to suggest He was talking to a fellow Jew
  - The official says his son lives in Capernaum
    - Capernaum was the seat of Roman rule in Judea, so it would make sense that the official lived there
    - It's also a considerable distance from Cana, about 17 miles
    - This man is clearly desperate for anything that might save his son
    - So he traveled the distance to see Jesus when he hears that Jesus has returned
- As he makes his request, Jesus remarks that the people of Galilee are consistently requesting signs and wonders before they can believe in Jesus
  - Now why does Jesus chose this moment to make this declaration?
    - Jesus is remarking on this man's willingness to travel so far to make His request
    - And on his insistence that Jesus return with him to Capernaum to heal his son

- If the man truly were operating in faith in Jesus as the Messiah, then he wouldn't need Jesus to return physically
  - In fact, he wouldn't have needed to make the trip himself
  - He could have just prayed for healing from his child's bedside
  - If Jesus is capable of healing the human body, then He is clearly capable of operating in supernatural ways
  - And therefore, time and space would not be an obstacle
  - So faith in Jesus as Lord wouldn't require that a man travel and insist that Jesus travel as well
- So, if you feel the need to make the trip and bring Jesus back with you, then it suggests you need to see physical proof, a sign of Jesus' power
  - That's what Jesus means when he says these people are consistently seeking physical signs to bolster their faith
  - It's one thing to believe that Jesus could heal, but it's another to believe that Jesus was the God Who could heal without barriers
- When God works through a man or woman, naturally that work will be as limited by the physical nature of the person
  - A man with the gift of healing must be in the presence of the one He heals
    - God is the One performing the healing
    - But still He is working through a person, and that constrains the healing to space and time
    - We can acknowledge that God did the work
    - But we also understand that the person performing the healing is just a vessel the Lord is using
  - On the other hand, when God Himself performs a miraculous work on His own, He is not bound by space or time
    - He doesn't suffer the limitations that a created being must work within
    - Such was Jesus, even in His incarnate form



- Jesus could direct supernatural outcomes through the Spirit of God
- So, belief in Christ's healing power from a distance became a distinguishing characteristic of true faith
- Believing that Jesus could heal from anywhere meant acknowledging Him as God
- Jesus chastises this man's incomplete faith, but the man is so desperate He isn't put off by Jesus' comments and pressing his request
  - So Jesus grants the man his request for healing
    - Jesus declares that the man's son is healed from 17 miles away
    - Now the question is whether the man would believe Jesus' word
    - Jesus hasn't given him the sign he required, that is Jesus didn't travel and heal the son in the man's presence
    - Instead, Jesus made a declaration to test the man's faith
  - At this point, in v. 50 we're told that the man believed Jesus' word
    - This is the biblical definition of saving faith throughout the Bible
    - Just as when Abraham believed the word of God and was declared righteous, so has this man believed in the word of Jesus
    - He truly believes his sons has been healed by the word of Christ
    - If he had any doubt at all, he wouldn't have left Jesus to walk 17 miles back to Capernaum
      - He wouldn't have wanted to risk the possibility that his son hadn't been healed
  - Saving faith is always a confidence in things hoped for, and a conviction in things unseen
    - This man is convinced that what he hopes for has come to pass based solely on Jesus' word
    - Saving faith is always this way
    - Today, we hope for the resurrection that follows our death

- And we are convinced that Jesus is Lord and will return for us one day
- And though we haven't seen these things come to pass as yet, we still maintain that confidence because he have faith in the word of God
- Just as this royal official did

[John 4:51](#) As he was now going down, his slaves met him, saying that his son was living.

[John 4:52](#) 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."

[John 4:53](#) 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.

[John 4:54](#) This is again a second sign that Jesus performed when He had come out of Judea into Galilee.

- The official leaves to return to Capernaum, and on the road he encounters his own servants coming to inform him that his son was well
  - The distance of 17 miles represents about 2 days travel by foot, so it's in the second day that the official and the servants meet
    - When the man hears the news, he immediately asks when the son was healed
    - The purpose of his question is to test Jesus' words
    - And in that sense, he continues to seek for a sign
  - He's told that the fever left at the seventh hour
    - This is a specific moment and a specific event
    - The suddenness of the healing was remarkable, such that the servants knew the exact moment it occurred
    - This confirmation was a sign to this man that Jesus did as He promised
  - In this case, his desire for a sign follows his faith, rather than preceding faith
    - This is an important distinction

- A sign can be a useful and healthy support to faith when it follows faith
- The Lord grants us such a confirming sign in the way we receive the Holy Spirit after faith
- The work of the Spirit in us gives us a confirmation that we have received what the scriptures promises
- But when we seek signs in advance of faith, it's proof that we lack faith altogether
- And our request for signs becomes a barrier to faith, not a means to it
- As the official learns that his son was healed at exactly the time when Jesus spoke, it says that he believed and all his household
  - We need to understand these statements with a full appreciation of the context of these events and the natural process of faith in the heart
    - First, the man believed in Jesus' promise during a moment of crisis
    - He appealed to Jesus, and Jesus declared the son healed
    - The man left believing in Jesus' potential to save and hopeful that the healing would happen as Jesus promised
    - This is the faith of a new believer: a fragile hope that needs signs to strengthen
  - Then the official hears the news of his son's healing, and his faith is strengthened
    - This moved him from faith found in a crisis to a faith formed in confidence
    - The sign of the instant healing caused the man's faith to grow strong and assured
    - From this point forward, he would never have doubted in Jesus' word or claims
  - And when you have a faith that is strong and confident, you are in a position to share that faith with others in a convincing manner

- You move to a contagious faith, one that leads others to follow through the supernatural blessing of the Spirit
- That's why we hear that the man's household believed
- The Bible isn't declaring that because one member of the family believes, then automatically all members will believe
- We can find many examples of families where one member comes to faith but no one else follows
- Instead, John is simply emphasizing the strength of this man's faith
  - He is so convinced and so enthusiastic over Jesus' miracle that he has come home and preached the truth to his whole family
  - And of course, they saw the healing as well, which no doubt bolstered their faith as well
  - And they all believed
- John ends with by saying this was this was the second sign that Jesus performed when He came out of Galilee
  - John is calling it the second, because of the earlier miracle done in Cana
    - The first was turning water into wine
    - The second is healing the official's son from a distance
    - These are signs that reflect Jesus as Creator and God
    - Indisputably, if someone can turn one physical substance into another or heal with just a word, they are demonstrating themselves to be the Creator
  - Together these two miracles form a complete cycle in Jesus' early ministry
    - The ministry began somewhat prematurely with his mother seeking a miracle to save a wedding host from embarrassment
    - And it ends with a father seeking Jesus to heal his son
    - The first sign is done in private but causes the disciples to believe
    - And the second sign is done in private and causes the official's family to believe

- But together they show the deity of Jesus
  - In fact, the entire narrative between these two miracles highlights the power of God in Jesus
  - His creative power is on display in the water and wine
  - His authority over the temple and in teaching were evident in Jerusalem and with Nicodemus
  - His omniscience was evident with the Samaritan woman
  - And His healing power over time and space was evident with the official's son
- And they sum up Jesus time in Galilee prior to gaining the unhelpful attention of the Pharisees
  - Jesus showing mercy on people of all kinds
  - Jesus teaching His disciples that they are to seek the lost as well
  - And Jesus displaying Himself to be God through miracles that could mean nothing else
- Looking ahead, chapters 5-10 chronicle Jesus antagonizing the leaders of Israel
  - Jesus moves into Judea and Jerusalem routinely and as He does, He begins to explain Himself more forcefully
    - John's Gospel is best known for the long monologues Jesus speaks
    - The first of those comes in John 5, as Jesus explains His work on behalf of the Father