

Sunday Night, July 7, 2007 – Notes: [Encouraging our Faith: A Nobleman's Son Healed](#).

Order of events:

1. Opening prayer.
2. Praise God with song.
3. Praise God with corporate prayer.
4. Praise God with study of His Word.
5. Close (blessing, reminder of the Gospel, prayer)

Read John 4:43-54. Why did God, through John, include this story in the gospel? Remembering the overall theme of John's gospel from chapter 20:

John 20 {30} Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book; {31} but these are written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.

And from our reading of verse 54:

John 4 {54} This was now the second sign that Jesus did when he had come from Judea to Galilee.

And what is a sign? Something that communicates information that you ordinarily wouldn't know. John is making it crystal clear that Jesus was not just some clever, educated, wise man with a top-secret fount of medical and magic tricks; no, Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, Master and Commander of the universe.

I was struggling this week thinking about Adam and Eve and the Garden of Eden just wondering what their life was like and how it was possible for there to be no death. I remember Ken Hamm saying that death did not enter the world until after the Fall of mankind. What would have happened had Adam fell from a cliff? Natural calamities, that seemingly have nothing to do with the Curse, happen to people all the time. I had a friend that tripped and hit his head and he died. Things happen. Then I read this text in John. And I thought about how God tells us that "we will be like Him [Christ]." (1 John 3:2) "[Christ,] who will transform our lowly body to be like his glorious body." (Phil 3:21) And, "it is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body. If there is a natural body, there is also a spiritual body." And so as Christ could rearrange the molecular structure of his body and walk through locked doors (John 20:26), and control the wind and the waves, and heal all sorts of deformities even 15 miles away, it occurred to me that maybe that was how mankind was before our separation from God, to what degree that dominion extended we don't know. God wrote this Scripture to answer my stupid question 1,900 years later! Thank you, Lord. With that, let's take a look at this story.

John 4 {43} After the two days he departed for Galilee. {44} (For Jesus himself had testified that a prophet has no honor in his own hometown.) {45} So when he came to Galilee, the Galileans welcomed him, having seen all that he had done in Jerusalem at the feast. For they too had gone to the feast.

Classic John: simple words, simple sentences, not so simple to understand. What exactly is John trying to tell us here? Usually in Scripture when the meaning and reading aren't obvious then it's either something profound and deep, or we're not reading it clearly, or we simply don't understand the context. Two scenarios seem to jump out right away: 1) two days is long enough to be somewhere, at that level of intensity, before one becomes old news, less interesting, or wearying; 2) one must leave his hometown and gain prominence elsewhere before he is recognized and admired at home. Maybe I'm simply

too indecisive, but I think he means both. I do think “hometown” is a general reference, not specifically aimed at Nazareth, Jesus’ hometown.

Careful reading of the text reveals the telltale magical words called conjunctions: little words that function as connectors between words, phrases, clauses, or sentences such as *and, because, but, however, therefore, so, for*, etc. Therefore, verse 44 is tied to verse 43 with the conjunction “for.” It could be restated that Jesus left for Galilee *because* a prophet in one area too long is old news. *So*, or *therefore*, when he came to Galilee, since they hadn’t seen him in a while and *because* they had seen his miracles in Jerusalem, they welcomed him back gladly. I think we and our pastor and his family just experienced a little bit of this while he was gone for 12 weeks on sabbatical in Africa. Our pastor and his family were a refreshing burst of newness and excitement to the folks in Malawi and the African Bible College, and they managed to leave before becoming “old news.” And when they returned to the states, our congregation was beside itself with joy to receive them. There is huge profoundness and wisdom in keeping things vivacious and fresh and challenging.

We used to have a saying, “familiarity breeds contempt.” Proverbs tells us, “Seldom set foot in your neighbor’s house – too much of you, and he will hate you.” (Pro 25:17) That’s one aspect of what John is saying. Let’s look at Luke chapter 4 to see the other side:

Luke 4 {14} And Jesus returned in the power of the Spirit to Galilee, and a report about him went out through all the surrounding country. {15} And he taught in their synagogues, being glorified by all.

{16} And he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up. And as was his custom, he went to the synagogue on the Sabbath day, and he stood up to read. {17} And the scroll of the prophet Isaiah was given to him. He unrolled the scroll and found the place where it was written,

**{18} “The Spirit of the Lord is upon me,
because he has anointed me
to proclaim good news to the poor.
He has sent me to proclaim liberty to the captives
and recovering of sight to the blind,
to set at liberty those who are oppressed,
{19} to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favor.”**

{20} And he rolled up the scroll and gave it back to the attendant and sat down. And the eyes of all in the synagogue were fixed on him. {21} And he began to say to them, “Today this Scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing.” {22} And all spoke well of him and marveled at the gracious words that were coming from his mouth. And they said, “Is not this Joseph’s son?” {23} And he said to them, “Doubtless you will quote to me this proverb, ‘Physician, heal yourself.’ What we have heard you did at Capernaum, do here in your hometown as well.” {24} And he said, “Truly, I say to you, no prophet is acceptable in his hometown. {25} But in truth, I tell you, there were many widows in Israel in the days of Elijah, when the heavens were shut up three years and six months, and a great famine came over all the land, {26} and Elijah was sent to none of them but only to Zarephath, in the land of Sidon, to a woman who was a widow. {27} And there were many lepers in Israel in the time of the prophet Elisha, and none of them was cleansed, but only Naaman the Syrian.” {28} When they heard these things, all in the synagogue were filled with wrath. {29} And they rose up and drove him out of the town and brought him to the brow of the hill on which their town was built, so that they could throw him down the cliff. {30} But passing through their midst, he went away.

{31} And he went down to Capernaum, a city of Galilee. And he was teaching them on the Sabbath, {32} and they were astonished at his teaching, for his word possessed authority. {33} And in the synagogue there was a man who had the spirit of an unclean demon, and he cried out with a loud voice, {34} “Ha! What have you to do with us, Jesus of Nazareth? Have you come to destroy us? I know who you are--the Holy One of God.”

{35} But Jesus rebuked him, saying, “Be silent and come out of him!” And when the demon had thrown him down in their midst, he came out of him, having done him no harm. {36} And they were all amazed and said to one another, “What is this word? For with authority and power he commands the unclean spirits, and they come out!” {37} And reports about him went out into every place in the surrounding region.

{38} And he arose and left the synagogue and entered Simon’s house. Now Simon’s mother-in-law was ill with a high fever, and they appealed to him on her behalf. {39} And he stood over her and rebuked the fever, and it left her, and immediately she rose and began to serve them.

{40} Now when the sun was setting, all those who had any who were sick with various diseases brought them to him, and he laid his hands on every one of them and healed them. {41} And demons also came out of many, crying, “You are the Son of God!” But he rebuked them and would not allow them to speak, because they knew that he was the Christ.

{42} And when it was day, he departed and went into a desolate place. And the people sought him and came to him, and would have kept him from leaving them, {43} but he said to them, “I must preach the good news of the kingdom of God to the other towns as well; for I was sent for this purpose.” {44} And he was preaching in the synagogues of Judea.

So, Jesus goes back to Galilee where he is welcomed. This may be an important lesson for some of our young folks. Sometimes we have to leave the familiar and comfortable in order to gain a different aspect of ourselves and, sometimes more importantly, for others to acquire a different view of us as well. Such profoundness in so few words! Interesting that all of the gospels record the saying about the prophet not being welcome in his own hometown: Matt 13:57; Mark 6:4; Luke 4:24; John 4:44.

John continues:

John 4 {46} So he came again to Cana in Galilee, where he had made the water wine. And at Capernaum there was an official whose son was ill. {47} When this man heard that Jesus had come from Judea to Galilee, he went to him and asked him to come down and heal his son, for he was at the point of death.

So, Jesus and company arrive in Cana. Cana is on the road from Nazareth to Capernaum. Based on what we know, Cana is the last place that Jesus caught the attention of the Galileans. He performed the water wine sign there, departed to Jerusalem for the Passover, and then returned to pick up where he had left off.

In Capernaum was an official whose son was ill. The father of the sick boy is titled official, royal official, official from the king’s court, nobleman, government official, or courtier in the various translations and paraphrases. The Greek is *basilikos* [βασιλικός - bā·s ·l ·kós], which essentially means one that works for the king. The king of Galilee was the son of Herod the Great (long dead king of Judea), Herod Antipas. Herod Antipas put John the Baptist to death. The Herod family was well liked by the Romans because of their strong and ruthless ruling and control. Seems quite an interesting man to be coming to Jesus. But almost every parent has experienced the helpless feeling of desperation or the cold clutch of fear that grips them when their little child is suffering, even the powerful among us (Exo 12:29). It’s a sick, sinking feeling to see or hear about a hurting or dying child.

Word spread quickly and far that Jesus was in Galilee. It has always amazed me how, long before electronic communications of any kind, information traveled so quickly – and fairly accurately. 15 miles away at Capernaum, the official heard that

Jesus was in Galilee and he promptly went to see him to seek healing for his son. In my mind's eye, I have always pictured the nobleman coming to Jesus on horseback, the quickest form of transportation in those days. Different translations say that he begged or implored Jesus to intervene. And what was Jesus' response to this loving, concerned, fearful father?

John 4 {48} So Jesus said to him, "Unless you see signs and wonders you will not believe."

It seems almost unbelievable! It seems so out of character from a man that said, "suffer the little children to come unto me." What would we think if we presented our prayer requests before the church and the pastor replied, "Unless you see signs and wonders you will not believe"? I believe we have here one of the cruxes of John's story; let's examine it carefully.

First of all, I believe there is a strong tone of dissatisfaction in Christ's response. His address, however, was not just to the government official; it was to the entire group listening. I understand that the plural form of the word "you" is used here. In the south he would have said, "Unless y'all see signs and wonders y'all will not believe." So he was not singling out and demeaning this man, he was using this as an opportunity to teach a lesson.

As a leader, part of Jesus' job is to give us what we need, not necessarily what we want, and many times we just don't seem to grasp that fact. What we need is to see the bigger picture of reality – God's reality. I get into this dilemma with a friend of mine quite often. When we are discussing some matter, his vision of life and happiness always seems to end at the grave – limited to this earthly life. That is not where life ends! Our life does not end at all! Our concern for the "here and now" had to really wear on Jesus – we just don't have an eternal view of things. Our physical life is not long. As that heart wrenching song *Held* by Natalie Grant says, "Can we not wait for one hour watching for our Savior?" Instead, *U.S.A. Today's* survey reports, "America's greatest fear is running out of money during retirement." Our greatest fear should be being eternally separated from our loving God and Savior! Let's look at a parallel story at the crucifixion:

Luke 23 {39} One of the criminals who were hanged railed at him, saying, "Are you not the Christ? Save yourself and us!" {40} But the other rebuked him, saying, "Do you not fear God, since you are under the same sentence of condemnation? {41} And we indeed justly, for we are receiving the due reward of our deeds; but this man has done nothing wrong." {42} And he said, "Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom." {43} And he said to him, "Truly, I say to you, today you will be with me in Paradise."

And then with Jesus and his disciples on the stormy sea:

Mark 4 {37} And a great windstorm arose, and the waves were breaking into the boat, so that the boat was already filling. {38} But he was in the stern, asleep on the cushion. And they woke him and said to him, "Teacher, do you not care that we are perishing?" {39} And he awoke and rebuked the wind and said to the sea, "Peace! Be still!" And the wind ceased, and there was a great calm. {40} He said to them, "Why are you so afraid? Have you still no faith?" {41} And they were filled with great fear and said to one another, "Who then is this, that even wind and sea obey him?"

And of course, our father Abraham:

Heb 11 {17} By faith Abraham, when he was tested, offered up Isaac, and he who had received the promises was in the act of offering up his only son, {18} of whom it was said, "Through Isaac shall your offspring be

named.” {19} He considered that God was able even to raise him from the dead, from which, figuratively speaking, he did receive him back.

Can you see the pattern? “Lord, please save me from this worldly situation.” “My child, your worldly situations are not what’s important. Your heavenly Father knows of what you have need. This life is vapor, don’t struggle so hard to cling to it. Cling to me.” We could go on and on through Scripture. Do we really believe that “Jesus is all we need?” The key is that Jesus was looking for faith. Not faith that he could work signs and wonders, but faith that God loves us and that he is sovereign and that his plans are perfect and that he has authored your life and situations and that he is glorified when you trust him and that the worst that could ever happen is you open your eyes and see Jesus face to face. No wonder Jesus seems irritated with our dullness at times!

Could our nobleman have restated his request? “When he came down from the mountainside, large crowds followed him. A man with leprosy came and knelt before him and said, “Lord, if you are willing, you can make me clean.” Jesus reached out his hand and touched the man. “I am willing,” he said. “Be clean!” (Matt 8:1-3) But, like us many times, this man was desperate for his little boy.

John 4 {49} The official said to him, “Sir, come down before my child dies.”

The father is pleading for his boy’s life. We can sense the pain and agony in his words. This man does have a certain kind of faith; it could be called a low level faith. He believes that Jesus is some sort of miracle worker, that he has powers ordinary people do not possess. And the nobleman has come here as a last, desperate measure for his suffering son. Often, unfortunately, this is exactly where Jesus meets most of us, as a last resort. We have run out of our own solutions to fix our lives and we come to him in desperation. Our faith is not where it needs to be. “Always looking for a sign. Miracles won’t change your mind. Tell me how much evidence you need.” [*Believe –Third Day*] But Jesus, being ever patient with the nobleman *and* us, knows that we are but dust and knows that faith grows and knows that he is the “author and perfecter” of our faith. In great compassion our Lord responds.

John 4 {50} Jesus said to him, “Go; your son will live.” The man believed the word that Jesus spoke to him and went on his way.

The NASB says, “Go; your son lives.” What a powerful and fascinating answer our Lord gives. Simultaneously he both answered and denied the father. The man was begging Jesus to come to Capernaum because he believed Jesus had to be there to heal his son, but Jesus refuses to go; however, he heals the boy as requested. He did as requested but not in the manner requested. Had our Lord gone with the nobleman as he had wished, his low level belief would not have had the chance to grow. Isn’t that the way God often works with us? Ever heard it said that God works in mysterious ways? Often we come to God desperate, but we want his answer to fit into our “box:” do it our way. God will have none of that! He forced the man to believe on *who he was* not just on *what he could do*: a fuller faith. And it seems this discussion was the push he needed.

“His understanding may not have been perfect, but he had faith in what Jesus said and he acted upon it.” [3] He accepted our Lord’s way; he had no choice. It still seems that he may have gone away with some doubts or second thoughts. But he went; that is the main point here. “Faith is not what you feel; it’s what you do” [1] based on what you know.

“Have you ever come to Jesus with a request, perhaps out of desperation, like this man? Have you had a need that was burning in your heart, for which you had no answer, and you had in your mind’s eye a way for him to act to work it out? We all do this, I’m afraid. Out of the anguish of our hearts we can think of no other way for Jesus to respond than the way we have in mind, thus we pray, “Come down, Lord.” But he does not come. Those situations oftentimes raise doubtful questions in our minds.” [1]

John 4 {51} As he was going down, his servants met him and told him that his son was recovering. {52} So he asked them the hour when he began to get better, and they said to him, “Yesterday at the seventh hour the fever left him.”

“The servants, overjoyed to find their master’s son so suddenly restored, set off to meet him, that they might tell him what they knew would be so pleasing, and he, intent on having his faith verified, began immediately to inquire what time it was when the fever left him, to see whether his cure was the effect of some natural cause or whether it was done by the power of Christ.” [3] Most scholars say the “seventh hour” is 1:00 p.m.

John 4 {53} The father knew that was the hour when Jesus had said to him, “Your son will live.” And he himself believed, and all his household.

“He and his whole family became true converts to the doctrine of the manifested Messiah. They, no doubt, at first thought God was dealing hardly with them when threatening to remove the child, but now they see that in very faithfulness God had afflicted them. The sickness of the child became the means of salvation to the whole household. Let us learn never to murmur against God or think that he does not act kindly toward us.” [3]

“Tom Landry once said, ‘The job of a coach is to make men do what they don’t want to do, in order to achieve what they really want.’ That is what Jesus does: he puts us through circumstances we do not want to go through; he makes us face things we do not like to face, in order to achieve what we have wanted with all our hearts all along. To do so requires the strengthening of faith. Faith’s encouragement: that is what [one of the major themes of] this incident is all about.” [1]

John 4 {54} This was now the second sign that Jesus did when he had come from Judea to Galilee.

Essentially means that this was the second time Jesus had performed a sign after coming from Judea back to Galilee.

Our nobleman here in this story has his faith raised to a new level, a higher level: to believe *who* Jesus is. This is an example of John’s purpose for writing this gospel: “that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God.” What exactly does that mean to believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God? I don’t know if you’ve noticed throughout the New Testament, but that *fact or reality* is exactly what we are told to believe. Here are a few verses to that effect:

- Matthew 16:16 Simon Peter replied, “You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.”
- Matthew 22:42 saying, “What do you think about the Christ? Whose son is he?” They said to him, “The son of David.”
- Mark 14:61 But he remained silent and made no answer. Again the high priest asked him, “Are you the Christ, the Son of the Blessed?”
- Luke 4:34 “Ha! What have you to do with us, Jesus of Nazareth? Have you come to destroy us? I know who you are-- the Holy One of God.”
- Luke 4:41 And demons also came out of many, crying, “You are the Son of God!” But he rebuked them and would not allow them to speak, because they knew that he was the Christ.
- John 1:41 He first found his own brother Simon and said to him, “We have found the Messiah” (which means Christ).
- John 4:42 They said to the woman, “It is no longer because of what you said that we believe, for we have heard for ourselves, and we know that this is indeed the Savior of the world.”
- John 20:31 but these are written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.
- Acts 9:22 But Saul increased all the more in strength, and confounded the Jews who lived in Damascus by proving that Jesus was the Christ.
- Acts 18:28 for he powerfully refuted the Jews in public, showing by the Scriptures that the Christ was Jesus.
- 1 John 2:22 Who is the liar but he who denies that Jesus is the Christ? This is the antichrist, he who denies the Father and the Son.
- 1 John 5:1 Everyone who believes that Jesus is the Christ has been born of God, and everyone who loves the Father loves whoever has been born of him.

So, what’s the big deal about believing Jesus is the Christ? Because, if you believe that Jesus is the Christ, then he is the Son of God. If you believe he is the Son of God, then

John 14 {8} Philip said, “Lord, show us the Father and that will be enough for us.” {9} Jesus answered: “Don’t you know me, Philip, even after I have been among you such a long time? Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, ‘Show us the Father’?”

John 10 {30} I and the Father are one.” {31} Again the Jews picked up stones to stone him, {32} but Jesus said to them, “I have shown you many great miracles from the Father. For which of these do you stone me?” {33} “We are not stoning you for any of these,” replied the Jews, “but for blasphemy, because you, a mere man, claim to be God.”

Simple fact of the matter is, as John so elegantly put it in the opening verse of his gospel, Jesus is God! Believe it. Amen! If you know who he is then what he did (does) is completely understood. We must believe in exactly who Jesus is and exactly what he has done and continues to do: in spirit and truth.

References:

1. Stedman, Ray C., *Faith’s Encouragement*, 1983 (<http://www.ravstedman.org/>)
2. Guideposts, *Nelson’s Illustrated Bible Dictionary*, 1986
3. <http://godsview.com/study.html>
4. <http://www.horizonsnet.org/sermons/sm15.html>
5. Halley, Henry H., *Pocket Bible Handbook*, 1951
6. Commentary by Dr. J. Vernon McGee (<http://www.mp3bible.ca/>)

John 4:23-54 continued.

Last week we looked at a portion of Scripture that doesn't get a lot of attention and we discovered two key and powerful messages that God has for us (actually there are 3 we will discuss): 1) Variety and freshness can make your message more impactful. And sometimes if you've been with a particular group for a while, going away and establishing your credentials elsewhere may make you more accepted at home – young people see this often as they grow up in a close community. Use techniques that make your “audience” more receptive to hear you – I guess I should pay more attention here! (in fact, variety helps us combat formalism, which we've been hearing about in our pastor's sermons on worship) 2) And most importantly, we began to see that God will and does use whatever it takes to make our faith grow, even, sometimes, very painful things. James tells us, “Consider it all joy, my brethren, when you encounter various trials, knowing that the testing of your faith produces endurance. And let endurance have its perfect result, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing.”

Back to lesson

Not meaning to sound cruel, please don't think I'm not sensitive to the pain of trials, but we are reminded that as long as we're in the world we will have trials (John 16:33) and that God works all things together for those who love him and are called according to his purposes (Rom 8:28). We know these things with our minds, but when heartache strikes, we don't know them in our hearts; that's why God gives us something else to help. That other little piece of the puzzle is shown to us here in John 4, another ingredient that is usually just overlooked as well. This man was surrounded by people who cared about him! His servants were excited about the boy's recovery and came to bring the good news to their master. This man had a family and a household full of love. How do we know that? He rode as fast as he could to Cana to *beg* a stranger for his son's life – love is never isolated; it spills over into everything. When he believed, so did his household – they were close. God gives us each other!

That's what Larry Crabb's book *Connecting: Healing for Ourselves and Our Relationships* is about – at least in large part. Allow me to show you another example of how God reiterates his points to me. I'm reading along in the *Connecting* book last week as I'm studying John 4 here, and here's what I come across:

“We have elevated psychological and personal problems to a position of top priority and, in so doing, have relegated the battle to relate well with God to secondary status, important in its own right and sometimes useful in the fight against our personal struggles, but certainly not our most vital and immediately pressing concern.”

“Our fiercest battles are fought when we seek with all our heart to *trust* God so fully that we see every misfortune as something he permits and wants to use, to *know* him so richly that we turn to no one and nothing else to experience what our souls long to enjoy, to *love* him so completely and with such consuming passion that we hate anything that comes between us and eagerly give it up.” [emphasis in original]

“Do I know him well enough to turn to him for comfort rather than demand relief from my pain through whatever means are available?”

“Do I love him so deeply that I welcome additional suffering that might draw my soul closer to him? Will I pay any price to know him well?”

The point above all points is that we *know* Christ! And that's what he was teaching our nobleman and us here.

We're going to pause for a few weeks in our study of John and pick up again in August with Chapter 5; so I can bring some freshness and maybe newness or vitality to our study. Maybe we'll try some different things. But right now, I want us to back up a minute and look at the purpose of John's gospel again and see if we're getting it and why we should get it. We've discussed John's purpose statement from John 20:31 before: "but these are written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name." And we've seen it all along the road of our studies. John [God through John] wants us to know that Jesus is the Christ, Messiah. We even see it here with our nobleman story; Jesus wanted this man to know who he was not just what he could do. Let's look at some other Scriptures that refer to this knowledge of the Christ:

“Truly this was the Son of God.” –*Centurion at crucifixion (Matt 27:54)*

Matt 11 {2} Now when John heard in prison about the deeds of the Christ, he sent word by his disciples {3} and said to him, “Are you the one who is to come, or shall we look for another?” {4} And Jesus answered them, “Go and tell John what you hear and see: {5} the blind receive their sight and the lame walk, lepers are cleansed and the deaf hear, and the dead are raised up, and the poor have good news preached to them. {6} And blessed is the one who is not offended by me.”

Matt 16 {15} He said to them, “But who do you say that I am?” {16} Simon Peter replied, “You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.” {17} And Jesus answered him, “Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jonah! For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my Father who is in heaven. {18} And I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. {19} I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.” {20} Then he strictly charged the disciples to tell no one that he was the Christ. (repeated in Mark and Luke)

Matt 22 {41} Now while the Pharisees were gathered together, Jesus asked them a question, {42} saying, “What do you think about the Christ? Whose son is he?” They said to him, “The son of David.” {43} He said to them, “How is it then that David, in the Spirit, calls him Lord, saying, {44}”“The Lord said to my Lord, Sit at my right hand, until I put your enemies under your feet”? {45} If then David calls him Lord, how is he his son?” (repeated in Mark and Luke)

Matt 24 {4} And Jesus answered them, “See that no one leads you astray. {5} For many will come in my name, saying, ‘I am the Christ,’ and they will lead many astray. (repeated in Mark)

Matt 24 {23} Then if anyone says to you, ‘Look, here is the Christ!’ or ‘There he is!’ do not believe it. {24} For false christs and false prophets will arise and perform great signs and wonders, so as to lead astray, if possible, even the elect.

Matt 26 {63} But Jesus remained silent. And the high priest said to him, “I adjure you by the living God, tell us if you are the Christ, the Son of God.” {64} Jesus said to him, “You have said so. But I tell you, from now on you will see the Son of Man seated at the right hand of Power and coming on the clouds of heaven.” {65} Then the high priest tore his robes and said, “He has uttered blasphemy. What further witnesses do we need? You have now heard his blasphemy. {66} What is your judgment?” They answered, “He deserves death.” {67} Then they spit in his face and struck him. And some slapped him, {68} saying, “Prophecy to us, you Christ! Who is it that struck you?” (repeated in Luke)

Mark 14 {61} But he remained silent and made no answer. Again the high priest asked him, “Are you the Christ, the Son of the Blessed?”

Luke 1 {1} Inasmuch as many have undertaken to compile a narrative of the things that have been accomplished among us, {2} just as those who from the beginning were eyewitnesses and ministers of the word have delivered them to us, {3} it seemed good to me also, having followed all things closely for some time past, to write an orderly account for you, most excellent Theophilus, {4} that you may have certainty concerning the things you have been taught.

Luke 4 {34} “Ha! What have you to do with us, Jesus of Nazareth? Have you come to destroy us? I know who you are--the Holy One of God.”

Luke 4 {41} And demons also came out of many, crying, “You are the Son of God!” But he rebuked them and would not allow them to speak, because they knew that he was the Christ.

Luke 22 {67} “If you are the Christ, tell us.” But he said to them, “If I tell you, you will not believe, {68} and if I ask you, you will not answer.

Luke 23 {35} And the people stood by, watching, but the rulers scoffed at him, saying, “He saved others; let him save himself, if he is the Christ of God, his Chosen One!” {36} The soldiers also mocked him, coming up and offering him sour wine {37} and saying, “If you are the King of the Jews, save yourself!”

Luke 24 {25} And he said to them, “O foolish ones, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken! {26} Was it not necessary that the Christ should suffer these things and enter into his glory?” {27} And beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, he interpreted to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself. (it is said that there are over 300 prophecies in the OT concerning the Christ)

John 1 {20} He confessed, and did not deny, but confessed, “I am not the Christ.” (John the Baptist clearly knew he was not the Christ.)

John 1 {41} He first found his own brother Simon and said to him, “We have found the Messiah” (which means Christ).

John 4 {25} The woman said to him, "I know that Messiah is coming (he who is called Christ). When he comes, he will tell us all things." {26} Jesus said to her, "I who speak to you am he."

John 4 {42} They said to the woman, “It is no longer because of what you said that we believe, for we have heard for ourselves, and we know that this is indeed the Savior of the world.”

John 7 {25} Some of the people of Jerusalem therefore said, “Is not this the man whom they seek to kill? {26} And here he is, speaking openly, and they say nothing to him! Can it be that the authorities really know that this is the Christ? {27} But we know where this man comes from, and when the Christ appears, no one will know where he comes from.” {28} So Jesus proclaimed, as he taught in the temple, “You know me, and you know where I come from? But I have not come of my own accord. He who sent me is true, and him you do not know. {29} I know him, for I come from him, and he sent me.” {30} So they were seeking to arrest him, but no one laid a hand on him, because his hour had not yet come. {31} Yet many of the people believed in him. They said, “When the Christ appears, will he do more signs than this man has done?”

John 10 {24} So the Jews gathered around him and said to him, “How long will you keep us in suspense? If you are the Christ, tell us plainly.” {25} Jesus answered them, “I told you, and you do not believe. The works that I do in my Father’s name bear witness about me, {26} but you do not believe because you are not part of my flock. {27} My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me. {28} I give them eternal life, and they will never perish, and no one will snatch them out of my hand. {29} My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all, and no one is able to snatch them out of the Father’s hand. {30} I and the Father are one.” {31} The Jews picked up stones again to stone him. {32} Jesus answered them, “I have shown you many good works from the Father; for which of them are you going to stone me?” {33} The Jews answered him, “It is not for a good work that we are going to stone you but for blasphemy, because you, being a man, make yourself God.” {34} Jesus answered them, “Is it not written in your Law, ‘I said, you are gods’? {35} If he called them gods to whom the word of God came--and Scripture cannot be broken-- {36} do you say of him whom the Father consecrated and sent into the world, ‘You are blaspheming,’ because I said, ‘I am the Son of God’? {37} If I am not doing the works of my Father, then do not believe me; {38} but if I do them, even though you do not believe me, believe the works, that you may know and understand that the Father is in me and I am in the Father.” {39} Again they sought to arrest him, but he escaped from their hands.

John 11 {21} Martha said to Jesus, “Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died. {22} But even now I know that whatever you ask from God, God will give you.” {23} Jesus said to her, “Your brother will rise again.” {24} Martha said to him, “I know that he will rise again in the resurrection on the last day.” {25} Jesus said to her, “I am the resurrection and the life. Whoever believes in me, though he die, yet shall he live, {26} and everyone who lives and believes in me shall

never die. Do you believe this?" {27} She said to him, "Yes, Lord; I believe that you are the Christ, the Son of God, who is coming into the world."

John 20 {31} but these are written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.

Acts 3 {19} Repent therefore, and turn again, that your sins may be blotted out, {20} that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord, and that he may send the Christ appointed for you, Jesus, {21} whom heaven must receive until the time for restoring all the things about which God spoke by the mouth of his holy prophets long ago.

Acts 5 {42} And every day, in the temple and from house to house, they did not cease teaching and preaching Jesus as the Christ.

Acts 9 {22} But Saul increased all the more in strength, and confounded the Jews who lived in Damascus by proving that Jesus was the Christ.

Acts 17 {2} And Paul went in, as was his custom, and on three Sabbath days he reasoned with them from the Scriptures, {3} explaining and proving that it was necessary for the Christ to suffer and to rise from the dead, and saying, "This Jesus, whom I proclaim to you, is the Christ."

Acts 18 {4} And he reasoned in the synagogue every Sabbath, and tried to persuade Jews and Greeks. {5} When Silas and Timothy arrived from Macedonia, Paul was occupied with the word, testifying to the Jews that the Christ was Jesus. {6} And when they opposed and reviled him, he shook out his garments and said to them, "Your blood be on your own heads! I am innocent. From now on I will go to the Gentiles."

Acts 18 {28} for he powerfully refuted the Jews in public, showing by the Scriptures that the Christ was Jesus.

1 John 2 {22} Who is the liar but he who denies that Jesus is the Christ? This is the antichrist, he who denies the Father and the Son.

1 John 5 {1} Everyone who believes that Jesus is the Christ has been born of God, and everyone who loves the Father loves whoever has been born of him.

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So, what's the big deal about believing Jesus is the Christ? For heaven's sake, of course he is the Christ; that's his name! Because, if you believe that Jesus is the Christ, then, by definition, that makes him the Son of God. But aren't we all God's children? Even the Mormons say Jesus is God's son right along with his brother Lucifer. Is that the same?

Son of Man; son of perdition; Son of God...

The Jewish leaders understood exactly what Jesus meant by the phrase "Son of God." To be the "Son of God" is to be of the same nature as God. The "Son of God" is "of God." The claim to be of the same nature as God, to in fact "be God," was blasphemy to the Jewish leaders; therefore, they demanded Jesus' death.

And if you believe that Jesus is *the* Son of God, then

John 14 {8} Philip said, "Lord, show us the Father and that will be enough for us." {9} Jesus answered: "Don't you know me, Philip, even after I have been among you such a long time? Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, 'Show us the Father'?"

John 10 {30} "I and the Father are one." {31} Again the Jews picked up stones to stone him, {32} but Jesus said to them, "I have shown you many great miracles from the Father. For which of these do you stone me?" {33} "We are not stoning you for any of these," replied the Jews, "but for blasphemy, because you, a mere man, claim to be God."

Heb 1 {3} "The Son is the radiance of God's glory and the exact representation of his being..."

Simple fact of the matter is, as John so elegantly put it in the opening verse of his gospel, Jesus is God! Believe it. Amen! If you know who he is then what he did (and continues to do) is completely acceptable and understood. We must believe in *exactly who Jesus is* and *exactly what he has done* and continues to do: worship in spirit and truth.

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"1 Cor 2:15 The one who is spiritual is the one who has the mind of Christ. Eph 5; Col 3

"The spiritual person is one walking in the Spirit, which means to have the mind of Christ, which means to know the Word of God and obey it. So the spiritual person is one walking in obedience to God's will revealed to him through the Word of God energized by the Spirit of God." –*John MacArthur*

We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen. We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father, God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, of one Being with the Father. Through him all things were made. For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven: by the power of the Holy Spirit he became incarnate from the Virgin Mary, and was made man. For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate; he suffered death and was buried. On the third day he rose again in accordance with the Scriptures; he ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead, and his kingdom will have no end. We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son. With the Father and the Son he is worshiped and glorified. He has spoken through the Prophets. We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church. We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins. We look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen. –*Nicene Creed*