

John 4: 46-54 (New International Version)

⁴⁶Once more he visited Cana in Galilee, where he had turned the water into wine. And there was a certain royal official whose son lay sick at Capernaum. ⁴⁷When this man heard that Jesus had arrived in Galilee from Judea, he went to him and begged him to come and heal his son, who was close to death.

⁴⁸"Unless you people see miraculous signs and wonders," Jesus told him, "you will never believe."

⁴⁹The royal official said, "Sir, come down before my child dies."

⁵⁰Jesus replied, "You may go. Your son will live." The man took Jesus at his word and departed.

⁵¹While he was still on the way, his servants met him with the news that his boy was living. ⁵²When he inquired as to the time when his son got better, they said to him, "The fever left him yesterday at the seventh hour."

⁵³Then the father realized that this was the exact time at which Jesus had said to him, "Your son will live." So he and all his household believed.

⁵⁴This was the second miraculous sign that Jesus performed, having come from Judea to Galilee.

OASIS: No Strings Attached, Jn 4: 43-54

Possible Starter question: What does the phrase “no strings attached” mean?

What are some examples of “strings attached” experiences—and why don’t you like them?

(n.b. I suspect that this phrase is derived from puppets and marionettes.)

Transitional comment: Now, let’s take a look at some of the good Jesus did.

- Pray for the Holy Spirit’s leading (if you haven’t already prayed)
- Now let’s listen as someone reads our passage aloud.
- Take a couple of minutes on your own to study the flow of interaction between Jesus and an overwhelmed father.

First segment (vs. 46-47):

O What do you observe about the context?

(n.b. map of Israel during Jesus’ life in back of Bible? Locate places, and calculate the distance that the man traveled.)

O Who comes to find Jesus and what do you learn about him?

I What might he have known about Jesus? Why does he seek out Jesus?

I What kinds of thoughts and feelings do you imagine filled him?

Second segment (vs. 48-50):

O In v. 48, what is it that Jesus recognizes?

I What kind of tone (tone of voice) do you think Jesus used?

(n.b. Since the text doesn’t indicate the tone, we have to speculate or use our imagination. Try to draw out/affirm a range of legitimate views.)

I What is Jesus wanting or seeking from people?

O In v. 49, what does the man’s response indicate?

O In v. 50, what would have pleased the man? What might have surprised him?

I If you had been the man, what are some of the thoughts, feelings reactions that you might have had?

O What does v. 50 show about the man’s response? What is clear? What is unclear?

Third segment (vs. 51-54):

O As the man travels home, what does he learn from his servants?

I Why does the detail about timing matter to him? What connection or insight do you think he is making?

A What impact does this insight make for this man?

A What difference does this insight make to you?

Reflection/application:

I What do we learn from Jesus' model of doing good? In what way/s does Jesus demonstrate "doing good with no strings attached"?

A In our everyday lives, what are some ways we can "do good with no strings attached"?

Pray together: that our eyes would be open to peoples' pressing needs and our hearts would be moved to action on their behalf—simply out of God's love.

Text is on other page or www.Biblegateway.com

- a. BIG idea: Doing good means...both declaring and demonstrating the goodness of God's Kingdom freely and non-manipulatively.
- b. Key verse/idea: John 4: 50: **Jesus replied, 'You may go. Your son will live.'**
- c. KEY: O = Observation; I = Interpretation; A = Application (or C = Challenge).

Advice to study leaders:

- d. Complement your OIA questions with "process questions" (what else? what more? What do others of you see/think?).
- e. Determine the core questions you'll ask (know which ones to skip if pressed for time).
- f. Always reword questions in words are comfortable for you (and, if the question doesn't make sense to you, then discard it.)
- g. When you ask questions, give people ample time to think and respond. How long do you wait? Take your time; don't rush people but encourage their participation. And avoid answering your own questions!
- h. Timing/pacing: allocate your time and move forward gently, with a steady pace.
- i. Application: Pace the study to conclude with "difference making" application.
- j. Secondary texts—use other texts very sparingly, even if they are relevant. Otherwise, other texts will push you more into the "teacher role," rather than that of facilitator. It also can cause some people to feel distracted or de-powered.
- k. If you are utilizing this "on-line" study and not part of the OASIS course, I recommend that you get the 1-volume commentary entitled New Bible Commentary, Revised (21st Century Edition, IVP). It is well worth the \$40.