

The Four Stages of Faith

John 4.43-45

August 23, 2020

Introduction – vs. 43-45

- In this story we get the **conclusion** of Jesus' trip and all four elements of the larger story are encapsulated in this one
- the four preceding pericopes: the wedding at Cana, the cleansing of the Temple, the conversation with Nicodemus and the events in Samaria all represent a different **stage** in the development of faith in someone's life

Main Points: the four stages of faith...

1. **Dependence** – vs. 46-47
 - a. There's a need or a crisis
 - b. Jonah 1; Mark 9.21-24
 - c. The first step in receiving saving grace is to recognize and admit our **need**. We are sinners and we need to be rescued from the looming day of judgment
2. **Perseverance** – vs. 48-49
 - a. Jesus doesn't make it easy
 - b. Jacob wrestled the angel – Gen. 32; Hebrews 11.6
 - c. People must be in **earnest** before the help of Christ can come to them.¹

3. **Obedience** – vs. 50-51
 - a. Jesus exercises authority over the official who has authority over him
 - b. Abraham and Isaac – Gen. 22, c.f. Gen.15.6; Romans 4.3; John 14.21
 - c. Trust and **obey** – there's no other way, to be happy is Jesus, but to trust and **obey**.
4. **Acceptance** – vs. 52-53
 - a. The veracity of Jesus' word compels faith
 - b. Job 42; Philippians 2.9-11
 - c. When we see and experience the power of God the only appropriate response is to accept Jesus as Lord and Saviour, and **surrender** our lives to him.

Conclusion

- From chapter 2 to the end of chapter 4, John takes us from Cana to Cana. In this we see the structure of faith laid out: we **confess** our need to be saved, we **seek** God undaunted because we know that God rewards those who earnestly seek Him. We place our **trust** in Christ and endeavor to live in obedience to His word, and **surrender** to his sovereignty and majesty, declaring Jesus Christ is Lord.

Amen

¹ Barclay, W. (2001). *The Gospel of John* (Rev. and updated., Vol. 1, p. 204). Edinburgh: Saint Andrew Press.