

## 9. John 4:43-54

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### Getting started

When was the last time you did a return journey of 300kms on foot to go to worship God? (No. Me neither!)

### Observation

1. The proverb in 4:44 does not seem to fit with the welcome in 4:45. Why do you think John mentions the proverb in verse 44? (Many answers have been proposed. Some suggest 'own country' refers to Judea, where Jesus faced opposition. Some suggest it means Galilee, and say that, despite the response of the official, Jesus did not receive the honour there that was due to him. But perhaps 'own country' refers to both Judea and Galilee, and are in contrast to the success Jesus had just had in the foreign land of Samaria.)
2. What did the royal official want from Jesus?
3. What is the tone of Jesus' words in verse 48, and how does this echo earlier events? (See, 2:23-25)
4. Having been rebuked in verse 48, how does the royal official respond?
5. What is Jesus' response to the royal official's further plea for Jesus to save his son from death?

### Interpretation

1. Why do you think Jesus healed the son?
2. If Jesus placed a low value on people who believed because of miracles/signs, why did Jesus do them?
3. What is the main point of this story?
4. What does this story show us about Jesus?
5. What is central to honouring Jesus?

### Implications

1. Have you ever felt totally overwhelmed by circumstances?
2. If you have, how has this affected your relationship with God?
3. Do you think this story helps us understand our total dependence on God and his goodness, and the need to persist in our trust?
4. How does this help us when we don't get what we ask for?

### Prayer suggestions

1. That we will always give Jesus the honour he deserves.
2. That God reveal to us the parts of our lives where we do not yet trust him.

**Notes:**

There is no indication the royal official was a Gentile. Nor does the royal official show the trust the Roman soldier did. So this need not be the same story we see in Matthew 8:5-13.