

***“How Firm A Foundation”***  
***John 4:43-54***

**Introduction:**

1. When I Was A Boy:
  - Every Summer - Our Family Would Visit:
    - My Grandmother - At Her Home In:
      - Ocean Grove, New Jersey!
  - And - To Be Perfectly Honest:
    - One Of The Major Highlights Of Visiting Her:
      - Was The Chance To Go To The Beach!
        - To Play In The Sand & To Swim In The Ocean!
  - And - Like Any Kid:
    - At The Beach:
      - I Liked To Make Sand-Castles!
        - And - I Would Try My Best:
          - To Make The Biggest & Fanciest Sand-Castle There!
  - But - No Matter How Big Or Beautiful:
    - My Sand-Castle Got!
      - It Didn't Take Too Long:
        - Before It Was Gone!
    - Sometimes - It Was Gone:
      - In Just Seconds:
        - If Someone Ran By & Jumped On It!
    - Other Times - It Took A Little Longer:
      - As The Ocean Waves Eroded The Sand Away:
        - From The Bottom Up!
  - I Learned By Experience Then:
    - What Jesus Said Would Happen:
      - To The House That Was Built On:
        - The Sand:
          - “Great Was The Fall Of It!” (Matthew 7:27)
2. Well - As We Head Back In Our Bibles:
  - To John 4 - Jesus Has Just Finished:
    - An Incredible Two-Day Ministry:
      - In The Samaritan City Of Sychar - Where:
        - Many Came To Believe In Him!
    - And - What Did They Believe?
      - 4:42 - That Jesus Was: “Indeed The Christ, The Savior Of The World!”
  - Well - After This Great Success:
    - In Samaria - Jesus Resumes His Journey:
      - From Judea To Galilee:
        - Which He Started Back In 4:3 - “He Left Judea, And Departed Again Into Galilee!”
  - Now - Under Normal Circumstances:
    - The Trip Would Have Taken:
      - Three Full Days!
        - But - He Extended His Trip:
          - By Two Days!
    - But - Those Two Days:
      - Were Not An Interruption:
        - In His Schedule!
          - They Were Part Of His Schedule!
    - A Divine Appointment:
      - To Harvest The Souls:
        - Of Those Samaritans!
3. Well - As We Pick Things Back Up:
  - In 4:43 - The Question We Might Have:
    - In Our Minds - Is:

- How Will They Receive Jesus:
    - In Galilee?
  - Will *They* Believe In Him:
    - As The *Samaritans* Believed In Him?
      - Well - Let's Find Out What Happens Next, As We Read:
        - 4:43-54!
  - What A Miracle This Was:
    - That Took Place There - For A Second Time:
      - In Galilee!
        - And What Faith Was Born:
          - Into The Heart Of That Nobleman!
  - But - The Faith:
    - That We Find At The End:
      - Of This Story:
        - Is Not The Same Faith:
          - That Was At The Beginning!
    - Because - Before The Nobleman's Faith:
      - Found Its Firm Foundation:
        - In Christ & His Word:
          - Both His Faith & The Faith Of The Rest Of The Galileans:
            - Were On Shaky Ground & Shifting Sand!
4. And - Through The Examples:
- Of Their Faith:
    - I Want You To Consider:
      - The Foundation Of Your Own Faith Today!
        - Because - Only One Foundation:
          - Is Firm & Sure & True!
- \* And - What We Find First In 4:43-46a Is:
1. ***A Foundation Of Works!***
- Because - When Jesus Returned To Galilee:
    - The Galileans "Received" Him:
      - Based On His Works!
        - Again - 4:43-46a - "Now after two days he departed thence, and went into Galilee. / For Jesus himself testified, that a prophet hath no honour in his own country. / Then when he was come into Galilee, the Galilaeans received him, having seen all the things that he did at Jerusalem at the feast: for they also went unto the feast. / So Jesus came again into Cana of Galilee, where he made the water wine!"
    - Now - Galilee Was The Home Of Jesus!
      - It Was Where He Grew Up:
        - In Nazareth!
      - It Was Where He Knew The People Best:
        - And The People Knew Him!
      - It Was Even Where:
        - He Did His First Miracle:
          - In Cana - In 2:1-11!
      - So - When The Galileans Heard That:
        - Jesus Returned - According To:
          - 4:45 - They "Received Him!"
    - Now - At First:
      - It Seems Like The Galileans:
        - Had A Measure Of Faith & Expectation:
          - In Jesus! After All:
  - They Received Him With Hospitality!
    - To "Receive" Means:
      - To Welcome With Open Arms!
        - They Embraced Jesus When He Returned:
          - With Joy & Gladness!

- It Was A “Home-Coming” Of Sorts:
  - For Jesus!
- In A Way - Jesus Had Achieved:
  - Some Celebrity Status:
    - Because Of What He Had Done:
      - In Jerusalem Just A Few Weeks Earlier!
- And So - They Received Him:
  - With Hospitality! But:
    - Did They Believe In Him:
      - As The Samaritans Believed In Him?
        - What Was The Foundation Of Their Faith!
  - Well - We Learn A Bit More:
    - About Their Reception:
      - In 4:45 - When We Find Out:
- They Received Him With Hopefulness!
  - They “Received Him” - John Tells Us:
    - “Having Seen All The Things He Did At Jerusalem At The Feast: For They Also Went Unto The Feast!”
      - The Reason They Received Jesus:
        - Was Because Of The:
          - Works That Jesus Did!
  - And - What Did He Do?
    - Back In 2:13-25 - John Told Us What Jesus Did:
      - At The Passover Feast!
    - First - He Showed His Zeal:
      - For The Temple:
        - By Chasing Out The Merchants & Money-Changers There!
    - Then - We Are Even Told That:
      - He Showed His Power:
        - By - Performing Miracles There! (2:25)
    - But - By Far - The Most Important Thing:
      - Jesus Did In Jerusalem:
        - Was Not His Works:
          - But His Words!
      - The Words He Said About:
        - The Temple Of His Body & How He Would Raise It In Three Days!
  - He Told Them About:
    - His Death & Resurrection:
      - Which Was The Good News - That:
        - If They Had Believed:
          - They Could Have Been Saved From Their Sin!
    - This Is Why Jesus Came!
      - Not Just To Heal Bodies:
        - But To Heal & Save Souls!
      - Not Just To Rescue The Sick:
        - But To Rescue Sinners!
    - Have You Received Jesus:
      - To Be Your Savior?
        - Through Faith In His Life & Death & Resurrection?
- Well - Sadly - That’s *Not* Why:
  - The Galileans Received Jesus!
    - They Received Him:
      - Because Of What They *Saw Him Do!*
        - *Not* Because Of What They *Heard Him Say!*
  - To Them - Jesus Was:
    - More Of A Celebrity:
      - Than The Christ!
    - And They Just Wanted To See Him:

- Do More Of The Same Works:
  - That He Did In Jerusalem!
- And That Is Why:
  - Whatever Faith They Had In Jesus:
    - Was On Shaky Ground!
    - They Were Hoping That Jesus Would Do Some New Thing!
- But - None Of This Took Jesus By Surprise!
  - He Knew That:
    - Even Though - For A Little While:
      - They Might Show Him Some Hospitality & Even Express Some Hopefulness In Him:
        - They Would Not Truly Honor Him Or Believe In Him As They Should!
- That Is Why John Tells Us:
  - In 4:44 - "For Jesus himself testified, that a prophet hath no honour in his own country!"
    - Galilee Was His Own Country!
      - And Jesus Used This Phrase Elsewhere To Prophecy About His Reception In Nazareth!
  - Jesus Knew That:
    - When He Came Unto His Own:
      - His Own Would Receive Him Not!
    - But - He Still Went!
      - In Order To Fulfill His Mission:
        - To His People!
- What Is The Foundation Of Your Faith?
  - Is It In Works Alone?
    - Either Your Works Or The Works Of Men:
      - Or - Even The Works Of God:
        - For Your Own Personal & Physical Benefit?
  - If This Is The Foundation:
    - Of Your Faith:
      - Your Faith Is On Shaky Ground!
    - Because - What Will Happen To Your Faith:
      - When Those Works:
        - Don't Work Out For You?
      - When Your Expectations:
        - Are Not Fulfilled?
  - The Galileans Sought After Jesus:
    - For His Works:
      - That Would Benefit Them!
      - And In Doing So:
        - Proved That Any Faith They Had In Him:
          - Was Weak And Small!
  - Make Sure Your Faith:
    - Is On A Firm Foundation!
      - But Then - The Story Turns To:
        - A Nobleman & His Son!

\* And - What We Find Next In 46b-49 Is:

## 2. ***A Foundation Of Wonders!***

- Because - When This Nobleman:
  - "Heard That Jesus Was Come" - "He Went Unto Him!"
    - Let's Look Again At These Verses:
      - 4:46b-49 - "And there was a certain nobleman, whose son was sick at Capernaum. / When he heard that Jesus was come out of Judaea into Galilee, he went unto him, and besought him that he would come down, and heal his son: for he was at the point of death. / Then said Jesus unto him, Except ye see signs and wonders, ye will not believe. / The nobleman saith unto him, Sir, come down ere my child die!"

- The “Nobleman” - Who May Have Been:
  - A Senior Official To:
    - Herod Antipas - Was Going Through A Time Of:
- Great Distress!
  - According To 46b - His “Son Was Sick At Capernaum!”
    - Capernaum Was Probably About 16 Miles From Cana - Where Jesus Was!
      - And - This Son - May Very Well Have Been His Only Son!
      - And He Was Chronically & Terminally Ill!
  - And - It Is Clear That:
    - This Nobleman Loved His Son!
      - Like Jacob With Joseph - His Heart & Life Was “Bound Up” With The Life Of His Child!
    - And - If You Ever Had Or Knew:
      - A Child Like This:
        - You Can Certainly Understand:
          - The Great Love & Care This Man Had!
  - And So - 4:47 - “When he heard that Jesus was come out of Judaea into Galilee, he went unto him!”
    - It May Have Taken Half A Day To Make The Journey - Going As Quickly As He Could:
      - But - Imagine How Hard It Would Have Been To Leave His Son:
        - In The Condition He Was:
          - Just For The Possibility Of His Healing!
    - And - When The Nobleman:
      - Finally Caught Up With Jesus In Cana:
        - We Get A Sense Of His:
  - Great Desire!
    - Because - 4:47 - He “Besought Him That He Would Come Down, And Heal His Son: For He Was At The Point Of Death!”
      - So - Like The Galileans:
        - He Appears To Have A Measure Of Faith:
          - In Jesus - But Only To Do Some Great Thing To Heal His Son!
      - And So - He Came To Jesus:
        - And Made His Plea:
          - Passionately & Persistently!
          - To The Point Of Begging!
        - That Jesus Would:
          - “Come Down & Heal His Son!”
      - He Believed That Jesus:
        - Must Have Had Some Kind Of Power!
          - But - Only Through His:
            - Personal Presence!
          - He Had To “Come Down And Heal!”
        - Perhaps This Man Had In Mind:
          - What Some Of The Older Prophets Had Done - Like Elijah & Elisha:
            - And The Power Of Their Presence To Even Bring The Dead To Life Again!
      - But - How Does Jesus Respond:
        - To The Plea Of This Father? (Great Denial)
          - 4:48 - “Then said Jesus unto him, Except ye see signs and wonders, ye will not believe!”
        - Now - When Jesus Said:
          - “Ye” - He Was Talking To:
            - Everyone Around Him! (Plural)
              - Even The Galileans Who Were There With Him:
                - Who Still Did Not Have A Firm Foundation For Their Faith!
        - But - John Tells Us That:
          - Jesus Said This “Unto Him” As Well!
            - So - The Nobleman Was Included In This!
      - Even Though:
        - The Nobleman Had A More Noble Reason:
          - For Coming To Jesus:

- Than The Other Galileans:
  - Since - He Came To Jesus For His Son!
- Jesus Said These Words:
  - To Confront & Convict & Challenge:
    - The Reality Of His Faith!
  - Was His Faith:
    - A Real, Saving Faith?
      - Or Was It A Temporary, Self-Serving Faith?
        - Even If It Sought Help For His Son!
- But - When Jesus Answered This Way:
  - It Caused In That Nobleman's Heart:
- Great Despair!
  - 4:49 - "The nobleman saith unto him, Sir, come down ere my child die!"
    - I Believe He Must Have Cried Out These Words To Jesus - Through Fears & Tears!
      - Because - He Knew That:
        - If Jesus Did Not Help Him:
          - Noone Could!
    - This Was A Matter Of Life & Death!
      - And So - He Mustered Whatever Faith He Had:
        - And Appealed To Jesus!
    - But - What Would Have Happened To That Man's Faith:
      - If Jesus Did *Not* Go Down? And:
        - If Jesus Did *Not* Heal His Son?
      - A Faith In Wonders:
        - Is Still A Shaky And Sandy Foundation!
  - What Is The Foundation Of Your Faith?
    - Is It In Wonders Alone?
      - So That - You Will Only Believe:
        - If God Does Some Kind Of:
          - "Sign Or Wonder?"
      - Even If It Is A Wholesome Desire:
        - For God To Do Some Wonder:
          - On Behalf Of Someone Else?
            - Someone You Love?
    - The Nobleman Sought After Jesus:
      - For A Wonder - A Miracle!
        - But His Faith Was Still:
          - On Shifting Sand!
    - You Need To Make Sure That:
      - The Foundation Of Your Faith:
        - Is Firm! And It Can Be & Will Be:
          - When Its Established On:

### 3. ***A Foundation Of God's Word!***

- Because - What Happens Next?
  - On 4:50 - "Jesus saith unto him, Go thy way; thy son liveth. And the man believed the word that Jesus had spoken unto him, and he went his way!"
    - Now - If Jesus Had Just Said:
      - "Go Thy Way" - Which Is A Single Word In John's Greek!
        - It Would Have Dashed The Hopes Of The Nobleman Completely - And He Would Have Left Devastated!
    - But - That's Not Where Jesus Left Things!
      - Jesus Was Not Offended:
        - At This Man's Appeal!
          - Even If His Hope & Faith Was Misplaced!
      - So - Jesus Told The Man To:
        - "Go" - Because Of:
  - The Power Of His Word!

- Jesus Then Said - "Thy Son Liveth!"
  - Or - In Its Present Tense:
    - "Your Son Is Living!"
- This Was The Miraculous Word Of Christ:
  - At Work!
    - At That Moment - Through His Word:
      - That Nobleman's Son Became:
        - Perfectly Well!
  - He Didn't Just:
    - Start To Get Better:
      - He Was Made Perfectly Whole!
- And Jesus Did This:
  - Solely Through The Power Of His Word!
    - Proving That:
      - His Power Did Not Depend On His Physical Presence!
  - Is It Any Wonder That John:
    - Started His Gospel By Telling Us:
      - About Jesus - That:
        - "In Him Was Life!"
    - And - That Life:
      - Was & Still Is Extended Through:
        - His Word!
- But Then - Also In 4:50 - We See:
  - The Persuasion Of His Word!
    - Because - What Happens Next?
      - "And The Man Believed The Word That Jesus Had Spoken Unto Him!"
        - He Believed The Word!
          - Now - That's A Firm Foundation:
            - For Faith!
          - The Word Of Christ!
            - The Word Of God!
  - Not Only Did A Miracle Happen:
    - To The Nobleman's Son:
      - When Jesus Said Those:
        - Life-Giving Words!
    - A Miracle Happened:
      - To That Man As Well!
  - And - That Miracle Is Described For Us:
    - In Romans 10:17 - "So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God!"
      - Through The Power Of His Word:
        - Jesus Opened Up The Spiritual Ears Of That Man:
          - So That He Might Believe In Him!
  - So - Once He Heard - That Powerful Word:
    - He Simply Believed!
      - And - We Know He Believed:
        - Because As Soon As He Did:
          - He Obeyed!
      - When Jesus Said - "Go!"
        - The Nobleman Believed:
          - And - 4:50 - "Went!"
            - Here John Uses The Same Single Word:
              - That Jesus Did!
      - And - Obedience Is:
        - One Of The Surest Signs Of Faith!
          - "Trust & Obey!"
        - Were There Any Other Words?
          - Don't Know! Not Told!
    - But - At This Point In The Story:

- It Doesn't Seem Like The Nobleman:
  - Was In Any Big Hurry:
  - To Go Home & See If What Jesus Said Was So!
- Because - In 4:51-53a - We Read:
  - "And as he was now going down, his servants met him, and told him, saying, Thy son liveth. / Then enquired he of them the hour when he began to amend. And they said unto him, Yesterday at the seventh hour the fever left him. / So the father knew that it was at the same hour, in the which Jesus said unto him, Thy son liveth!"
  - If The Nobleman Met With Jesus:
    - At The Seventh Hour:
      - According To The Jewish Reckoning - It Would Have Been:
        - About 1:00 In The Afternoon!
    - If The Nobleman Met With Jesus:
      - At The Seventh Hour:
        - According To The Roman Reckoning - It Would Have Been:
          - About 7:00 In The Evening!
    - But - Either Way:
      - His Servants Met Up With Him:
        - Sometime The Following Day!
          - Which Means That He Wasn't "Double-Timing" It Home!
  - The Nobleman Believed In:
    - And Rested In:
      - The Word Of Jesus:
        - About His Son!
    - And - His Servants Were The Ones:
      - Who Confirmed Jesus' Word:
        - To Him!
    - In 4:52 - They Told Him:
      - "Yesterday At The Seventh Hour The Fever Left Him!"
        - That Is - That Chronic & Terminal Illness - Was Gone!

### **Conclusion:**

1. And So - Even Before That Nobleman:
  - Got To See The Miracle For Himself:
  - That Seed Of Faith:
    - Was Strengthened:
      - By The Testimony Of His Servants!
        - So That - 4:53 - "Himself Believed - Even More, I Might Add - And His Whole House!"
2. The Firm Foundation:
  - For The Nascent Faith Of That Man:
    - Was The Word Of Christ!
  - What Is The Foundation:
    - Of Your Faith?
      - Is It In Some Kind Of Work:
        - That Will Benefit Or Improve:
          - Your Life In Some Way? Or:
      - Is It In Some Kind Of Wonder:
        - That May Even Benefit Or Improve:
          - The Life Of Someone Else?
    - If This Is The Foundation Of Your Faith:
      - It Is On A Shaky & Sandy Foundation!
        - And - When You Become Disillusioned Or Disappointed:
          - Your Faith Will Erode:
            - As Quickly As The Waves Of The Ocean Wash Away A Castle Made Of Sand!
  - 3. The Foundation Of Your Faith:
    - Must Be The Word Of God!



- Not Only Is It How:
  - Your Faith Begins - It Is How:
    - Your Faith Will Grow!
  - In The Hymn We Are About To Sing:
    - We Are Reminded Of This Truth!
- How Firm A Foundation, Ye Saints Of The Lord,  
Is Laid For Your Faith In God's Excellent Word!  
What More Can Be Said Than To You God Hath Said,  
To You Who For Refuge To Jesus Have Fled?
- 4. Is The Word Of God:
  - The Foundation Of Your Faith?
    - Do You Read It? Pray Through It? Study It? Memorize It? Ingest It? Apply It? Obey It? Share It?
  - When You Do:
    - It Will Lead You To A Greater Faith:
      - Not Just In:
        - The Power Of God's Word:
      - But In:
        - The Person Of God's Word:
          - The Lord Jesus Christ!
- 5. Make Sure Your Faith:
  - Is Established:
    - On The Firmest Foundation There Is!
    - The Foundation Of:
      - The Word Of God!

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