

Lenten Devotional March 2, 2021

Scripture

John 4:43-54

43 When the two days were over, he went from that place to Galilee 44 (for Jesus himself had testified that a prophet has no honor in the prophet's own country). 45 When he came to Galilee, the Galileans welcomed him, since they had seen all that he had done in Jerusalem at the festival; for they too had gone to the festival. 46 Then he came again to Cana in Galilee where he had changed the water into wine. Now there was a royal official whose son lay ill in Capernaum. 47 When he heard that Jesus had come from Judea to Galilee, he went and begged him to come down and heal his son, for he was at the point of death. 48 Then Jesus said to him, "Unless you see signs and wonders you will not believe." 49 The official said to him, "Sir, come down before my little boy dies." 50 Jesus said to him, "Go; your son will live." The man believed the word that Jesus spoke to him and started on his way. 51 As he was going down, his slaves met him and told him that his child was alive. 52 So he asked them the hour when he began to recover, and they said to him, "Yesterday at one in the afternoon the fever left him." 53 The father realized that this was the hour when Jesus had said to him, "Your son will live." So he himself believed, along with his whole household. 54 Now this was the second sign that Jesus did after coming from Judea to Galilee.

Devotional

The Rev. Brian Lays '15

In many of the Gospel accounts of Jesus' healings, Jesus heals face to face, taking the hand of a sick girl, or telling a paralytic to pick up his mat and walk. But our passage today is different. Jesus assures the royal official, whom he meets in Cana, that his sick son, who is in Capernaum, "will live." Although the official wants Jesus to come with him to Capernaum and heal his son in person, Jesus doesn't offer to take the detour. Instead, he offers a word of promise, and the official is left to "walk by faith and not by sight" and journey home alone. *The man believed the word that Jesus spoke to him and started on his way.* Upon returning to Capernaum, the official discovers that, sure enough, his son was healed the previous day right when Jesus proclaimed it would be so.

The life of faith is often lived in the interim between promise and fulfillment. When we see God's promises fulfilled, we celebrate and give thanks, as we should. Yet we don't always reflect on how long we waited to see the promise fulfilled. And when we are in the midst of waiting on a promise, we don't always reflect on the times we've seen God fulfill other promises. There's no escaping it: faith is a waiting game. The good news is that many who have gone before us have "started on their way" trusting that God's word would be fulfilled. May we join that great cloud of witnesses this day—and continue on our way with the hope that God is faithful still.

Prayer

Faithful God, we give you thanks that your word does not return to you empty. Give us patience and faith to wait upon you, trusting that your promises are sure, even when the best is yet to come. We pray in Christ's name, Amen.