

In the Name of the Father, and of the ✠ Son, and of the Holy Ghost.

The Beloved Disciple recounts that it was in Cana of Galilee that the Lord had worked His first miracle, the changing of water into wine. That is more than a trivial fact. God doesn't waste Words. The Lord worked a miracle in Galilee.

Word of that miracle must have spread. That well may be why a nobleman sought the favor of a despised itinerant preacher. The text doesn't say that the nobleman believed, at least not at the time he asked the Lord to heal his son. But it is likely that he had heard of the miracle of our Lord at the wedding in Cana, and hoped that the same Man who reportedly commanded water to become wine could command his dying son to be healed.

The son was at the point of death. St. John records not just that the nobleman asked that his son be healed, not that he directed Jesus to heal his son, but that he implored Him to come down and heal his son. His request had two parts – first that the Lord come down, second that the Lord heal his son. Although the nobleman didn't know it, it wasn't necessary for the Lord to go anywhere to work a miracle. He didn't need to "come down."

He had already come down. He came down from heaven and was incarnate by the Holy Ghost of the Virgin Mary, and was made Man. And at the same time He is fully God. He speaks and it is. He commands the wind and the waves and they obey. With a Word He withers a fig tree, with a Word He brings to life the dead.

Note well the Lord's answer to the nobleman, for in it the Lord condemns his unbelief: "Unless you people see signs and wonders you will by no means believe." The flesh is fickle. It must touch and handle and see to believe. Consider Thomas: "Unless I see in His hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and put my hand into His side, I will not believe." The nobleman didn't believe that Jesus could heal from afar, which is to say that he didn't believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Promised Messiah, God the Son sent by God the Father.

The Lord doesn't answer the nobleman. God doesn't answer unbelief. He doesn't stop to explain His Holy Incarnation, His Divinity, the Mystery of the Personal Union of the Divine and Human in the One Person of the Christ. He doesn't explain anything. He does what God always does – He speaks and it is. He declares the boy healed. From afar. Without going anywhere. It is a better miracle than that of Cana. At Cana He was before the stone water jars when He worked the miracle. At Cana no life was spared. Now, from afar, He heals. He spares the son's life.

St. John records that the nobleman believed the Word that Jesus spoke. Faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God – which means that Christ is God, because the man believed at His Word. He believed before he knew that his son was healed. He went his way, and the miraculous Word was proven to be true as he went. He took the walk of faith, and faith, saving faith, faith in Jesus Christ, faith worked by the Word of God, always receives its reward.

The nobleman must have known the answer to his question of his servants before they gave it. They testified that son was healed at a certain hour, the man knew that it was exactly the same

moment that the Lord had declared him healed. His faith was rewarded, His faith grew. And that testimony worked faith in his whole household. Thanks be to God. He is the God Who Heals, as He declared at Marah through Moses when God healed His people through water. And so it is that He heals today.

For the Son was at the point of death. Not the nobleman's son, God's Son. For that He came down, for that He was Incarnate, for that He took on Flesh, for that He was born of the Virgin Mary. The Son was at the point of death. But there was no healing for Him. The affliction was too great, the stripes too deep, the wounds too fatal, for He bore your sins.

He bore the sins of the nobleman. He bore the sins of the nobleman's son. He bore the sins of the world. He bore your sins. Then the Son who was at the point of death died. What He spared the nobleman's son He Himself endured. And that death was proven by the point – the point of the Roman lance.

And yet, even in death, the Promise God made to David was true, as the shepherd king of Israel foresaw the True Shepherd King and said "O Lord God; You have also spoken of Your servant's house for a great while to come" – indeed, that His House would be established forever – in the Seed of David.

So it was that the report the nobleman received foreshadowed the greatest report of all time and eternity: "Your Son lives!" God the Son lives. He suffered death, and then took up His life again. And He did so according to His Promise, on the third day. And by that Promise, by that rising to life again, you hear and believe, because you know that is the time at which the Lord said He would rise.

So you marvel, and you confess with David "Therefore You are great, O Lord God. For there is none like You, nor is there any God besides You, according to all that we have heard with our ears... for you, O Lord God, have spoken it." God has given you faith. And in that faith, you can stand with the Apostle. You can stand, and be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might.

For in Holy Baptism He has made His Gospel Promise personal. He has given it to you, individually. He has healed you with water. He has removed your sins. He has saved you from death. And He has vested you in His righteousness. He has placed His Spirit within you, that you be protected by the Panoply of God. You have the Truth. You have Christ's righteousness. You are ready in the Gospel. You are protected in the faith. You have salvation. You have the Word of God.

So marvel and say with David "...who am I, O Lord God, that you have brought me this far?" Marvel at the grace and goodness of the Lord who created you, the Lord who redeemed you, the Lord that sanctifies you. Marvel at the great and awesome deed which He has done. And marvel at the great and awesome deed that He will soon do again this day – not make water wine, but make wine His Blood, and make Bread His Body, and make Christ your Meal. He speaks and it is. You hear His Word, His Promise, and you believe. And you are healed at this very hour.

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