

July 25 – Small Group - “Forming Faith to Apprehend True Life” John 4:43-54

1. How do people in the wider Canadian culture define faith? Do they see any value in it?

Read John 4: 43-54

2. What does this father see as his greatest need? What does Jesus see as this man’s greatest need?

3. Faith is rooted in what you can see. The official perhaps has heard about Jesus from his neighbours, perhaps even seen him heal with his own eyes. Christian faith begins with what we can see, what we can verify. What can be seen, what is verifiable about the Christian faith? How does this run counter to how many view faith?

4. Jesus responds to the official’s request by creating a situation that is utterly agonizing for him. Not only his initial dismissiveness, his refusal to go down with him, but also sending him on a tormented two day walk home not sure what he will find there. There are at least two ways his faith is deepened as a result of this response:

- I. He begins to grow into a faith that believes before he sees. This is the direction Jesus sends him on when he says – Go your son will live – believe before you see. Do you have examples in our own lives where our faith grows as we believe before we see?
- II. The official first believes because of the benefits that Jesus brings into his life. (vs. 50) He believed the word that Jesus spoke to him, meaning he believed the outcome, what he wanted Jesus to do for him. However, when the servants tell him his son is well and that it happened at the very hour Jesus spoke – he believed. It seems he now has a faith that desires Jesus for his own sake rather than the benefits that Jesus brings. Do we have examples in our own lives of our faith growing from desiring the benefits Jesus brings to desiring Jesus himself? What impact does such a faith have on our lives?

Read John 20:30-31

5. “Go your son will live.” Jesus uses here the Greek word for life – Zoe – which is the divine life of God. It is a life death cannot extinguish, the life of the new creation, the life of an eternal future. This is the same word for life that John uses in what you just read. How is this far more precious than what the father first asked for? Do you now see why Jesus sees faith as his greatest need?

6. What is the impact on our lives, our relationships, our world when we apprehend Zoe by faith?