

From a talk by B. Cobbey Crisler

Book of John, A Walk with the Beloved Disciple

(from transcription notes with earlier permission from Janet Crisler)

Jesus is discussing intellectual problems of Scripture with a woman. This is unheard of!

John 4:25, "*That woman suddenly comes to him and says, I know that Messiah is coming.*" How about that for a recognition! "*I know that the Messiah is coming which is called Christ.*" She didn't say that right. Why, is that in the text? Because it is for the Greeks. "*I know the Messiah comes when he is come, he will tell us all things.*"

John 4:26

John 4:26. Jesus, in one of the rare occurrences, is discouraged from turning the fact that he was the Messiah into any advertising campaign. Rather he focuses on this woman and her receptivity, "*He said, I that speak unto thee am he.*"

John 4:27, "*When the disciples come back, their only problem is that he's talking with the woman.*"

John 4:28, "*The woman leaves her waterpot.*" That's what she'd come for, but she went away with living water. "*She ran into the city*"

John 4:29, "*She said to the men, Come, see a man, which told me all things that ever I did. It's got to be the Messiah.*"

John 4:30, "*The men came out,*" reluctantly, because they didn't want to look like they were coming out because a woman suggested it.

Do you remember when the women disciples told the men disciples that Jesus was risen? The men thought they were idle tales!

4:31

John 4:31, "*In the meantime his disciples asked Jesus to eat the groceries they had bought.*"

In John 4:34, "*Jesus announces his meat is to do God's will.*"

4:34

Remember that. That is what his food is, literally, in Greek. So when he breaks bread and distributes it to his disciples later, you know what his definition of food is. It "*is to do God's will.*" That's the nourishment. "*And to finish his work.*"

JOHN 4:46

In John 4:46, we go "*back to Cana, and while he was there a nobleman has a sick son at Capernaum.*"

John 4:47, Sends Jesus to *"come heal his son at the point of death."*

John 4:48. What is Jesus doing? Does he say, "Right away." He's working with the Father's thought, isn't he? What does he say? *"Unless you see signs and wonders, you won't believe."* The implication is that we trust before we get the result. Remember that is exactly what Jesus illustrated in the raising of Lazarus. Trust that it was already done, complete and finished.

John 4:49, *"The nobleman says, Sir, come down ere my child die."* The physical proximity of a physician was considered necessary, then as now, to heal.

John 4:50, *"Jesus says"* instead, *"Go thy way; thy son lives"*.

Commentary Three

John 4:50, *"The man trusted sufficiently in what Jesus said and went his way."* It's a fair walk from what has been thought to be the location of Cana to Capernaum. You can imagine what has been going on in the father's thought, the anticipation of the event, maybe doubt, and whether he was ever convinced of what Jesus said?

John 4:51, *"His servants meet him half way, and they say, Your son lives."* Those were the same words Jesus said. The last words Jesus had said are repeated here.

John 4:52. He says to his servant, *"Tell me, what time exactly did he begin to improve?"* Notice, built into the father's thought was that it had to take time or process. What time did he begin to improve? *"The servant announcement is, Yesterday at the seventh hour the fever left him, instantly."*

John 4:53. So, the father checked his watch. And he knew it was the same hour that Jesus said, in Verse 50, *"Thy son liveth."*

What you see there is something that physicists say exists in nature to some degree, namely, action-over-a-distance. Physicists define as part of this action-

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over-distance what? Light, magnetism, electricity, sound, things like that. Action-over-a-distance. Jesus said humanity better consider *another* candidate for action-over-a-distance, a candidate that will eventually replace all. Namely, prayer. Prayer-action-over-a-distance.

You didn't have to be physically near someone to have someone healed. What freedom that announces to mankind if there's no physical prerequisite for healing! Healing can occur *regardless* of time and space (and time and space are no obstacle to healing), it occurs mentally or in thought. Prayer travels faster than a man could walk from Cana to Capernaum. The healing got there before the father. The healing was there just as Jesus indicated in John 3:13, "*No man ascendeth up to heaven except he that came down from heaven, even the Son of man which is in heaven.*" This is how Jesus regarded the son of this nobleman, and then proved his vision.

**If
communication
from God to
man must
work,
where must
we work?
In the thought
of the receiver.**

Do we have any evidence of what Jesus said was the summary of his mission? Proof that angels were ascending and descending on the Son of Man (John 1:51)? In the case of the nobleman's son, it is healing. There is a verification. There is a *semeion*, or an identifying mark, or feature of Jesus' theology. Completely leaving the old definition of religion for the new, a practical form of theology which brings with it results.

5:2

John 5:2. We're now at the famous incident at the "Pool of Bethesda." Near what serves as an occasional sheep market today, there is still a pool that has been excavated, that has archeological remnants which suggest the five porches. There was apparently, if this is the correct location of the pools, a structure that had two pools, each with two porches. Down the middle was a fifth porch with pools on either side. It may have been the ancient equivalent of a hospital.