

**“The man took Jesus at his word and departed.”
John 4:50b**

1. To “take people at their word” is to believe them. What qualities does someone have whose word can be relied on, who can be believed?

2. Which of Jesus’ words (sayings, teachings) do you find easy to believe?

3. Which of Jesus’ words (sayings, teachings) do you find hard to believe?

4. What is the difference between Jesus’ easy-for-you and his hard-for-you words?
(For example, is the difference whether or not they match how you think? Or if they speak of earthly or spiritual things? Does the answer change depending on your day, your circumstances, your emotions?)

5. Read in John 4:43–54 the entire account of Jesus’ interaction with this man. Did Jesus give him an easy or a hard word to believe? What reason(s) might Jesus have had for acting the way he did?

6. Perhaps there are parallels in your life: are you asking Jesus for something and he is responding differently from how you had pictured? When this unnamed father of long ago experienced this, he clung to what he already knew about Jesus *and believed*. When Jesus doesn’t respond as you expect, what truth(s) about him that you already know can you in faith cling to?

7. “ . . . and departed.” What does Jesus ask you to in faith go and do?

© 2023 Elizabeth Sullivan. All rights reserved.

THE HOLY BIBLE, NEW INTERNATIONAL VERSION®, NIV® Copyright © 1973, 1978, 1984, 2011 by Biblica, Inc.™
Used by permission. All rights reserved worldwide.