

**WEDNESDAY FELLOWSHIP**  
**At Christ Church, Crouch End Hill**  
Tel/ Fax: 020 8340 1566

No: 3

## John Chapter 2...

### Outlining the Chapter.

The purpose of John's Gospel, remember, is to demonstrate that Jesus of Nazareth is the Son of God. In John 2, the author forcefully accomplishes this. The three incidents in John 2 – wine at the wedding (vv 1-11), coins in the temple (vv 14-17), and signs for the Jews (vv 18-22) reveal different facets of Jesus' divine character.

### **Wine at the wedding (Read John 2:1-11)**

#### **Vv1-3**

Weddings in Jesus' day were week – long festivals. Banquets would be prepared for many guests, and the week would be spent celebrating the new life of the married couple. Often, the whole neighbourhood was invited and as many people as could come, would do so. It was considered an insult to refuse an invitation to a wedding. To accommodate many people, careful planning was needed. To run out of wine was more than embarrassing; it broke the strong unwritten laws of hospitality. Jesus was about to respond to a heartfelt need.

#### **V4**

It is also not entirely clear from the story exactly what Mary expected Jesus to do. If she anticipated a miracle, it is not obvious from the narrative. After all, there was no apparent prior circumstance in which Jesus had actually performed a miracle, since this is clearly recorded as his very first one. No doubt Mary had absolute confidence that her son would somehow get the problem solved, though she could hardly have predicted the outcome. Perhaps she thought he could dispatch his disciples to quickly purchase more wine, or that he would speak just the right words to the guests to calmly explain the situation and make it acceptable to them, or perform some other similarly natural action to solve the embarrassing problem. Tradition says that Joseph, Mary's husband, was dead, so she probably was used to asking for her son's' help in certain situations.

The type of confidence shown by Mary, without specific demands, must reside in us when we need our Lord Jesus Christ to rescue us from a troublesome situation. When we are in difficulties, we must trust completely in the Lord to provide, even if the exact details elude us. Often we expect specific help for our problems, yet relief does not often come in the way anticipated. As the old proverb goes: *be careful what you pray for because you might actually receive it.*

**Mary sets a perfect example for us: she lays the problem in the hands of Jesus, she puts at his disposal all the human resources she could draw upon (the hands of the servants of the feast) and then trusts in him as to the outcome. We can do no less.**

### **The issue**

The real issue at the wedding was not the wine running out but who replenished it. Jesus had the servants fill six stone water pots – which were used for ritual purposes under Jewish law – with water. Then He transformed that water into the best of wine – (v10). According to Commentator Leon Morris " *This particular miracle signifies that there is a transforming power associated with Jesus. He changes the water of Judaism into the wine of Christianity, the water of Christlessness into the wine of the richness and the fullness of eternal life in Christ, the water of the law into the wine of the gospel.*"

In an instant, Jesus' disciples saw proof of His divine power as Creator, as the One through whom " all things came into being" (1:3a) and as the One who superseded Moses' law with God's own grace (vv16-17). In Jesus they saw God's glory (v14) and they believed in Him . (2:11).

**Certainly, it is well within the scope of Jesus' power to transform the quality of our lives as well, making us fit vessels to display His glory (see Matt 5:16; 2Cor.4: 5-7)**

### **STUDY QUESTIONS**

#### **John 2: 1-11**

#### **LOOKING INTO THE SCRIPTURE**

#### **JESUS CHANGES WATER INTO WINE**

Read 2: 1-11 and discuss.

**1. If you could choose any miracle to start you off in a new job or ministry, what would it be?**

- a. healing the multitudes
- b. negotiating a peace treaty between the superpowers
- c. paying off the national debt in one day at no one's expense
- d. raising a sunken ship and saving the passengers
- e. leading a national revival
- f. \_\_\_\_\_

**2. Why do you think Jesus went to the wedding?**

- a. to please his mother
- b. the whole village was invited
- c. it was the fun place to be
- d. to perform a miracle

**3. When they ran out of wine, why did the mother of Jesus try to get Jesus involved?**

- a. concern for the guests
- b. to get the bridegroom out of a jam
- c. she was catering the party
- d. she knew Jesus could do something

**4. How do you think Jesus felt?**

- a. upset
- b. annoyed
- c. embarrassed
- d. reluctant
- e. willing

**5. Why did Jesus go about solving the problem as he did?**

- a. to keep from embarrassing the groom
- b. to remain anonymous
- c. he didn't know if it would work
- d. to reveal His glory

**6. How do you think the bridegroom felt when he heard about the new wine?**

- a. perplexed
- b. intrigued
- c. delighted
- d. amazed

**7. Why do you think Jesus performed his first miracle at a wedding feast?**

- a. it just happened that way
- b. his mother asked him
- c. he saw a need and met it
- d. wine had a special significance
- e. weddings had special significance

**MY OWN STORY**

**1. Where do you need to see the water turned into wine in your life right now? Choose two or three?**

- ☞ SELF-ESTEEM: feeling blah, worthless, useless and out of it
- ☞ FAMILY: feeling hassled, haggard, strung out, and put through the wringer
- ☞ WORK/SCHOOL: feeling pushed, pressed and overloaded
- ☞ APPEARANCE: feeling ugly, zits, braces, frizzy hair, and overweight
- ☞ SPIRITUAL LIFE: feeling lonely, dry, and out of sync with God and his family
- ☞ PHYSICAL LIFE: feeling worn out, used up, drained, and ready to retire
- ☞ MENTAL LIFE: feeling dumb, stupid, like my brain has taken a vacation

**2. In the most difficult area that you checked, how would you describe your situation in terms of the story of Scripture?**

- a. the wine has run out completely
- b. there's new wine available but I'm not drinking
- c. I've tried the new wine and nothing has changed
- d. I'm not sure the new wine is any better

**3. What role do you see individual members of your group playing to make the miracle happen in your life?**

- a. JESUS' MOTHER: intercessor
- b. SERVANTS: labor under Jesus' direction
- c. BANQUET MAITRE D': witness of the change
- d. DISCIPLES: walking the road with me
- e. JESUS: resource manager

**Jesus clears the temple. Read 2: 13-23**

**The incident**

Every Jew over nineteen was required to pay a temple tax, which could only be paid in Galilean or sanctuary shekels—hence the need for money changers. The corruption, however, was not in the system but in the exorbitant rate these unscrupulous financiers charged. Adding to the corruption was the way sacrifices were approved. A fee was charged to inspect all animals brought to the temple for sacrifice. Most of the time, the inspectors found the animal blemished in some way, disqualifying it as a legitimate offering. This forced the out-of-town

traveller to purchase an “approved” animal at the temple for often ten to twenty times the fair market value. No wonder Christ was enraged.

**The issue** - is the sanctity of the temple, the dwelling place of the deity. Today, God dwells in the temple of our physical bodies (see 1 Cor. 6: 19-20) .

The implications of this are enormous. We are not to allow the place where God dwells to become a house of merchandise—a loud, busy, deceptive place. It must be a place of prayer... a place of sanctity... a place of worship, where we can commune with God in spirit and in truth.

**Questions**

- As one of the sellers, how would you feel about Jesus’ actions?

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- As one of the disciples, how would you feel?

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- Jesus showed great zeal for His Father’s honour in His house, the temple. How can we be passionate about God’s honour today?

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- If you compare your spiritual life to the rooms of a house, which room do you think Jesus might want to clean up?

(a) Library—the reading room (b) Dining room—appetites and desires (c) Workshop—where you keep your gifts, skills and talents

(d) Recreation room—where you hang out after work (e) Family room—where most of your relationships are lived out or (f) Closet—where your hang—ups are?

- Why doesn’t Jesus entrust himself to the crowds in verses 23-25

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Jesus knows what is in each of us (John 2:25) - our faults and failures, our darkness and defeat. But He hasn’t come merely to point an accusing finger and judge us, as we will see especially clearly in our next chapter. He has come to save, to enlighten, to make us children of God. ( 1;9, 12, 17). So let’s entrust ourselves to Him, and let Him transform, cleanse, and bring power to the areas of our lives that need it most.