

4. John 2:1-11

Bill Salier

Getting started

What difference does it make to your life being a Christian?

What changes have you had to make to your lifestyle and attitudes because of your allegiance to Christ?

Observation

1. Why was Jesus at the wedding?
2. What do you think of Jesus' reply to his mother in verse 4? What 'time' do you think he is referring to?
3. What kind of jars was the water contained in?
4. Who knew about this miracle?
5. What was the quality of the wine like?
6. What was the disciples' response to this miracle?

For Your Information

Running out of wine at a gathering like this constituted a major social embarrassment – there is even the possibility that the groom could have been sued for this happening.

Jesus' address of his mother is simply the word "woman" – it sounds a little more harsh to our ears than it perhaps was though it is certainly a formal and 'distancing' form of address for a son to address his mother.

Notice also that Mary is not named throughout the story – there is no attempt to draw attention to her and she is in no way the 'master' of her son as some varieties of theology that venerate Mary would suggest.

Interpretation

1. What is the significance of the third day do you think? (think of other third days in the Christian story, and also check back through 1:29 and following to count the days)

2. What effect do you think Jesus' reply to Mary in verse 4 would have on her – what would she have been caused to consider?

3. How would you classify or describe this miracle?

4. What do you think is the significance of the fact that it was Jewish ceremonial jars that were used to hold the water?

5. This is the first of Jesus' miracles, in some ways the 'basic' miracle – what does it tell us about Jesus' mission and its effects?

Implications

How do you see your relationship to Jesus? Are there things that you might be tempted to 'trade on', that mean Jesus 'has to' favour you?

The old structures of Judaism had to be transformed to receive the good news of Jesus. What old structures, ways of thinking about life, religion, pleasing God might you need to rethink in the light of Jesus' coming?

Did you notice?

The abundant quantity and quality of the wine that Jesus created is remarked upon in this account – while not the main point it shows that what Jesus will do will be of the highest quality and will be abundant, generous, gracious as you would expect God to be.

John calls this the first of the signs – this is his special word for Jesus' miracles – they are signs pointing towards something. The fact that he labels this as the first suggests that there is something foundational or programmatic about this miracle.

Prayer suggestions

- Thank God for his miracle of new creation in bringing you to be his child.
- Ask that you will always trust Jesus and never try and 'trade' your way into his favour
- Ask God to show you areas of your life that need to be renewed and then for his power to make those changes.