

## Thought for Sunday 23<sup>rd</sup> August 2020

### Pastor Gordon Hamilton

#### Read John 2:1-11

It has always puzzled me as to why John's is the only gospel to mention this story, and John ends the bit in verse 11 with the words; *'This was the first of his miraculous signs, Jesus performed at Cana in Galilee. He thus revealed his glory, and his disciples put their faith in him.'* John doesn't mention anything about Jesus' birth, although Matthew and Luke felt that was important. John starts his gospel with the words; *'In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was with God in the beginning.'* John doesn't even mention how he became a follower of Jesus, although does mention the calling of Andrew, Peter, Philip and Nathanael. Strangely the other three gospel writers all mention how Jesus told Levi (Matthew) to follow him, interestingly we have just looked at the Sermon on the Mount, written by Matthew, and chapters 5-7 of Matthew's gospel, but not until chapter 9 do we read that Matthew is called to 'follow Jesus.' This story of the wedding at Cana begins by saying; *'Jesus' mother was there, and Jesus and his disciples had also been invited to the wedding.'* We presume that the couple being married were friends of the family, thence Mary being there, and as weddings were always big affairs, Jesus was most probably invited and told you can bring your friends as well. This was obviously before the days of social distancing. I have no idea how much a wedding like this would have cost but there must have been quite a lot of wine to start with, before we read in verse 3; *'The wine is gone, they have no more wine.'* We know that it is Mary who encourages Jesus to use his miraculous powers to produce more wine, surely it would have been far more discreet for a few more bottles to have 'suddenly' been found in an outhouse or somewhere. But we are told that Jesus changes the water in *'six stone water jars... each holding from twenty to thirty GALLONS.'* So at an average of 25 gallons per jar, that is about 150 gallons changed into wine. That calculates to about 757 bottles of wine, and we are told, not just any old wine but the best wine! We have to presume that the jars weren't empty because to fill those jars from empty would have taken a long time, it wasn't a case of just turning on a tap. The stone jars were probably used to allow people to wash their hands before eating, so would have been filled prior to the wedding, but still a major undertaking for the servants, so the servants would have known what was in the jars. Two things puzzle me, why did Mary say to Jesus; *'they have no more wine.'* She obviously expected Jesus to do something? Had Jesus shown his power to his mother before? Scripture doesn't tell us he did, all we know from Luke's gospel is that Mary treasured up all the things told her by the angel (2:19), along with Joseph they marvelled at the things Simeon says (2:33) and that Mary treasured all the things she saw and heard Jesus do and say (2:51). We know that the Holy Spirit came to rest on Jesus at his baptism **read John 1:32-34...** I believe that Jesus was full of the Holy Spirit before then, in fact right at the beginning, **read Luke 1:29-35...** *'The Holy Spirit will come upon you.'* Jesus is the Son of God, Jesus is 100% God and Mary sums it up two verses later; *'nothing is impossible with God.'* Which still leaves the unanswered question; why did Mary say to Jesus; *'they have no more wine.'* Jesus responds; *'my time has not yet come.'* Yet still Mary insists by saying to the servants; *'Do whatever he tells you.'* Oh that we would listen to Mary's words and do what Jesus requires, maybe then we would see miracles happening on a regular basis. What did we read recently in Habakkuk 1:5; *'Look at the nations and watch—and be utterly amazed. For I am going to do something in your days that you would not believe, even if you were told.'* I'm sure the servants would have been utterly amazed! Maybe for Mary, living with Jesus, seeing him grow up, watching his relationship with his heavenly Father grow day

by day, it just became natural, if Mary have a problem, she would turn to Jesus. Too often our problem, can be, we don't make Jesus our first port of call, we think it is too trivial, we think we can deal with it. Why do we think that way, maybe we think we are not worthy, or that Jesus he has bigger fish to fry. Last week we finished looking at the Sermon on the Mount, what did Jesus say in **Matthew 6:26? Read it again.** What is that lovely chorus; *'Turn your eyes upon Jesus, look full in his wonderful face and the things of earth will grow strangely dim, in the light of his glory and grace.'* Mary was his mother, she lived with him, she saw him grow up and living with Jesus, Mary trusted him implicitly. You may say, that is easy because Mary knew him personally, face to face on a daily basis, and while I'm not denying that, Jesus wants us to have a personal relationship with him. When we do, when we give to him every detail of our lives, then we may see things that will utterly amaze others. The question is, will we accept as the normal the things Jesus will do in our lives, when we walk with Jesus. You may remember the chorus; *'A little walk with Jesus makes it right all right.'* You've run out of wine, okay, here you are, 757 bottles of the best wine for you! A dozen bottles might have done the job, but a dozen could just have been a coincidence, 757 bottles, or six stone water jars of wine is no coincidence, that is a God incidence. We are not told that his disciples grew in number because of this miracle, in fact we are not told that any of those at the wedding even knew what had happened, but his disciples did. They knew something quite miraculous had happened. John ends this passage with these words; *'He (Jesus) thus revealed his glory, and his disciples put their faith in him.'* I believe this miracle was done purely for the benefit of his disciples. Throughout the gospels we see the disciples needed reminding again and again of his glory, and his power. 2,000 years later we are no different, but we do need to live our lives hand in hand with our Saviour, that we can know the loving hand of Jesus on our lives. The servants just did as they were asked; *'Fill the jars with water.'* Then; *'draw some out and take it to the master of the banquet.'* They did exactly as they were told and God blessed their work. We are living in difficult times, even in church / chapel we are unable to sing God's praises, so I decided to look for a hymn /song whose words we can say, even though we may not know the tune, I pray the words of this hymn by Dougie Brown will touch your heart.

Your will, not mine, that is what I desire to see,  
Walking in righteousness, and holy liberty.  
Your life, not mine, that is what I desire to live,  
Forgiving others, as always You forgive.

*I bow before Your majesty, I fall before Your throne;  
I cannot understand Your love, but I claim it as my own.  
I rise and stand before You as a living sacrifice;  
I seek to do Your will, O God, for the rest of my life.*

Your voice, not mine, that is what I desire to hear;  
Speak in the stillness and whisper in my ear.  
Your mind, not mine, that is what I desire to have;  
To prophesy Your word, release the captive heart.

Your race, not mine, that is what I desire to run;  
To finish off the work that others have begun.  
Your work, not mine, that is what I desire to do;  
To serve Your purposes, and worship only You.