



John: When Religion Runs Dry

RECAP:

John begins Jesus' public ministry with a wedding in Cana of Galilee, attended by Jesus, His newly called disciples, and His mother (vv. 1-2). Early in the narrative, Mary's presence is highlighted before Jesus', signaling her role in the unfolding moment. When the wine runs out, a serious social and cultural failure in an honor/shame society, Mary brings the problem to Jesus (v. 3).

Jesus' response introduces tension and transition. By addressing His mother as "woman" and stating that His "hour has not yet come," (v. 4) Jesus signals a shift in their relationship and foreshadows His ultimate mission, which will culminate in His death and resurrection. Mary does not argue, but instead instructs the servants to follow Jesus' commands, demonstrating her trust in His authority (v. 5).

John then draws attention to six stone water jars used for Jewish purification rituals, emphasizing their religious function and capacity (v. 6). Jesus instructs the servants to fill the jars with water, which they do (v. 7), and then to draw some out and bring it to the master of the banquet (v. 8). Without explanation of the process, the water becomes wine.

The master of the banquet tastes it and remarks on its superior quality, noting that it has been saved for last, unaware of its origin (vv. 9-10). Only the servants know what has occurred, highlighting that Jesus' first sign is revealed quietly, and primarily to the lowly.

John concludes by identifying this event as the first of Jesus' signs, through which He revealed His glory, leading His disciples to believe in Him (v. 11). The miracle functions not merely as provision, but as revelation, pointing to the new work Jesus has come to accomplish.

- 1. Icebreaker:** What is the most memorable wedding, besides yours, you have ever attended, and why?
- 2.** Looking back at your notes from this week's teaching; was there anything you heard for the first time, something that caught your attention, challenged you, or confused you?
- 3.** Why do you think John begins Jesus' public ministry with a quiet miracle at a wedding where the wine ran out? (v. 3) What might this say about Jesus' character and mission?
- 4. Read Exodus 7.** What dots might Jesus be connecting back to this 'first plague' in the wedding scene at Cana which John describes as His 'first sign'?

5. What do you notice about Jesus' interaction with His mother (v. 4)? How do you see Mary's perspective of her son, Jesus, changing?
 6. Why do you think the simple instruction from Mary (v. 5) is so powerful? What does it mean for you to personally "do whatever Jesus tells you" at this stage of your life?
 7. What are the things in your life (success, recognition, control, or pleasure, etc.) you are tempted to fill your "jars" with that only/always seem to run dry?
 8. **Read Titus 3:4-6.** How does this text connect to the transformative implications at the wedding in Cana?

9. As you reflect on this passage and this sermon, share where you most need “internal renewal” right now (*in your heart, mind, habits, or your faith*)?

SUPPORT/PRAYER

(15 min)

Pray for one another in pairs or as a group.

Pray that God would reveal the things we are tempted to fill ourselves with – success, recognition, control, pleasure, or anything else that never truly satisfies us and always seem to run dry and invite Him to meet us there and to redirect us to replace those things with Him.