

Book of John #4

John 2: Wedding, Temple, Passover

Eric Cepin
Jan. 7, 2023

In John 1, John the Baptist points out Jesus to his followers. Jesus asks them, “What do you want?” and we also need to ask “what do we want?” from Jesus. This is challenging because in all honesty, I want life to be peaceful without conflict and to be blessed in my rule-following goodness. I want things to be better for me! But think about this:

1. **Commanding Jesus is impossible**; His love for you is not impossible. Jesus won't withdraw his relationship when we try to bend his agenda to ours.
2. **Jesus sees the heart of your worship**: he is concerned about your motivations today and throughout your life.

As we dive into the book of John, in John 20 we learn the reason he wrote this book:

John 20:31 But these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.

He is the savior who provides life to anyone who takes hold of his name. Look for moments of belief which bring us out of darkness into life.

Side note/invitation: if you aren't a follower of Jesus, read the gospel from beginning to end. If you have followed Jesus for a while, try reading it backwards, meaning start at the last chapter. Once we have the resurrection, everything looks different.

In John 14, Jesus says “if you've seen me, you've seen the father.” As we understand Jesus, we understand God.

In Mary's song, it's about revolution: She understands her son will change everything. She has had 30 years of conversations with him!

We pick up the story in John 2 as Jesus and his followers go to a family wedding. Mary is already there; she has some kind of authority there. Weddings in this culture were a

week long: the bride and bridegroom are the king and queen for a week. But something always goes wrong. In this case, they had no more wine. Mary had two agendas:

- she wants to protect people from shame and embarrassment.
- From Jesus's answer, she also had in mind for him to start his ministry.

John 2

4 "Woman,^[a] why do you involve me?" Jesus replied. "My hour has not yet come."

5 His mother said to the servants, "Do whatever he tells you."

Was this disrespectful? He also says "woman" when he's on the cross. This word creates distance. "My hour" means "This is not the beginning of me dying." There are some interesting dynamics happening: for 30 years he has been under his mother but now he is saying he's not doing it her way and is now under the Father. Mary's answer is saying that there is something that needs to be done about the shame. You cannot command Jesus but he still loves you when you try to put your agenda forth.

6 Nearby stood six stone water jars, the kind used by the Jews for ceremonial washing, each holding from twenty to thirty gallons.

7 Jesus said to the servants, "Fill the jars with water"; so they filled them to the brim.

8 Then he told them, "Now draw some out and take it to the master of the banquet."

These pots were set apart for cleaning people. We don't have these in our culture.

They did so, **9** and the master of the banquet tasted the water that had been turned into wine. He did not realize where it had come from, though the servants who had drawn the water knew. Then he called the bridegroom aside **10** and said, "Everyone brings out the choice wine first and then the cheaper wine after the guests have had too much to drink; but you have saved the best till now."

Disney has a show where there is a watcher: John is the watcher in this story.

11 What Jesus did here in Cana of Galilee was the first of the signs through which he revealed his glory; and his disciples believed in him.

There are seven signs in the book of John. This is the sign where Jesus's glory is revealed: he steps forward and presents himself as God by changing the water into wine. This miracle turns ceremonial washing pots (the old way of doing things) into the best wine to remove their shame, not in the way his mother wanted but *in his way*. We

often want Jesus to fix our embarrassing things (our agenda) but **Jesus will always do things in a way that is transformative and produces love and a realization of who he is.**

13 When it was almost time for the Jewish Passover, Jesus went up to Jerusalem. **14** In the temple courts he found people selling cattle, sheep and doves, and others sitting at tables exchanging money. **15** So he made a whip out of cords, and drove all from the temple courts, both sheep and cattle; he scattered the coins of the money changers and overturned their tables. **16** To those who sold doves he said, "Get these out of here! Stop turning my Father's house into a market!"

Israelites were slaves in Egypt; remember, there were 10 plagues to encourage Egypt to let them leave. The 10th plague had the Israelites kill a lamb and put the blood over their doorpost so that their first born son would not be killed. After reaching the promised land, they were supposed to come to Jerusalem each year and bring a lamb to celebrate this "pass over." However, some people couldn't bring their own lambs and would buy them in Jerusalem with Caesar's money. So the money changers would change the money into temple money so they could buy them.

This is like a spaghetti western: Jesus walks in, sits down, and starts building a whip. His disciples wondered what was happening: you don't drive an ox with just a whip, though. You also need anger: why was he so angry?

There were many courts in the Jewish temple. Selling things for profit in this place would be like putting a Costco and Walmart in front of the Village and you have to walk through them to get in here. Jesus is deeply concerned with our motivation: it's OK to provide for travelers but not in the center of where there should be worship.

Worship was cluttered then: now it's 2024. What are you looking forward to this year? I want to get to December and see the refinement that will happen but I don't want to walk through it. Jesus is deeply concerned with your motivation: **why are you here? What do you want from Jesus?** What he wants is for your heart to be centered on him: your eyes focussed on him.

18 The Jews then responded to him, "What sign can you show us to prove your authority to do all this?"

19 Jesus answered them, "Destroy this temple, and I will raise it again in three days."

20 They replied, "It has taken forty-six years to build this temple, and you are going to raise it in three days?" **21** But the temple he had spoken of was his body. **22** After he

was raised from the dead, his disciples recalled what he had said. Then they believed the scripture and the words that Jesus had spoken.

John has designed this to be read backwards: once you have the resurrection, these signs come to life. Here, Jesus says worship revolving around the temple is ending. This is not where God dwells any longer!

23 Now while he was in Jerusalem at the Passover Festival, many people saw the signs he was performing and believed in his name. **24** But Jesus would not entrust himself to them, for he knew all people. **25** He did not need any testimony about mankind, for he knew what was in each person.

You can't command Jesus but he loves you and is deeply concerned about what is in your heart. He knows your agenda and he wants to reform it: **will you let him?** It might involve **whips or wine**. **Whips** means it could be painful to correct (my self-centeredness). **Wine** means to remove shame with Joy. God will dismantle our demands of him (making goals) but he will meet us in our longings (desires).

When Jesus asked this, the disciples wanted to hang out with Jesus. He says "Come and you will see."

As we get into the dirt with John, over and over, the invitation is **Come and you will see**. This is the invitation today here at the Village for 2024: come and see. What places in you will he reform, what shame will he uncover? I'm excited!