

November/December 2009

SMALL GROUP SERIES:

7 Signs of Jesus

Discussion Guide
Week #1

Small Groups 
Transforming Community @ RBCPC

Sign #1: Jesus Turns Water Into Wine

John 2:1-12 (TNIV)

1 On the third day a wedding took place at Cana in Galilee. Jesus' mother was there, 2 and Jesus and his disciples had also been invited to the wedding. 3 When the wine was gone, Jesus' mother said to him, "They have no more wine."

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."

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

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."

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."

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

12 After this he went down to Capernaum with his mother and brothers and his disciples. There they stayed for a few days.

a John 2:4 The Greek for Woman does not denote any disrespect.

b John 2:6 Or from about 75 to about 115 liters

Notes For Reflection:

Facilitator's Guide

Helpful Background Information for the Passage:

2:2. Weddings lasted seven days, and hosts invited as many people as possible, especially distinguished guests like prominent teachers.

2:3. To run out of wine at a wedding was a social faux pas that would become the subject of jests for years; the host was responsible to provide his guests with adequate wine for seven days.

2:4. "Woman" was a respectful address (like "Ma'am") but hardly customary for one's mother. Jesus' statement here establishes polite distance (though "What have I to do with you" is usually a harsh, not a polite, expression in biblical language).

2:6. The description of the stone jars indicates that they contained enough water to fill a Jewish immersion pool used for ceremonial purification. Although Pharisees forbade storing such water in jars, some Jews were less strict; thus these large jars were being reserved for ritual purposes. Stone jars were common because they were less likely to contract ritual uncleanness than those made of other substances.

2:7. Using the jars for another purpose would temporarily defile them.

2:8. "Master of the banquet" was a position of honor (Ecclus 32:1-2); one of his primary duties was to regulate the distribution of wine to prevent excess that would (especially in a Jewish context) ruin the party. At least in Greek banquets, guests elected this person to preside over the entertainment and to control the level of dilution for the wine; thus some observers might have held him partly responsible for the host's running out of wine prematurely.

2:11. God had often manifested his glory by doing signs (Ex 16:7; for glory,). Moses' first sign was turning water into blood (Ex 7:20; cf. Rev 8:8); Jesus' first sign is turning water into wine.

The InterVarsity Press Bible Background Commentary, Craig Keener

Facilitator's Tip of the Week

Be a good host:

A good host helps others feel at home in his/her home, creating the safe and comfortable space for transformation to happen through the breaking down of barriers we often have before each other and God. Being a host takes humility, a heart to serve and the commitment to be inconvenienced. But, we think everyone can be a host, and every group needs a host. It's around these hosts that a group will form and grow.

- from **RBCPC Small Groups 10 Core Principles**

The master of the banquet in this story was concerned about being a good host, and Jesus' mother understood that value enough to do something about it! Celebrate the value of the relationships in your group by continuing to provide a welcome environment. You don't have to do it all yourself - engage the rest of your group in hospitality by rotating homes or refreshments. **Thank you** for all you do for your group!

Jesus Turns Water Into Wine

START IT

- Share about the most elaborate wedding you've been to.
- Share about a time when have you been in desperate need of something but couldn't get it (ex. Running out of gas)

STUDY IT

- Read John 2:1-12. Describe the setting- who's there, what's happening, what's the conflict?
- Why might it be a problem to run out of wine? What social stigma might the host family suffer from subsequently?
- What strikes you about Jesus' interaction with his mother?
- What is shocking about what Jesus does?
- Why, do you think, did Jesus produce the wine? Why so much wine? Why such good wine?
- What is the meaning of the sign? Why did the disciples put their faith in him?
- What do you learn about Jesus from this story? What kind of man is he? What kind of God is he?

LIVE IT

- What signs has Jesus given you about his love for you and meaning for your life?
- How should we respond to the miraculous?
- What are you lacking in your life (in your relationships, character, finances, etc)?

PRAY IT

- That a revival of the spirit of God would overcome our church.
- That we might have spiritual eyes to see the miraculous signs of God's presence and power in our lives, and respond with faith.