



## Do That Thing You Do – Touchpoint for January 15, 2025

### John 2:1-12 (NRSVUE) Jesus Turns Water into Wine

#### TOUCH POINT

<sup>2</sup> On the third day there was a wedding in Cana of Galilee, and the mother of Jesus was there. <sup>3</sup> Jesus and his disciples had also been invited to the wedding. <sup>4</sup> When the wine gave out, the mother of Jesus said to him, “They have no wine.” <sup>5</sup> And Jesus said to her, “Woman, what concern is that to me and to you? My hour has not yet come.” <sup>6</sup> His mother said to the servants, “Do whatever he tells you.” <sup>7</sup> Now standing there were six stone water jars for the Jewish rites of purification, each holding twenty or thirty gallons. <sup>8</sup> Jesus said to them, “Fill the jars with water.” And they filled them up to the brim. <sup>9</sup> He said to them, “Now draw some out, and take it to the person in charge of the banquet.” So, they took it. <sup>10</sup> When the person in charge tasted the water that had become wine and did not know where it came from (though the servants who had drawn the water knew), that person called the bridegroom <sup>11</sup> and said to him, “Everyone serves the good wine first and then the inferior wine after the guests have become drunk. But you have kept the good wine until now.” <sup>12</sup> Jesus did this, the first of his signs, in Cana of Galilee and revealed his glory, and his disciples believed in him.

<sup>12</sup> After this he went down to Capernaum with his mother, his brothers, and his disciples, and they remained there a few days.

**Grace and peace to you from the Mystery in whom we live and move, and have our being.**

In my neighborhood growing up, there was a convenience store called U-Totem. The store was within walking distance, with only one street to cross. There was also a Dairy Queen, a Mugs-Up car hop, and a liquor store we were forbidden to enter or buy candy cigarettes from. The U-Totem was where I was sent to get things we didn't have. I'd hop on my Stingray bike with the banana seat and go.

Often, my mom's church friends or sisters would come over with their families, and she'd make the favorites—red chili, refried beans, fresh tortillas, and usually a side salad because she thought there should be something green on the plate. It was so not needed!

She wanted people to enjoy her cooking and have a good time around the table. There were always plenty of seconds, but occasionally she offered more of something she didn't have left.

“Would anyone like more of anything?” she'd ask. “More red chili? Green beans?”

Well, there would always be some knucklehead who would say, “Yes, I'll have more green beans.” Not wanting to admit there weren't any more green beans, she'd call me into the kitchen, put money in my hand, and whisper, “Mijo, go to U-Totem and get a can of green beans.” I would look up at her and say, “Mom, why did you offer green beans if we don't have any more?”

“Just go, and don't fool around,” she'd say.

I remember how strange it seemed to offer something you didn't have and then send your young boy on a trip to the convenience store for no reason. Not very convenient for me.

But there was something special about knowing my mom and I had a secret. I had to get there and back before they knew what happened. Haha! We actually didn't have any more green beans! So, I guess you could say my mom and I bonded over the secret that she codependently over-offered (a quality that seems to have been passed down in the Rojas family), and I saved her skin.

I suppose all moms are like that. They take great pleasure in making everyone happy and well-fed, even if it comes at the youngest one's expense.

I think maybe this is what Mary was doing at the marriage at Cana.

I'm wondering if she was part of the preparations for this big marriage ceremony. After all, more than one person had to take part, and she knew when they ran out of wine. Wedding ceremonies usually lasted more than a day and had enough food and drink to last into the week. She may have kept an eye on supplies and such.

The couple didn't really have a honeymoon; they had a week of hosting guests who brought well wishes. They would need a lot of wine for that, I guess.

Even during those times, they had what you might consider a concierge or a head waiter that accompanied the wedding planner. That person knew the food, the drink, and the vendors. My guess is that Mary was involved in the preparations.

Some sources from those times suggest Mary was related to the bridegroom—perhaps an aunt—so she would be closely invested in the wedding celebration going well.

This is where I think Mary and her son had a "can of green beans" moment. She obviously knew her son intimately. She understood his unique gifts and had witnessed his great compassion for others. They both had a deep understanding of Jewish customs and wanting to follow them well.

Let me stop for a moment and share the resistance I'm feeling to picking apart all the hermetically sealed theological meanings in this story. Can we just reflect on the relationship between a mother and her son? Or possibly a loving aunt and her nephew, the bridegroom?

Let's talk about Jesus bringing friends who weren't invited to a party. That's kind of funny. He was in the middle of putting together his twelve disciples, so he had to bring this ragtag group. It was probably expected by his mom. Maybe his friends were the ones responsible for drinking all the wine!

Let's talk about the tongue-in-cheek conversation between Mary and Jesus, where she just kind of looks in another direction and wonders aloud, "Hmm, we have no more wine." I can relate! "Hmm, we have no more green beans." As her boys, Jesus and I know what she means.

“Mom, why are you involving me in your over-offering and desire to please?” The underlying communication from his mom was, “Go do that thing you do.”

Jesus answers, “Woman, what concern is that to me and to you?” Oh my! If I had answered my mother that way... Some say his response could be interpreted as, it’s not my time to be known yet, or Jesus’ time to be taken away and arrested had not come yet. It could even mean, “Let me handle this my way.” All valid interpretations.

But I say, let’s take the more human route: “Mom, seriously, I’m here with my friends... and well, let me handle this my way. On the down low.”

What we do know is that Jesus wasn’t addressing Mary disrespectfully by calling her “woman.” He used that term again later when he was carrying the burden of the cross. “Woman” said in this fashion showed an endearing respect—*my dear woman*.

So, what enduring purpose would John have in recording this story? If you want to see real significance and meaning in this story when it comes to unconditional love and celebration, let me offer this: the water jugs that were used to turn water into wine were to hold ceremonial washing water—not just any old jugs. Jugs used for the rite of ceremonial cleansing!

Perhaps John wanted us to know that the presence of incredible, unconditional love and grace embodied in the person of Jesus inferred there was no longer a need for ceremonial washing. Why? Because love was present. The *I Am* was present. It is not in the law or rituals or ceremonies alone. It is not in the wine alone. It’s in every person present. They are clean, and there is no more need for ceremonial washing to enter into this presence. It is time to turn the water into wine for celebration.

Could this be considered the first massive Lord’s Table? Jesus declaring, “The drinks are on me!” for the couple’s celebration—for the people’s celebration? Maybe Mary is saying, “I know we will never run out of this wine.”

“Son, do that thing you do!”

“Waiters, do what he tells you, and you’re going to be amazed. Bridegroom, take the credit. It’s all good.”

Mom and son, in cahoots, are offering the abundance of grace. For me, the truth is inescapable. There’s no more need for ceremonial washing to party with Jesus.

It may seem unorthodox according to temple rules, but maybe it wasn’t so unorthodox after all. Maybe it was simply the truth—that there was no more need for ceremonial washing water. All was becoming new—not just the joining of two people in marriage but the joining together of the embodied Christ and new wine.

Oh, and... Jesus did a miracle. Cause that's how he did.

I would have given anything for John to end his story with having Mary being the first one in history to say, "Thank you, Jesus!"

**Amen**

## Opening Songs

### **Be Still**

(The London Fox Taizé Choir)

Be Still, know that I am God

### **Calm Me Lord**

(Margaret Rizza)

Calm me Lord as you calmed the storm.  
Still me Lord, keep me from harm.  
Let all the tumult within me cease.  
Enfold me Lord, in your peace.

## Bible Passage

(A passage takes us from one place to another)

## Touchpoint

(Where God's story touches our life story)

### **Dwell Among Us**

(Salt of the Sound)

Keep moving and living and breathing in us  
Keeping working and singing and speaking through us  
You dwell among us...  
With all this life I long to see, more of You and less of me  
Lord send Your spirit here to work in us

## The Meal

### **The Lord's Prayer**

(The Scottish Festival Singers)

## Benediction

May we awaken to our new beginning. A life of authenticity that rocks the world of orthodoxy around us. May we learn to integrate hope and joy into a world paralyzed in the adolescent unease of transformation. May we listen to the voice and the light that guide the movements of our hearts, that we may be a voice and light to others. May we stop coming to Jesus as capable or incapable men and women of God and come as children. May Spirit ignite a fire of new beginning out of our joyous confession of powerlessness. Amen

### **Sevenfold Amen**

(The Emmanuel Quartet)

**Amen**