

Encounters: The Wedding Couple

John 2:1-10

3/5/23

Discussion Guide

Preparation

What do you remember about your wedding day? Describe it and the reception afterwards. Was it an expensive wedding? How many attended? What did you serve? How much did you spend? Who paid?

Imagine how you would have felt had the caterer or whomever provided the food for the reception had not showed up. How would you guests have reacted? How would you have felt?

Passage

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, 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.

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." John 2:1-10

"This was the first of the signs through which he (Jesus) revealed his glory (glory means weight or significance; and his disciples believed in him)." (2:11)

1. Is there anything from last week's discussion that you'd like to bring up and talk about?
2. Share a time when you experienced something like the young wedding couple experienced, something that reminded you that something is wrong with the world and it frustrated you to the degree that you lost your temper, cried, or even temporarily walked away from God.
3. Talk about the significance of Jesus not only saving the day by providing wine at the wedding reception, but he does so by providing the best wine. He didn't have to. He could have provided "jug wine or wine in a box." It would have been sufficient.

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4. Share a time when God brought light into a dark moment in your life.
5. Psalm 30:11 says, *"You turned my wailing into dancing; you removed my sackcloth and clothed me with joy."* Psalm 30:11 When did God do that in your life?
6. Have you ever felt like Samwise from the Lord of the Ring; you wonder: *"Is everything sad going to become untrue one day?"*
7. Jesus did not have to provide wine for the wedding party. He had no obligation to the family or to his mother. Yet he did it anyway as an act of grace. How have you experienced the grace of God in your life?
8. What do you think about Jesus' exchange with his mother?
9. Discuss the paths to salvation the world offers and whether or not they are sufficient. In what ways is grace a better path?
10. When applied to a person's life how does grace shape a person's character, motivations, and behavior?
11. Do you know of Christians who acted like many of the missionaries Langdon Gilkey observed while imprisoned, who behaved in selfish and ungenerous ways, all the while justifying themselves through sanctimonious rationales?
12. Who in your life acted like Eric Liddell, *"who poured himself out for others and was overflowing with humor, kindness, and an unmistakable inner peace."*
13. React to Reinhold Niebuhr's quote: *"Religion is not the place where the problem of man's egoism is automatically solved. Rather, the ultimate battle takes place between human pride and God's grace."*
14. Have you ever seen someone changed by Jesus to their very core? Once they met Jesus, they were fundamentally a different person?
15. Share an example of a character flaw that caused problems in your life and how Jesus changed that area so it no longer caused problems for you.
16. Discuss Edmund Clowney's summary of Jesus' encounter with the wedding couple:
"Jesus sat amidst all the joy of the wedding feast sipping on his coming sorrows so that today, you and I who believe in him can sit amidst all the world's sorrow sipping on joy and the joy yet to come. There is just one love, one feast, only one thing that can really give your heart all that it needs and they await you in Jesus."