



This Sunday we welcomed our newly-ordained Curate, Peter Nevins, to preach the last of our summer sermons on 'Questions from God'. Read John 2: 1-11. Jesus asks, 'Why do you involve me? My time has not yet come'. Jn. 2:4

Introduction

The WWJD bracelets of the 1990's were meant to prompt us to keep asking ourselves, 'What would Jesus do?' They have their limitations, particularly if you mis-matched issues and quotes! John shows us how Jesus takes us on a deeper journey concerning intercessory, or 'asking' prayers.

1 Why involve Me? When do we involve Jesus in our lives?

- Reflex action prayers in time of crisis, emergency or just surprise: we default to 'O God help!' It's in our 'culturally conditioned evolutionary biology' which even atheists share when cornered.
- Bargaining prayers which try to gain God's good will: we promise to move our attitude towards Him from hostility to warmth; from 'interested' to belief or even commitment as long as God helps us with our ambitions in education/career/finances/whatever – so that together we'll be serving the chief in my pantheon of gods, which of course is me.
- We do have faith but are unsure it's enough, like the man with the son with a demon – **Mark 9: 21-24** But Jesus encourages this father to have faith in Jesus and His powers – of course He can heal!

Interlude '..... My time has not yet come.' John 2:4b - 5

The Messianic Secret: At the beginning of His ministry Jesus often asked people to keep quiet about His miracles because it was not time for Him to reveal that He was the Messiah. Had he done so, he would have been mobbed as the conquering King come to rid the Jews of the Romans: His time on earth cut even shorter. Mary, who knew her Son, tells them to do what He tells them, and Jesus complies, but on His own terms.

2 Why did John include the Cana Wedding story in his gospel?

- John includes this miracle intentionally to explain that we can have life in its fullness through belief in Jesus, the Son of God. **John 20: 31**. Our ordinary human life is transformed into eternal, spiritual life, just like the changing of water into very good wine. *The miracle was a dramatic Visual Aid*.
- Also, our text is part of a group of miracles and teachings starting from **John 1:19 to 7: 37-39*** which demonstrate how the beautiful temple, the all-important Torah (Law) and even Jerusalem itself is being surpassed by Jesus who had to die for us to bring us into spiritual relationship with God.
- Then there's the Old Testament connection: Jesus is fulfilling the covenant prophecies found in **Ezekiel 37** (the valley of dry bones), **Ezekiel 11: 19-20; Jeremiah 31: 31-34**. Filled with His Spirit, we become the people He intends us to be.
- Jesus agrees to His Mother's request to help when the wine ran out, but on His terms – which would have been embarrassing for the host. The best wine was always served first and shared with the guests. We have to be prepared for Jesus to accomplish His purposes in our lives His way, which is always about us becoming people like Him: full of the Holy Spirit and united to God the Father.

Questions for discussion

1. *Do we identify with any of these or any other less-than-worthy reasons for involving Jesus in our lives?*
2. *What attitude of heart should we have when approaching God in 'asking' prayers?*
3. *When praying this week, can we reflect on whether we are really willing to accept the changes Jesus will want to make in our lives?*
4. ** Some might like to skim through Chapters 1-7 and pick out the references to water, wine and Spirit.*
5. *This was the first of Jesus' miraculous signs (v.11) which always involved the physical illustration of a spiritual principle. The sign always points away from itself and towards the One who performed it.*

Thought: Everything except Jesus in this account remains in the background – the bride and groom; their relationship to Mary; how they got invited Jesus stands in full relief, all the rest in shadow. 'What Rembrandt did for art, John, under the Spirit's guidance, does for religion.' [Idea from John by W.Hendrikson.]