Welcome to the month of May study of the Gospel of John (1 of 7 signs each Sunday)
May 3, 2020

JOHN 2:1-5 *1The third day, there was a marriage in Cana of Galilee. Jesus’ mother was there. 2Jesus also was invited, with his disciples, to the marriage. 3When the wine ran out, Jesus’ mother said to him, “They have no wine.” 4Jesus said to her, “Woman, what does that have to do with you and me?* *My hour has not yet come.” 5His mother said to the servants, “Whatever he says to you, do it.”*

“The third day”

This would be the third day after Jesus’ encounter with Nathanael. The first two stories of this Gospel, the wedding and the cleansing of the temple are both “third day” stories.

“in Cana of Galilee”

The location of Cana is uncertain. We just know it is Nathanael’s home.

“Jesus’ mother was there”

Jesus and his disciples were also invited. There is a commentary theory that the shortage of wine resulted from Jesus and his disciples unexpectedly swelling the guest list.

Disciples are present, but we don’t know which ones.

FYI: Jesus mother appears twice in this Gospel, here and at the cross (19:25-27).

“When the wine ran out”.

These people, by Jewish law are expected to provide plentiful food and wine for weddings.

Weddings are celebrated for seven days, and are a community celebration.

“Jesus’ mother said to him, ‘They have no wine’

We can assume that the wedding party has been in progress for some time.

What did Jesus’ mother have in mind?

What was her personal situation at this time?

“Woman, what does that have to do with you and me?”

Was he asking “What have I done to deserve this? or perhaps “ What is my involvement in this?

Do you think Jesus’ reference to her as “woman” suggests disrespect?

How would “woman” be interpreted in our time?

“My hour has not yet come”

Jesus’ hour in the Gospel of John is the hour of his glorification—the hour of his death, resurrection, and ascension.
What do you think is the meaning of this Jesus statement?

“His mother said to the servants, ‘Whatever he says to you, do it'”

Reference Pharaoh’s instruction to the Egyptians during the famine, where Pharaoh showed his confidence in Joseph by putting him in charge of managing the crisis.

JOHN 2:6-8 *6Now there were six water pots of stone set there after the Jews’ way of purifying, containing two or three metretes apiece. 7Jesus said to them, “Fill the water pots with water.” They filled them up to the brim. 8He said to them, “Now draw some out, and take it to the ruler of the feast.” So they took it.*

“Now there were six water pots of stone set there after the Jews’ way of purifying”.

Barclay notes that the Jews regard seven as a perfect or complete number, and six is incomplete. Barclay believes that the six jars  “stand for all the imperfections of the Jewish law” (Barclay, 89).

Thoughts on that?

The amount of water held by each jar is literally “two or three measures” or “twenty or thirty gallons”.

“Jesus said to them, ‘Fill the water pots with water.’ And they filled them up to the brim”.

They would have hauled and poured nearly 200 gallons of water.

“Now draw some out, and take it to the ruler of the feast”.

The chief steward is in charge of the wine.
Embarrassment of the shortage?

Responsible for the quantity of wine and its quality and distribution.

Was the water drawn from a well or a cask?

This Gospel story gives the impression that the wine is drawn from the jars.

JOHN 2:9-10.  *9When the ruler of the feast tasted the water now become wine, and didn’t know where it came from (but the servants who had drawn the water knew), the ruler of the feast called the bridegroom, 10and said to him, “Everyone serves the good wine first, and when the guests have drunk freely, then that which is worse. You have kept the good wine until now!”*

“When the ruler of the feast tasted the water now become wine”

This story never tells us exactly when the water becomes wine. The servants pour water into the jars. When the steward tastes it, he discovers that it is wine.

“and didn’t know where it came from”

Jesus worked this miracle quietly.

Only his mother, his disciples, and the servants know what he has done.

“and didn’t know where it came from (but the servants who had drawn the water knew)”

As most of us know, there is confusion about where Jesus comes from.

His origin is one of the concerns of this Gospel (6:46; 7:27; 8:14; 19:9) and that suggests a clue to the meaning of this passage. What do you think that might be.?

“Everyone serves the good wine first, and when the guests have drunk freely, then that which is worse”

Guests can be expected to have more discriminating palates when they first begin to sip the wine. Later, when their senses have become dulled, they would not care whether they were drinking good or mediocre wine.

“You have kept the good wine until now”

Herein lies the key to understanding this story.

What do you think is the key to the story?

JOHN 2:11. *11This beginning of his signs Jesus did in Cana of Galilee, and revealed his glory; and his disciples believed in him.*

“This beginning of his signs Jesus did in Cana of Galilee”

We hear pastors call this a “miracle,” but John takes it one more step by using the word “signs.”

Your thoughts?

The Lord bless you and keep you; the lord make his face to shine on you and be gracious to you and give you peace.

Numbers 6:24-26