

TABLE TALK February 10, 2019

“The Perfect Wedding Guest”

Scripture Focus: [John 2:1-11](#)

THIS WEEK’S FAMILY ACTIVITY

God’s love is never-ending! Tell your kids you are going to play a measurement game. Give each child a measuring stick or tape and ask them to measure items around the house. Point to or holler out the name of possessions in your household (couch, cabinet, pets, toys, etc.) and have the kids measure each item individually. Invite them to shout out the measurements after each one. Keep the game moving quickly and give the kids lots of encouragement along the way. After they’ve measured a few items, holler out, “Measure God’s love for us!” Watch as they think about what you have asked them to measure and talk about ways we can measure God’s love. Remind them that God’s love is too big to measure—it is bigger than anything in our home, the world and the universe! Thank God for his love that is bigger than we can ever imagine.

Adopted from Church of the Resurrection GPS Guide June 10, 2018

MONDAY

Read: [John 1:43-51](#)

Jesus grew up in Nazareth, a tiny village. It lay about an hour’s walk from Galilee’s district capital, Sepphoris, a prosperous city which built a Roman theater during the time of Herod the Great. This description from Dictionary of Jesus and the Gospels shows Nazareth’s obscurity: “As it expanded, Nazareth may have grown to a settlement of some 200 persons.” So when Phillip told Nathanael that “We have found the one Moses wrote about in the Law and the Prophets: Jesus, Joseph’s son, from Nazareth,” Nathanael responded as any of us might have: “Can anything from Nazareth be good?” But Nathanael was quickly convinced Phillip was right once he met Jesus.

- In verse 51, Jesus reminded Nathanael of the story of “Jacob’s ladder” in Genesis 28:12, and said Nathanael would see something similar as he spent time with Jesus. The message was that Jesus truly linked heaven and earth in a way Jacob’s famous dream only symbolized. How open is your heart to perceiving the often unseen spiritual realities of God’s world? In what ways can reading, studying and meditating on the story of Jesus, as told in John’s gospel, help to make that connection stronger for you?

*Prayer: Lord Jesus, John wrote that in you heaven came to earth. But many days this dark world doesn’t look much like heaven to me. Please connect me more closely to God, to the source of*¹ Joel B. Green and Scot McKnight, eds. Dictionary of Jesus and the Gospels.

(Downer’s Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1992), p. 37.
all life and goodness. Amen.



Adopted from Church of the Resurrection GPS Guide February 14, 2016

TUESDAY

Read: [John 2:1-25](#)

About the first story in today's reading, Pastor Hamilton wrote, "Why does John tell us the jars were used for Jewish rites of purification? He could have said simply, 'There were six stone jars'... John's story is not just about Jesus changing water into wine, but it is instead about how life in Christ is richer and more joyful than the ritualistic religion of first-century Judaism."¹ John linked that to the story of Jesus cleansing the Temple. He meant that Jesus knew many rituals had become more obstacle than signpost, and that Jesus was truly the way to God.

- John pointedly noted that Jesus changed water in jars used for ritual purification (verse 6) into "good wine" (verse 10). It was a sign that he offered a better way than his day's rigid, repressive ritual system. Did you, in your growing up years or later, ever experience faith as rigid and repressive, draining life of joy and satisfaction? When has Jesus changed "water into wine" in your spiritual walk?
- What did verses 24-25 say about Jesus? (He clearly was not anti-social—the wedding feast story showed that.) In what ways have you learned to put your deepest trust in God's love for you, instead of in people? How can a realistic view of human nature help you love others more and better, avoiding both letting the wishes and opinions of others drive you and the pain of being excessively hurt by their limitations?

Prayer: Lord Jesus, I'm awed to realize that the same power that changed water into wine is transforming my life. Fill me to the brim with the high-quality life you came to give your people. Amen.

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WEDNESDAY

Read: [John 3:1-36](#)

In chapter 3, John's story introduced Nicodemus, a Pharisee, and returned to John the Baptizer, the great prophet. Nicodemus' authority came from religious status attained through strict outward piety. John the Baptizer's authority grew from the way his God-given message pointed to the coming Messiah's greatness, not to himself. His humble joy at Jesus' "increase" (verse 30) was an example of the inner rebirth Jesus spoke of to Nicodemus.

- John said Nicodemus came to Jesus "by night" (verse 2). When he cleansed the Temple, Jesus challenged the Pharisees' power and authority. Nicodemus may have needed the darkness to keep other Pharisees from seeing him with Jesus. That night, Jesus invited Nicodemus to live in the light of God's kingdom. Their talk changed Nicodemus (cf. John 7:45-52; John 19:38-42). In what kinds of darkness did you come to Jesus? How has God brought you from the darkness into the light?

¹ Adam Hamilton, *John: The Gospel of Light and Life*. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2015, p. 35.

- When John the Baptizer's followers saw Jesus' growing ministry as a "threat," the prophet said, "No one can receive anything except what has been given from heaven...[Jesus] must increase, but I must decrease" (verses 27-30). Where do you find your source of "joy" and "greatness"? Does John's counter-cultural model of what matters most in life challenge you to rethink any of your attitudes or actions? Prayer: Lord Jesus, help me to remember that my "greatness" and "joy" come from you. Give me more of your willingness to connect even with people like Nicodemus who might at first seem like "enemies." Amen.

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THURSDAY

Read: [John 4:1-42](#)

John said Jesus "had to go through Samaria" (verse 4). That wasn't a geographic requirement—most Jews chose a route that bypassed Samaria. (Click [here](#) to see a map that shows the three routes). John was describing a spiritual necessity. Jesus had a "divine appointment" to meet a woman even the Samaritans no doubt shunned. He offered her "living water," and her response made her the first witness to Jesus in John's story.

- Jesus offered "living water" (in common usage, the term meant fresh, clean water, not stagnant water that had stood in a cistern). He said, "The water that I give will become in those who drink it a spring of water that bubbles up into eternal life" (verse 14). What choices have helped make your walk with Jesus one that "bubbles up into eternal life"? In what ways are you able to let that joyous, bubbling quality show as you live your life?
- The woman expressed the vague hope that someday the Messiah could answer her questions. "'I am he,' said Jesus. 'You don't have to wait any longer or look any further'" (verse 26, The Message). How would you express the biggest questions or issues in your life? In what ways has trusting Jesus helped you come to peace about some or all of those issues?

Prayer: Lord Jesus, you aren't willing to settle for just my head and hands. You seek my heart, too—and, sometimes with fear and trembling, I offer it. I offer all of me to you again today. Amen.

Adopted from Church of the Resurrection GPS Guide February 21, 2016

FRIDAY

Read: [John 4:43-54](#)

Right after the story of reaching the Samaritans, John underscored Jesus' inclusive caring by telling of his "long-distance" healing of a royal official's ill son. The man probably worked either for Herod and/or the Romans, but that didn't bother Jesus. But for John this wasn't just a random "healing" story. This, he said, was "the second miraculous sign Jesus did" (verse 54).

- The crux of this story came in verse 50: "Jesus replied, 'Go home. Your son lives.' The man believed the word that Jesus spoke to him and set out for his home." How did this royal official find enough confidence in Jesus to believe and set out for his home? Are

there areas of life in which it's a challenge for you to trust Jesus' love and caring for you and your needs?

- In his prologue, John said, "The light came to his own people, and his own people didn't welcome him" (John 1:11). Jesus told Nicodemus, "God's Spirit blows wherever it wishes" (John 3:8). When you have welcomed Jesus and the light he brings to your life, how have you seen God work in unexpected ways in your life? In the lives of others, including people you might not think would be open to that?

Prayer: Jesus, you touched and changed Nicodemus in his righteous robes, the outcast woman at the well, the royal official in his courtly garb. Wherever I fall in that spectrum, I trust you to touch and renew me—and through me, others who are thirsty for you. Amen.

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SATURDAY

Read: [Hebrews 3:6-14](#)

This passage requires us to recall (or learn) some Bible history. The writer quoted [Psalm 95:7-11](#). That Psalm, in turn, looked back to [Numbers 13:1-14:24](#), when Israel refused to trust God on the borders of the Promised Land, and thereby missed their chance to live in the land of promise. The word "today" gripped the writer's heart. He wrote with a sense of urgency. God is in the present, not someday. A whole generation of Israelites missed their "today." His appeal was, don't make the same mistake—encourage each other every day.

- In the film *Field of Dreams*, Doc Graham recalled his one major-league game (he never got to bat) and said, "Back then I thought, well, there'll be other days. I didn't realize that was the only day." He went on, "We just don't recognize the most significant moments of our lives while they're happening." What "ordinary" things are happening in your life today to which tomorrow you may wish you'd paid more attention? Whose values are you using to discern which of today's moments are most significant?
- In *The Screwtape Letters*, C. S. Lewis observed that "the Present is the point at which time touches eternity."² The past is gone, and we can no longer alter it; the future is unknown, and one moment can shatter our illusions of controlling it. How often, because "today" seems ordinary, do you find yourself spending energy regretting or missing the past? How much of your time and energy goes to imagining what the future might be like, for good or ill? What helps you to live mainly "today," not in the past or the future?

Prayer: Lord Jesus, thank you for the gift of this day. Walk through this day with me, keeping me alert and attuned to what you are doing in my life right now. Amen.

Adopted from Church of the Resurrection GPS Guide October 8, 2017.

² Lewis, C. S. *The Screwtape Letters: Annotated Edition* (Kindle Locations 1101-1102). HarperCollins. Kindle Edition.