

Involve Me

John 2:1-11 (NIV)

¹ 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." ¹¹ What Jesus did here in Cana of Galilee was the first of the signs through which he revealed his glory; and his disciples believed in him.

When all the people were being baptized by John at the Jordan River, Jesus came too. After John washed Jesus with those waters, the heavens opened. A bright light broke through and shone on Jesus. A dove descended on him, the Holy Spirit, true God, in the form of a dove. Then a booming voice from heaven sounded, "You are my Son, whom I love; with you I am well pleased." (Luke 3:22) This is the start of Jesus' public ministry. Jesus is no longer a boy, but a man, about 30 years old. He has left home. He is actively engaging in his work as the Messiah, ready to teach and preach.

First thing Jesus does after being baptized is go off into the wilderness where he is tempted by the devil for 40 days and 40 nights. When Jesus returns, John the Baptist saw him and proclaimed without hesitation, "Look, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!" (John 1:29) John recounted what he saw at Jesus' baptism. He repeats his declaration the next day when Jesus is passing by again. This time, two of John's disciples get up and follow Jesus. Jesus invites them to stay with him. They go and tell others that they have found the Messiah, the Christ, the Savior. More join Jesus. Six of the Twelve disciples are now following Jesus.

The third day after Jesus called his first disciples, a wedding took place at Cana in Galilee. Jesus and his disciples had been invited to the wedding. In Jewish tradition, weddings were a big deal. They lasted for seven days! Seven days of partying, enjoying time with family and friends, and food – lots and lots of food. Imagine your wedding reception lasting seven days!

At this wedding, Jesus' mother was also there. We don't totally know why. Maybe she was an invited guest like Jesus, but she does have knowledge of the diminishing wine stores of the newlyweds. She has authority to tell the servants what to do. Maybe Mary is serving as the hostess or emcee of the wedding. Regardless of why she is there, Mary notices a problem. The reserve wine is almost gone. They were not going to have enough to finish out the feast with the customary drink. She comes to Jesus and simply presents the information: "They have no more wine." (verse 3)

Is this really a big deal to have no more wine for this wedding? They have other beverages, right? They can always drink water, can't they? Yes, they could, but it would be a social embarrassment for the newlywed couple to run out of wine before the feast was over. It's like having the wrong color flowers show up for your wedding or the names at the tables at the reception being in the wrong places. You'll maybe remember these mistakes years down the road, but this is not a "ruined my life" type of moment. So, why involve Jesus? Jesus even says it, "Woman, why do you involve me?" (verse 5)

When you pray, do you sometimes feel like God is answering your prayer with a, "Why do you involve me?" question? What has your prayer, what you presented, got to do with me? Did you really need to take up my time presenting this request to the Almighty? We ask ourselves, "Should I pray about passing my driver's test?" "Should I pray for the Green Bay Packers to make it to the Super Bowl?" "Should I pray about my child's birthday party?" "Should I pray about my dentist appointment?" When we look at our daily needs, our earthly needs, do we sometimes think that these things are so trivial that I simply shouldn't waste God's time with these things? Maybe I should just keep them to myself and handle it on my own. Why involve him? So, when you get done praying you end it with an "Amen," but you are really thinking, "Well, I gave it a try, but it probably won't work. Maybe I shouldn't even bother with prayer. Why involve God?"

"Woman, why do you involve me?" (verse 4) To clear a few things up from the translation, first realize that the term "woman" as used here does not have that condescending tonal inflection that many of us might add to it inadvertently. It's not a snarky remark

meant to put down Mary's statement. This is why some translations of the Bible have the address be, "Dear woman." Even though it's not condescending, it is noteworthy that Jesus calls Mary "woman" instead of "mother." Remember, Jesus has now begun his public ministry as the Messiah. He's talking to Mary not so much as a son, but as a grown man, as her Savior, her Lord. In other words he is asking Mary, this business with the wine, do you come with this information treating me as your son or as your God? What common interest do you and I have with the lack of wine? I am here to show people that I am their Savior. Are you bringing this to my attention so that the newlyweds can believe that as well? Where do our goals on this intersect? Why involve me?

Jesus is not saying, "Don't involve me." He didn't say, "Mary, that's a stupid request. Are you really asking me to waste my time on getting this couple more wine?" Instead he says, "My hour has not yet come." (verse 4)

Mary doesn't make an actual request of Jesus. She doesn't tell him to go run an errand for her and pick up some more wine from the local liquor store in Cana. Is she expecting Jesus to read her mind? Is this some kind of game? Is this like when your spouse says, "There are no more clean bowls," or "The check engine light is on." There may not be an actual request made, but it's implied. Do the dishes. Check out the car. I shouldn't have to tell you what to do; you should know what to do. Is this what Mary is expecting?

We don't know exactly what was running through her mind, but we do know that she expected Jesus to do something. She says to the servants, "Do whatever he tells you." (verse 5) She remembered who her Son was, that he was more than just her boy who has become a man. She recalled the miraculous conception, that although she was a virgin, she became pregnant and gave birth to a baby boy while still being a virgin. She remembered the shepherds praising God while Jesus slept in an animal's feeding trough. She remembered the Magi bringing those expensive gifts and proclaiming her little boy as their King. Jesus is no ordinary child. Yes, she raised him, but he is her Savior, her God. He can and will take care of me. She trusts him to take care of this situation too.

What Mary did right here with Jesus is worth imitating in our relationship with God. Mary simply brings the problem to Jesus. She doesn't tell him what to do. She doesn't beg and plead with him to give her an answer. She doesn't tell Jesus to check that tone. She doesn't tell Jesus to move up his time table so that his hour can come now to save this couple from social embarrassment. Why? Because she trusts that he will do something about it, and do what is best. She brings the problem to Jesus, drops it there, and leaves it with him. Mary involved Jesus in her life by delegating her problem to him.

This is what we can do as well. When you have a problem, involve him. Bring it to the Lord. Delegate it to him. Simply tell him what the problem is, then leave it to him to solve. Trust him to respond at the time appropriate and in the way that is appropriate. It doesn't matter if it is a big problem or little problem, spiritual problem or earthly problem, leave it to the Lord. Let him handle it. Leave it with him. Don't take the problem back with you. Why? Because God wants you to involve him to show you, reveal to you that he is your God and your Savior.

Look at what happened when Mary involved Jesus in the lack of wine situation. In his timing, Jesus told the servants to fill up the six stone jars with water and then to draw some out and give it to the master of the banquet. By the time that the master of the banquet drank some, that water had been turned into wine. In fact, the water had turned into such good wine that the master of the banquet called the bridegroom aside to tell him that he bucked tradition and saved the best wine for the last. When Mary involved Jesus in her problem, Jesus fixed it. Jesus fixed Mary's problem in such a way that it wasn't just to save face for the newlyweds. He fixed it in a way that actively fulfilled his purpose as the Messiah. The Father from heaven had declared at Jesus' baptism that he is the approved Anointed One. John the Baptist had already pointed Jesus out as the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world. Now Jesus himself revealed that he truly was the long awaited Messiah by turning water into wine in a way that just his disciples and the servants would see it. He revealed his glory, and his disciples believed in him. In same way, as we hear this story we too believe that Jesus is the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world by miraculously changing water into wine.

Knowing that Jesus is the Son of God, the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world, let's make use of our faith by bringing all our problems to God just like Mary did. Involve God. Tell him our problems. You don't even need to tell him how to fix them; just leave them with him. Trust that he will take care of them. If he will change water into wine to help this newlywed couple, to help his mother with her problem, and to reveal himself as true God so that his disciples believe in him, then he will solve our problems in a way that will cause us to believe in him as our Savior as well.

Involve God with your problems. Leave them to him. He will answer them as our Savior. Amen.