



John 2.1-11 Sermon 17<sup>th</sup> January 2010

A strange story of an ordinary man's dilemma being solved by the presence of the only person who could save the day. But also a story with a deeper significance:-

*What Jesus did here in Cana of Galilee was the first of the signs through which he revealed his glory; and his disciples put their faith in him.*

John 2.11

These words sum up the nature and purpose of the church pretty well and contain some ideas which can help us as we think about our priorities and plans for the year ahead. Let me start with a few questions:-

WHEN people visit our church or meet us around town or at work, what do they see? Do they see signs pointing towards Jesus? Or are our signs pointing in other directions?

ARE WE 'revealing His glory' in our lives and in our worship? Or are we hiding Him from view, under layers of tradition, formality and strange religious language?

ARE WE encouraging faith in Jesus? Or are we instead confirming people's prejudice that he is irrelevant, weak and unworthy of faith?

HAVE WE inadvertently changed the wine back into water?

I SUSPECT that we may find these questions uncomfortable and if we are honest, in spite of our good intentions, we often fall short of what Jesus calls us to be.

So CAN WE do what Jesus did at that wedding in Cana? Not exactly! We can't turn water into wine.

But we can go and BE WITH our friends and neighbours in the ordinary celebrations and griefs, the ups and downs of life.

WHEN CRISIS COMES – when the wine runs out, we can't turn water into wine but we do know someone who can! And we CAN show that the resources of the Christian faith – prayer, praise, worship, the Bible, the love of other Christians, the gifts of the Holy Spirit – are EFFECTIVE in a crisis.

Beyond that we are called to BE the presence of Christ, his body, the branches of his vine, wherever we are and wherever He sends us. The wedding at Cana is just one of many gospel stories where the presence of Jesus transforms EVERYTHING. The presence of Christians, the presence of the church should be having the same effect...

THE TASK facing us is very simple, but it is not at all easy. We are called simply to MAKE SIGNS and to BE SIGNS which point towards Jesus. We are called to REVEAL HIS GLORY and we are called to ENCOURAGE FAITH in Him.



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SIMPLE! But it is not easy to do all of this consistently. We need help, from each other, from the resources of the wider church, from Christians who are further along the road than we are and above all from the Holy Spirit.

May we discover the way to fulfill this great calling together, remembering that, with God, nothing is impossible.