

life, I've lost the heart and soul of that relationship. Once I've turned another person into a commodity to buy and sell I've lost the true nature of love.

When two people marry something quite different is happening. Nothing is being sold, but two people commit themselves to each other. They commit themselves to live for the other, not so my needs are met, but so they are loved, valued, honoured, served with my whole being. When two people marry neither is up for sale, they have nothing to sell, but they freely give themselves to each other, not to meet their needs, but out of love. Love gives totally, for no other reason than

that's what love does – it sacrifices itself.

The stone water jars are turned into wine, wine at a wedding, for wine is the symbol of joy. It tells me of the joy Jesus has in his bride.

Unbridled, extravagant joy. Jesus didn't make a few flagons of some cheap and nasty stuff, but the best, and abundantly, extravagantly, because that is the nature of his love toward us. That's the sort of relationship he wants.

Jesus doesn't want to be a commodity we buy and sell to meet our deepest need. He won't have a bar of that. Jesus has nothing for sale, neither does his bride, the church. We have nothing for sale, only

someone who loves us more than his very life. Jesus is prepared to sacrifice himself totally for the one he loves, simply because that's his nature. And he wants us to have the joy of living life from the same nature, from living life intimately intertwined with him. Enjoying each other and the life we share.

Let us pray.  
Jesus forgive me for the times I've used you and other people simply as a commodity to meet my needs. Forgive me for the times I've sold you and other people to get what I want. Grow me in the joy of living with, simply doing what you say because I know in my heart I can trust you with my life

17 January 2010

## JESUS TURNS WATER INTO WINE

John 1:10-18



In the Gospel Reading for today Jesus turns water into wine, I wonder why? Why do you think Jesus did this as his first sign? Ask the person next to you what they think.

Why did Jesus turn six stone jars of water; that was about 650 litres, into wine? That's a lot of wine when you think the average bottle of wine is 750ml so that would be about 870 bottles, give or take a few. Now that's a lot of wine. Why did Jesus create so much wine, and why as his first sign?

I'd assume your first sign would be important because first impressions are important. What does this tell you about Jesus? He likes a good red, so it's fine if at weddings we all get

sloshed! Maybe not. Somehow I don't think Jesus first sign is giving us the OK to get drunk at every wedding we go to. We don't need Jesus to get drunk, I've discovered people are quite capable of doing that on their own.

The first thing to note is that Jesus is at a wedding. A lot of Jesus parables are about weddings, and wedding feasts. He even calls the church; his community of faith, the bride of Christ. So Jesus first sign is done at a wedding. Weddings are where two people publically commit themselves to each other, forsaking all others. And it is blessed by God, it is ordained by God. Two people's lives are now intimately united. Their future is intimately bound with each other. Bound for

better for worse, for richer for poorer, in sickness and in health, to love and to cherish, so long as they both shall live.

Notice in God's ideal, marriage isn't until the other person becomes too boring and you get a better offer. The consumer mindset doesn't fit with God's understanding of commitment. The consumer mindset asks; does this product meet my need. If it does I buy it and it belongs to me. Once it no longer meets my needs, what do I do? Replace it with a better one.

My analogue TV was good in its day, but now it's the day of the High Definition TV. So I sold my old TV for a few bucks, without shedding a tear, and invest in a wonderful

### Christ Church Lutheran

Worship Times - 9.00am & 10.45am

Pastor: Tim 0427326553

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Reaching Out with the Love of Jesus that All my Know, Worship & Grow in Christ

new TV. Till it doesn't meet my needs, then it'll go the same way. The consumer mindset has no loyalty, no commitment, no heart. What do you think Jesus is trying to tell us by doing his first sign at a wedding?

What do you do when church becomes boring and the people difficult to get on with? The consumer mindset says; if it don't meet your needs, trade it in for a better model. In the consumer mindset everything is expendable, it must meet my needs.

Maybe that's why so many marriages are falling over in the Western World, about two in three. They generally are started with a consumer mindset. I have a need. I see what appeals to my eye. I like, I invest, but what happens when it becomes mundane, everyday, dare I say boring at times.

Where's the excitement. I want excitement, I want romance and passion. I want this person to meet my needs. I have a need to be loved and appreciated and valued. So what do I do when my needs aren't being met?

### Why is Jesus' first sign at a wedding?

wedding. Jesus isn't at this wedding trying to get any needs meet. Actually Jesus doesn't live need controlled. Jesus doesn't live like a consumer; taking what he wants, when he wants to meet his needs, then discarding it once it has been used up and is superfluous to his needs. Once I've used something up what has it become – garbage! Something to be discarded. Why do you

think Jesus chose a wedding as his first sign, as his first impression? And then why so much wine? Totally excessive. The six stone water jars where for the purification rites of the Jews. You most definitely had to wash your hands before eating. Now washing your hands before eating is a good thing, but does it produce joy in your life? The six stone water jars were part of the religious rites of the day. They were part of the rules and regulations you had to keep to keep in sweet with God. Which when I reflected on it turns God into another commodity to be consumed. I have a need for a god who will look after me, so if I invest myself in these rituals, then god will come good with his

protection, a bumper harvest, then I'll be economically secure and able to enjoy the good life.

If god doesn't deliver what we want, what should we do with him? Trade him in for a better model. If he asks us to do things that are inconvenient, or look silly to our friends, who seem to be enjoying life, having a great time without doing these silly, inconvenient things, what should we do?

Do we go with the god who has the best deal; holidays, wealth and prosperity, or denying myself, taking up the cross and following Jesus, who wasn't rich, who wasn't liked by everyone, who rubbed people the wrong? I like holidays, wealth and prosperity, I like having my needs meet. Which way do we go; the god of convenience or the god of commitment? The god

of self-denial, or the god of self-fulfilment? Which way do I go? The god who meets my needs, giving me what I want, or the god who wants me to give up everything and follow him, which will cost me my life?

After all if I follow the God of commitment my

### Why does Jesus make so much wine?

life will no longer revolve around my needs, and the importance of them being met. Then my life will revolve around this God, doing his will, living by his agenda, so that what he wants is achieved and for his benefit. Do you think God is serious; that I should no longer live to have my needs meet? Why the six stone water jars used for ritual purification? Past of the reason is that you can

obey all the rules under the sun, good rules, helpful rules, but if your heart isn't in it, you won't find joy, you won't find satisfaction, you'll always be looking for more.

That's one thing about the consumer mindset, it's never satisfied. Once you've got it, it becomes out of date, used, old, the norm, so you're once again on the search for the latest and the greatest to fulfil your desires, to meet your insatiable need. With mindset I'll always want more; new experiences, new commodities, new relationships to meet my needs. That's why religion doesn't meet anyone's needs. Once we've turned god into a commodity to be traded to meet my needs I'll always be unfulfilled. Once I've turned god into something to buy and sell; even if the currency is my good