

Jesus the Perfect Savior

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[0 : 0 0] Good morning, Watermark. The scripture reading today comes from John chapter 2, verses 1 to 12. You can follow along on your bulletin, on the screen, or in your own Bible.

Starting in verse 1, we read, On the third day, there was a wedding at Cana in Galilee, and the mother of Jesus was there. Jesus also was invited to the wedding with his disciples.

When the wine ran out, the mother of Jesus said to him, They have no wine. And Jesus said to her, Woman, what does this have to do with me?

My hour has not yet come. His mother said to the servants, Do whatever he tells you. Now there were six stone water jars there for the Jewish rites of purification, each holding 20 or 30 gallons.

Jesus said to the servants, Fill the jars with water. And they filled them up to the brim. And he said to them, Now draw some out, and take it to the master of the feast.

[1 : 0 8] So they took it, and did not know where it came. When the master of the feast tasted the water, now became wine, and did not know where it came from, though the servants who had drawn the water knew.

The master of the feast called the bridegroom and said to him, Everyone serves the good wine first, and when people have drunk freely, then the poor wine.

But you have kept the good wine until now. This, the first of his signs, Jesus did at Cana in Galilee, and manifested his glory, and his disciples believed in him.

After this, he went down to Capernaum with his mother and his brothers and his disciples, and they stayed there for a few days. This is the word of God.

Great. Thank you, Iris. Well, good morning, everybody. If you're new to Watermark, my name's Kevin. I'm one of the leaders here, and great to have you.

[2 : 0 7] If you are new, won't you come and introduce yourself afterwards? I'd love to meet you and say hi, and get to know you a little bit. I want to, before we dive into this passage, one or two quick updates I want to give us.

I meant to say this earlier, I forgot. Last week, we called up Aiyong here, if you remember, and Aiyong shared about how she works for an organization called Sons and Daughters, and they were about to start an alpha course this coming Thursday, in a bar on Lockhart Road in Wan Chai, for the ladies that are working in the Red Light District.

Well, ICG went with her on Thursday, and we started this alpha course, and it was so exciting. We had a number of ladies that we went down to the bars, and met them, and called them, and invited them, and there was food, and there was jewelry making, and there was the alpha course.

It was a really amazing evening. So I wanted to let you know, thank you for praying. You can continue to pray for Aiyong and Sons and Daughters over the next 10 weeks, as they do this alpha course in a bar on Lockhart Road.

So I just wanted to give you feedback. That was a really great evening. Okay. Let's think about this passage. For the last three weeks, we've been working through John's gospel, John chapter 1.

[3 : 21] And John chapter 1, John introduces, or gives the background to Jesus' ministry. And today, as Iris read to us, we get to chapter 2. And chapter 2 is kind of the launch, the start of Jesus' ministry.

But I want to just take a step back, and remind us, a bit of a high-level view, what is John's gospel all about? But in John's gospel, John, the author wants us to see something of Jesus' glory, His majesty, His uniqueness, and to trust in Him, and believe in Him.

So in chapter 1, there's a very important verse. He says this in verse 14, the word that Jesus became flesh, and dwelt among us. We have seen His glory, full of grace and truth.

And from this fullness, we have received grace upon grace. Jesus came, that we may see His glory, and from seeing Him, receive grace. And then at the end of John's gospel, chapter 20, John writes and he says, Jesus did many other signs in the presence of His disciples, but these are written down, that you may believe Jesus is the Christ, and by believing, find a life in His name.

And this is the reason why John's gospel is written. This is the reason why it's in the Bible. God, and John, the author, want us to see something of Jesus' uniqueness, His majesty, His glory, and by seeing that, trust in it, hope in it, believe in it, and then find life.

[4 : 45] Life in Jesus, life in His name. John tells us again and again, that life, apart from Jesus, is mere existence. It's not fullness of life. Life with Jesus at the center is fullness of life.

And this is why the gospel is written. That we may see Jesus, trust and believe in Him, and experience fullness of life. Okay? So, this morning, as we look at this passage, my hope is that we will meet God, the living Jesus, in these pages, trusting Him, experience life in His name.

So, this passage, John chapter 2, let's look at Jesus and His followers are invited to a wedding celebration. Obviously, weddings are a big deal. They're a big deal in our day and age.

They're a big deal back in the first century. Weddings are not just two people coming together. They are two families coming together. Or maybe even two villages coming together.

And in this day, obviously, it was a huge social engagement. The entire village would be welcomed and invited to the ceremony, to the celebration. And what would happen in a typical Hebrew wedding is that there'd be a big feast in the afternoon or the evening.

[5 : 56] All the family would be around and involved. after the feast would be a ceremony of some sort. They'd go through a traditional Hebrew wedding ceremony. And at the end of the ceremony, as night is falling, the bride and the groom would be led by the wedding party or the family and friends through the village by torchlight kind of campaign or what is the word I had?

Parade. There would be under a canopy. There would be a canopy over the bride and groom and they'd be led through the streets back to the house that the groom has spent many years preparing for his bride.

And they'd be singing and they'd be dancing and they'd be celebrating and people would be leaning out their windows into the streets wishing them well to the happy couple. And they'd go back to the house and the celebration wouldn't end there.

Rather than going on honeymoon, for the next week, everybody would come to their house. They'd have an open house and celebration would continue and there'd be feasting and food and celebration and wine as everybody celebrates the happy couple.

Okay? Now, in our passage today, Jesus and his disciples are at such a wedding celebration. Maybe it's a family member of Mary, his mother, and something goes wrong.

[7 : 20] The wine runs out. Now, for us, that may seem like a nuisance, bad form, but not the end of the world. In that day and age, this is disastrous because it was the responsibility of the groom and his family to provide enough food and wine for the celebration.

And if they didn't do so, that communicated that either they weren't prepared or they didn't care enough about the bride and her family. So it's kind of like the groom saying, your family's not that important to us, right?

We're just gonna go cheap. We're not really gonna take care of you. This was incredibly offensive and insulting. And so Jesus does this amazing miracle.

He turns about 700 liters of water into some of the world's greatest Bordeaux blend wine and he saves the reputation of the groom and he helps this young couple avoid the first marital conflict.

Okay? So, thank you Jesus. Now, immediately this passage raises a couple of questions for us. The one question is this.

[8 : 26] Does anybody believe that this really happened? I mean, let's be honest. This is a pretty strange thing, right? I mean, how do we know this isn't just some fable? I mean, has anybody here turned water into wine recently?

Okay, I've never seen that being done. But if you know how to do that, come and talk to me. I'd love to know. This is a pretty unusual miracle, right? And you may be here thinking, come on, like, this doesn't really happen.

I can sympathize with that sentiment. But I want to put it to you that the nature of miracles is that they are unusual and out of the ordinary. That's the definition of what a miracle is.

A miracle is not something that normally and usually happens. And throughout the Gospels, there are many miracles that take place, things that are unusual and out of the ordinary, and they're there to make us sit up and to ask the question, what's so special about Jesus?

If these things happen ordinarily, they wouldn't be called miracles. And the Bible's claim is that the divine being who is beyond our realm of time and space and the limitations of time and space has stepped into our time-space-bound world, but as the creator of this material world, he's not bound by the limitations that we creatures are bound by.

[9 : 45] And so in some sense, you're going to ask the question, well, what would you expect would happen if the divine being, the creator, came to our world? If the creator of everything that exists stepped into our world and just acted ordinarily like nothing was different, that would be unusual, right?

You'd almost expect that the one who's beyond time and space and the limitations of this world, when he steps into our world, he's going to act a bit unusually, differently, but out of the ordinary.

And so part of the fact that he is the uncreated being beyond time and space and steps into our world means from time to time, he does things that are unusual, out of the ordinary, even miraculous.

So yes, this is unusual, but not impossible for one who claims to be the person that Jesus claims to be. Okay? But he had two other questions.

So the miracles aside, here's two other questions that this passage asks us. The first is this, why does Jesus speak to his mother this way? I mean, look what he says to her, right? Mary asks him to do something about the wine problem, and Jesus says, woman, what does this have to do with me?

[10 : 53] Now, if one of my children spoke to their mothers, i.e. my wife this way, I would be all over them like a rash. They would know all about it, right? Nobody gets to speak to my wife like that.

Why does Jesus speak to his mother like this? And here's the second question. Why the arbitrary, seemingly arbitrary miracle of turning water into wine? John tells us this is one of the first miracles Jesus does.

If Jesus wants to make a statement, why not arrive with a bang, like raise someone from the dead, or pass through walls, or turn the little olives that are on the table into gold coins, or something useful, right?

Why the arbitrary sign of water into wine? Surely Jesus could do something more interesting than this. Well, these two questions reveal two things about Jesus.

The way that he speaks to his mother and the nature of his miracle help us see two things about Jesus that help us to see his glory, his majesty, his uniqueness, and by seeing that, hopefully will call us to trust in him and find life in his name.

[11 : 57] So let's look at those questions together. Okay, let's look at the first one. Why does Jesus speak to Mary like this? Why? Because Jesus is the perfect son. Jesus is the perfect son.

Look at verse three and four with me in your Bibles if you have it, or in the bulletin. Jesus' mother Mary comes to him and says, Jesus, they've run out of wine, do something about it. And Jesus responds, woman, what does this have to do with me?

My hour has not yet come. Now, according to the culture and the language of that time, to call his mother woman was not as offensive as it comes across in our day and age.

Okay, for us, that's highly offensive. In that culture, it wasn't quite as offensive, but it also wasn't massively polite. So Jesus is not being rude, he's not being disrespectful, but he is being rather abrupt.

He is being rather surprising. There's nothing linguistically or culturally necessary for him to call her woman. He could have called her mother. There's other verses in the Bible that talk like that, but it is rather surprising.

[13 : 04] It's rather abrupt. And then he says, what does this have to do with me? Again, I don't know about you, but if your mother or your wife asks you to do something, it has everything to do with you, even if you didn't think it did before.

It now does, right? But Jesus here says, why does he speak like this?

Jesus is showing us, and he's showing Mary something incredibly important. He's redefining the relationship. Jesus is showing us that long, long before he's the son of Mary on earth, he's the son of the father in heaven.

That long before he's the son of Mary on earth, he's the son of God, the uncreated one. And that as much as he wants to please and honor his mother Mary, his primary purpose in life, and his primary purpose in coming, is to please and honor his father who sent him.

And this is a point that Jesus is going to make throughout the gospels again and again and again, that he only ever acts in accordance to the will of his father in heaven. Listen to what he says in John 5 verse 30, I seek not my own will, but the will of him who sent me.

[14 : 19] John 6 verse 38, I've come down from heaven, not to do my will, but the will of him who sent me. John 4 verse 34, John 14 31, I do as the father has commanded me.

Again and again and again, Jesus says this, my primary identity is not that I'm the son of Mary of Nazareth or Jesus of Nazareth, I'm the son of my father in heaven. And I have come and every decision I make, every thought that goes through my mind, goes through the filter, the paradigm of what does my father call me to do.

Jesus is the perfect son, the perfect example of filial piety. I've come to honor my father. Okay, you ask, well, big deal.

So what does that mean for us? Well, I think this has two implications for us. First one is this, Jesus shows us uniquely the priority of faith even over family.

The priority of faith even over family. Jesus shows us that his family going forward is not necessarily made up of biological relatives or blood relatives, it's made up of those who come to him on the basis of faith.

[15 : 27] Unlike every king, every president, every emperor or dynasty leader in the ancient world and the modern world, Jesus shows us that blood relatives have no priority in his kingdom.

So just think of, I'll try not mention any names, but think of even in the modern era, right? If there is a king who's on the throne or president who's on the throne, think of the privileges that their blood family get, right?

Or the sheikhs in the Middle East. Think of the presidential pardons that family members get because their relatives is on the throne, right? In every culture, every dynasty, every presidential, every political administration, the relatives of the person on the throne get special privileges.

privileges. Jesus shows us here that not even his blood relatives get special privileges. It's those who come to him on the basis of faith, not family, that are included in his kingdom.

At one point in his ministry, Jesus is speaking in someone's house and someone comes to him and says, Jesus, your mother and your brothers are here. They're seeking you. They want you to come speak to them.

[16 : 39] And Jesus says, who are my mother? Who are my brothers? Then looking at those around him, he says, here, here are my mother and my brothers. What's his point?

Jesus shows us that it's not those that have social or religious or filial standing who have any claim on him at all. Friends, you can be the son of Tim Keller, C.S.

Lewis, John Piper, Billy Graham. It doesn't matter who you are. You have no claim on Jesus unless you come to him on the basis of faith. It's those that have faith that are included in his family.

But here's the second implication. Jesus is entirely committed to pleasing his father even to the point of death. Look at what he says here to his mother Mary.

He says, Mary, what does this have to do with me? And then he says, my hour has not yet come. Now, in John's gospel, whenever Jesus talks about his hour, what's he talking about?

[17 : 38] He's not talking about the hour that he goes to bed or the hour of his appointment or something. He's talking about the hour of his crucifixion, the hour of his death, the hour when Jesus will be nailed to the cross on Mount Calvary for the sins of the world.

Jesus will take upon himself the wrath and the judgment of God the Father for the sins of all those who trust in him and hope in him. Listen to what he says in John 12. He says, now my soul is troubled.

This is a few hours before he's going to go to the cross. In 24 hours time, Jesus is going to be nailed to the cross. He says, my soul is troubled. What shall I say? Shall I say, Father, save me from this hour?

No, for this purpose I have come to this hour. Father, glorify your name. In the face of the crucifixion and the cross, Jesus' face is steadfast, is focused.

This is why I've come. Father, glorify your name. Friends, Jesus' death on the cross was not random. It wasn't arbitrary. It wasn't the unfortunate consequence of a political situation that unfolded in Jerusalem.

[18 : 43] It was purposed, it was deliberate, it was chosen before the foundations of the world that redemption and restoration and hope and healing and salvation will come to the world, not automatically with his coming and his birth, but through his death, through his hour.

And here at the very beginning of his ministry, Jesus turns to his mother and says, my hour has not yet come. I haven't come to make a spectacle. I haven't come to show everybody that I'm the Messiah.

My time is still coming. Wait. But soon his hour would come. And at that time, Mary's heart would be broken. Her heart would be pierced as Jesus hangs on the cross to make atonement for sinners and rebels.

For this purpose, I have come to this hour. Father, glorify your name. So Jesus is the perfect son, not to Mary, but to God the Father. And because he's the perfect son, that means he goes to the cross for people like you and me.

Jesus is the perfect son. But he's not only the perfect son, he's also the perfect savior. And that's the answer to the second question. Why does Jesus do this strange miracle, turning water into wine?

[19 : 56] Well, the reason is because he's the perfect savior. you see, for the people in Jesus' day, this miracle, water and wine help deep, deep symbolism.

They weren't just arbitrary liquids. They held deep symbolism. And when Jesus does this miracle, every first century Jew familiar with the Jewish scriptures would have noticed the deep symbolism straight away.

So let's think about this for a few minutes. Water. What does water mean? For the Jewish people, what did water symbolize? Well, this passage actually tells us in verse 6 what this water symbolized.

Look what it says in verse 6. Now there were six stone water jars there. What were they used for? Used for the Jewish rites of purification. In the Old Testament, water held two main symbolisms.

The one was life and flourishing and health and abundance and blessing. Okay? But it also helped the symbolism of cleansing, of purification, of sanctification, of holiness, right?

[21 : 04] I think one of the most famous verses is Ezekiel 36. Look at what it says here. God says to his not so holy people, he says, I will sprinkle clean water in you and you shall be clean from all your uncleanness and from all your idols I will clean you.

Okay? It's a very, very important verse in the Old Testament. I think it's also why the Israelites had to walk through the Red Sea on the way out of Egypt.

It's symbolic of saying you've left Egypt, you're walking through the waters symbolically on your way to the promised land. I will cleanse you from all the uncleanness of 400 years of Egypt. I'm going to wash you and make you my new people.

You were once slaves in Egypt, you walk through the waters, you're washed, you're cleansed, now you're my people on the way to the promised land. In a sense, they go through a baptism, right? That's kind of what baptism is.

Baptism says, my old life is dead, it's washed away, it's gone, I'm a new person as I follow Jesus. The Israelites go through the waters of baptism as they leave Egypt. Water in the Old Testament was symbolic of cleansing, of washing, of purification.

[22 : 12] Now remember, for the people of God, quintessential to what it means to be the people of God is to be set apart for God, to be consecrated, to be not holier than thou, but devoted to Him, consecrated to God.

And this is what it means to be God's people. You belong to Him, you set apart, you consecrated. And so throughout the Old Testament, God's people are constantly needing to wash themselves, go through all sorts of symbolism and ceremony as a way of showing that they are set apart from the ways of the world and they're washed and devoted to God.

So every Jewish person, almost every day, would have to go through ceremonies of washing themselves to show their devotion and their consecration to God. They wash themselves physically, they go into somebody's house and they wash their hands, they wash the utensils that they're going to eat with, they wash the seat that they're going to sit down on, they wash everything because one of the worst things that can happen to you as a Jew is you come into contact with something that is unclean or defiled.

If you come into contact with something unclean, it makes you unclean. So the Jews are constantly washing themselves, washing their hands, washing their seats. Washing their utensils to make sure that they're never considered unclean.

Because to be unclean means you're not welcomed by God in His presence. God, the Holy One, won't associate with those of us that are unclean or dirty. Okay? So that's what the water is all about.

[23 : 41] Jesus goes to His wedding and they've got these six massive jars of water for purification. The water for cleaning. What about the wine? What is the wine about?

Okay? Well, again, first century Jews steeped in the Old Testament. And there's huge messianic expectations and excitement. Every Jew would have known that the abundance of wine is a symbol of the blessing and the joy and the celebration that will come on God's people when the Messiah comes.

When the Messiah comes, it's going to be a time of extravagant joy. And this is symbolized by wine. Listen to Isaiah 23, one of the most famous verses about this.

It says, God writes this, on this mountain, He's talking about Mount Zion or Jerusalem, on this mountain, the Lord of hosts will make for all peoples a rich, a feast of rich food, a feast of well-aged wine, of rich food full of marrow, of aged wine well-refined.

He will swallow up death forever. The Lord God will wipe away every tear from our face. And the shame of His people will be taken away from all the earth. Verse 9 goes on, I don't think I have it up there.

[24 : 50] It says, it will be said on this day, behold, this is our God, we've waited for Him, that He might save us. This is the Lord, we've waited for Him. Let us be glad and rejoice in His great salvation.

Or again, Amos 9, I'll read this quickly. Behold, the days are coming, says the Lord, when the mountains will drip with sweet wine, and all the hills will flow with it.

I will restore the fortunes of my people. They will build, rebuild, ruin cities and inhabit them. They will plant vineyards and drink deeply of their wine. They will make gardens and eat their fruit.

And again and again, throughout the Old Testament, this idea of wine is a picture of feasting and celebration and extravagance and everyone coming together. And God restoring for His people all that was wrong with the world.

And when the Messiah comes, it's going to be a time of celebration and feasting. The Messiah is going to make right all that is wrong and broken with the world. So here's this question.

[25 : 55] Jesus takes, what do you think it means when Jesus takes these jars of water, not drinking water, of which there was plenty, every table would have had drinking water. Jesus takes purification water, water for ritual cleansing, ceremonial cleansing.

And He turns it into an abundance of extravagant wine. What do you think Jesus is saying? He's saying two things. He's saying one, the Messiah is here.

The Messiah has come, the long-awaited Redeemer that for thousands of years Israel has been waiting for. The Messiah has come. Christ the Redeemer has come. Jesus is not just a miracle worker.

He's not just a religious teacher. He's not just a good rabbi. Jesus, the long-awaited Messiah, the one who's going to restore the fortunes of Israel, has come. But here's the second thing Jesus wants to say to us.

Very importantly, Jesus says that His coming means that the old system of purification and cleansing and putting yourself right with God through washing your hands and washing your utensils, that whole system of making yourself clean and acceptable to God has changed.

[27 : 09] And that system is done away with and there's a whole new system that's come. And it's a system that's abundant with extravagant joy and celebration. Friends, Jesus coming means that unholy people like me and like you, dare I say, no longer need to clean ourselves up, no longer need to go through the purification ceremony, no longer need to have jars of water outside to wash our hands and wash us before we come into church to make sure we are acceptable to God.

Jesus, the Holy One, has come to make unholy people like me and you holy and acceptable before the Holy God because the Messiah has come and because He's come to cleanse us.

What all the ceremonies and all the traditions we're trying to symbolize, Jesus says, I have come to do it. Does that make sense? Listen to our Ezekiel 36.

This is the passage we read earlier. Look at what goes on. It says this. God says, I will sprinkle clean water on you and you will be clean from all your uncleanness and from all your idols I will cleanse you.

And then He says, but I won't just do the ceremony on the outside. I won't just clean your hands. Actually, I'm going to clean your heart. I will give you a new heart and a new spirit I'll put within you. I'll put my spirit within you and cause you to walk in my statutes and I'll cause you to walk and obey my rules.

[28 : 35] You will be my people and I will be your God. Jesus come to cleanse us, not just outside, but on the inside and to make unholy people like us acceptable before the Holy God.

Now, what are the implications of this? Again, I think there's two implications. Okay. The first one is this. rest in the confidence of God's gracious acceptance.

Rest in the confidence of God's gracious acceptance. Friends, let me ask you this. How many of us ever feel like we need to clean up our lives?

How many of us ever come to church feeling like I don't quite have it all together? Maybe you don't feel like that. I feel like that regularly. In fact, can I be honest with you?

I felt like that today. I came to church today pretty weighed down. I feel like God, I'm not good enough. I don't have what it takes. I've got a bunch of fears and things that I'm worried about.

[29 : 40] I don't know if I should tell you the story. Last week, we were in worship and there was a little family dynamic going on, right?

One of my kids wasn't at worship and I really wanted her to be worshiped. So while I've got my hands up, you know, sing the songs, my mind's elsewhere. I'm thinking, where's my kid? And then Claire says to me, hey, this isn't the right time to deal with it.

Just leave it very wisely. And I, the great husband that I am, ignore her advice and then go outside to go and find my kid. And I'm a mess. And on one hand, I'm looking like I'm worshiping God amazingly with a holy man.

Actually, inside, there's all sorts of turmoil. Friends, this week, there are things in my life that I'm not very proud of, that I don't like about myself. And there are things that need to change and that I want to change.

And if I'm honest, sometimes I don't really know how to change. My point is, I come to church sometimes a big mess. And there's a temptation for me to look for the water jars. Where are the jars?

[30 : 43] Where can I clean myself up? What can I do to make myself acceptable? Jesus has come to wash away the crap and the stuff in our lives that doesn't make us acceptable for God, to make us clean.

Friends, anyone be able to resonate with that? Friends, anyone here feel trapped by sin, by habits that you can't break? Friends, anyone here find yourself going back again and again, doing the same dumb things and wishing you could change?

Friends, anyone here bothered by the damaged relationships around us that we just keep on seeming to perpetuate? Friends, anyone here feel uncomfortable about how we've lived or acted or behaved this week?

Friends, any of us here feel dirty or unclean? Maybe not by what we've done, but by what others have done against us. Feel defiled by the sins that others have sinned against us.

Jesus Christ says to us, you've got two choices. You can either try and clean up your own act through self justification or some self atonement or moral improvement project.

[31 : 53] But the problem is that will never ever work and you'll never feel like you've done enough. You'll tell yourself, I've got to go on some pilgrimage to Mecca. You'll go, you'll never feel satisfied.

I've got to beat myself up. I've got to fast. I've got to punish myself. You'll never do enough. You can try and clean yourself up through some self-justification, self-atonement project.

It'll never work. Or you can come to Jesus, the perfect one who died on the cross, to take your sin and your shame for you so that you can stand before God wholly. You can see Jesus in his glory.

You can believe in him and let him clean you and heal you and restore you. 1 Corinthians 6 says this, Do you not know that the unrighteous, like me, will not inherit the kingdom of God?

Do you not be deceived? Then he lists a whole lot of things. Sexually immoral, adulterers, idolaters, thieves, the greedy, drunkards, revilers, swindlers, et cetera, et cetera, won't inherit the kingdom of God.

[32 : 52] And he says, but such were some of you. Friends, that's our church. That's us, right? This isn't that church down the road. This is us. Such were some of you. But you were washed.

You were sanctified. You were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the spirit of our God. Friends, at the heart of Christianity is the belief that I am made clean because Jesus' righteousness, Jesus' purity, Jesus' holiness is credited to me when I come to him and trust in him and believe in him.

So rest in the confidence, abundant, gracious approval that Christ gives you when you trust in him. But here's the second implication.

We're almost done. Take joy in God's abundant approval. Take joy in God's abundant approval. I think it's important not to miss that in Isaiah 25, when it talks about what's going to happen when the Messiah comes, the tone of this passage is not dreariness or weariness, but joy and celebration.

Let me read again to us what Isaiah 25 says. It says, On this mountain, the Lord of hosts will make for all peoples, not just those that have got it together, not just the Jews, all people, black, white, Chinese, African, Hongkonger, Filipino, Indonesian, wealthy, poor, educated, for all people, a feast of rich food, a feast of well-aged wine, of rich food full of marrow, of aged wine well refined.

[34 : 28] He will swallow up death and sin and condemnation and guilt and shame forever. The Lord will wipe away the tears from our face and the shame of his people he will take away from all the earth.

It will be said on that day, Behold, this is our God. We have waited for him that he might save us. This is the Lord. We've waited for him. Let us be glad and rejoice in his salvation.

Friends, I think it's no coincidence that in the New Testament, Acts chapter 2, when God's Spirit is poured out on his people on the day of Pentecost, those standing around the disciples, what do they accuse them of?

Of having drunk too much wine. Right? Now, I don't think the point is that when you're full of the Spirit, you become inebriated and you're like on the side of the road, you know, passed out. That's not what happens necessarily when the Spirit comes.

The point is when we're full of the Spirit, there's an abundance of exuberance, of joy overflowing us that somebody should say, what's happened to you?

[35 : 35] Right? Friends, Isaiah 25 does not say, on that day, the Lord will pour out his Spirit like rich wine and everyone will just have to grin and bear it and keep on plodding through life until one day they get to heaven and finally they will be happy.

Friends, the Old Testament does not say that when the Messiah comes to deal with our sin and our cleanness, he will come, but it will be pretty miserable fear until finally we get to heaven and then maybe it will be joyful.

Friends, Jesus didn't turn 700 liters of water into cough medicine or hand sanitizer. No, he turned it into the very finest wine.

It will be said on that day, behold, this is our God. We've waited for him. We've waited for him. Let us be glad. Let us rejoice in his salvation. And so as we come to a close, let me ask you a couple of questions.

Friends, if you are a Christian, are you glad that Christ has come? Does your life exude the joy and celebration that the gospel is meant to bring? Friends, has Jesus Christ made any difference to your life?

[36 : 46] This isn't in my notes, but could it possibly be okay that somebody accuses you of having drunk a little bit too much alcohol because of the joy that you find because Jesus comes to you?

Maybe that's heretical. I'm sorry. Elders, you can correct me if I'm out of line. Friends, is some worship a chore? Or is it a drag? Or is coming to worship God something we delight in?

Friends, do you see Sunday morning as a slog or as a time to drink deeply of the wine of God's presence, the joyful welcome, the grace of God Almighty who says to us, welcome, my sons, my daughters.

I have come for you. Friends, Jesus the Messiah has come. For 700 years, God's people waited, waited, waited for the Messiah to come.

One who would deal with their sin and their suffering and their shame. One who would turn their mourning into rejoicing, their guilt into freedom. And John is telling us in John chapter 2 that he's come.

[37 : 46] He's the perfect son. Not of Mary, not of Joseph, the son of God. And because he's the perfect son, he went to the cross to die and rise again that you and I might be acceptable and welcomed.

Jesus is the perfect son and because of that, he's also the perfect savior. He came to open the way that we who are slaves to sin and our old lifestyle can be set free and can enjoy the welcome of the father and his gracious and lavish acceptance.

So, let's pray. Let's come to him now in prayer and response. Chris and the team are going to lead us in a song of response. But before we do that, I want to just ask us to take a minute just in quiet reflection.

And what does it look like for you to respond to God's word? Maybe I can ask us two questions this morning. One, what has God wanted to say to you this morning?

God's word should never just be intellectual. It should speak to our hearts. What is God wanting to say to you? And secondly, how are you going to respond? For some of us, maybe you need to respond through adoration, joyful celebration.

[38 : 55] God has come. Thank you, Jesus. For some of us, maybe we need to respond with confession. Some of us, maybe we need to respond with thanksgiving.

Maybe some of us just need to come before God with our requests. God, I need you. I need you. Let's take 30 seconds and respond to God. Lord Jesus, thank you for who you are.

God, the more we read the Bible, the more we are astounded by who you are. You're the majesty, you're king, you're God almighty, the uncreated one, and yet you've come to bring us into your kingdom.

Jesus, we love you. Help us to trust you. God, open the eyes of our hearts to see you, to trust you, to believe in you, and so to find life in your name. I pray, come and have your way in our hearts and our lives.

In your name I pray. Amen.