

This isn't an easy topic because so many of you will have heard this story from the Gospel again and again. So I wanted to try and guide us into looking at aspects that, perhaps, we don't often notice from this story. So what I've got is four main points that I think can tell us about Jesus' character and, I hope, can both guide us and challenge us in our faith as we try to look more like Christ.

- 1 Jesus was there for heavens agenda. This is implied when Jesus uses the term 'dear woman'. In the original transcripts this does not express distain but simply distance from his mother (for more information see the extract below). Are we focussed on the things of God in the mundane, in the day to day tasks, in work, in our social settings? Because Jesus was focussed all of the time.

"An enormous amount of ink has been spilt trying to guard against the implication that Jesus is saying something uncomplimentary to his mother. Even the NIV's *dear woman* instead of simply *woman (gynai)* indicates such a concern. The word *woman* does not necessarily connote coldness, but the idiom "what [is there] to me and to you?" does express either a harsh rejection or a mild form of detachment, depending on the context. Here it expresses distance but not disdain. It is part of the larger theme that Jesus is guided by his heavenly Father and not by the agenda of any human beings, even his family (cf. Jn 7:1-10; Mk 3:33-35; Lk 2:49)."

- 2 The use of the word 'hour' that we read of in verse 4 focusses us onto the point of his ministry. His death, resurrection and ascension. Jesus is focussed on what he came to do. He was focussed before the first drop of blood was shed on that cross and he was focussed before his first miracle- that's incredible. Are we focussed on what we must do? Are we focussed on the commission that Jesus gave us at the end of Matthew 28. "Go and make disciples of all nations, baptising them in the name of the father, son and holy spirit, teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you." or are we simply drifting from Sunday church to Sunday church without really taking upon ourselves the focus that God has given to us?
- 3 Jesus went to where the party was at! He took time (most likely to have been about a week) to see this Jewish wedding as part of his mission here on earth. The question that this raises for us is about whether we make the most of every opportunity that God gives us? And to take that a step further- do we make the most of the social opportunities that God brings to us? Are we afraid of the situations we can find ourselves in? Let us remember that Jesus is in every situation and that in all areas of life there is an opportunity for the HOPE of Jesus to shine through.
- 4 Jesus came to bring abundance. The sheer amount of wine that we read about is amazing. Over 100 gallons! One commentary that I read said "This is a free, extravagant outpouring" and I think it shows us how he wants us to LIVE and LOVE. It shows us how we should respond to moments of crisis and moments of despair- for the wedding party this was a nightmare situation! We can see this calling in other parts of the Gospel too. Take Matthew 5 v 40 "And if anyone wants to sue you and take your shirt, hand over your coat as well." How do we give MORE than is necessary to those around us?

Do we give in abundance and live in abundance? I don't know about you but I am very British in my outlook on life. Wanting to make things simply 'right or ok' and I am the same in my prayer life- I want things to be okay and I think that, too often, I accept OKAY as

enough. I think God has MORE for us, his children, if all we'd do was ask and faithfully live for him.

So, to finish, I believe that we need to be looking UP towards Heaven's agenda. We need to remember why we do it- because he died, rose again and ascended into heaven for US. Thirdly, we don't need to be afraid of the situations that we can find ourself in but we can see every situation as an opportunity. Fourthly, He came to give us an abundant and eternal life. Do we really give and live in the light of that?