

16 Jan 2022

Psalm 62 1-5 John 2 1-11

Water into Wine

A year ago I recorded a talk on this very same passage.

You may remember the lovely pictures we included of Jon, Terry, Carol and I clutching glasses and in some cases a bottle of fine wine!

Our wonderful leader has given me the same passage. I think it's because, he too, will be joining the 60s club very soon!

I could have swapped, but I do like a challenge. Scripture is so rich it's a good exercise to ask God to teach us something fresh from a familiar passage.

Lets recap:

Last year, I talked about this week long celebration involving the whole community; we see that Jesus cares about the joyful situations in our lives as well as the sad and difficult;

That the running out of wine would have been seen as a disgrace, and embarrassing for the hosts.

How Mary knew Jesus' power and ability and came to him with the problem.

How she trusted Him and followed His instructions. She believed.

And we looked at the logistics of servants trotting back and forth filling these immense stone jars with water, used for ceremonial washing. That it would have taken some time.

We also learnt that the translation of Jesus speaking to His mother is not a true representation of the language. That he had, in fact been respectful to her. He was saying, 'My way is not your way. My time is not your time.'

We see in this piece of scripture Jesus showing his character, power and love.

He gives us a small glimpse of His glory.

He shows us nothing is impossible for Him.

And that, all sounds fairly comprehensive, doesn't it?

But this year when I looked again, my mind was overwhelmed with the wine!

Not news to some of you!

Jesus turned the basic, but precious commodity, water, the thing that sustains us, keeps us alive and cleanses us, into the finest wine.

The best.

Water into wine.

On further research, some say that the wine running out is a picture of how the joy of this world runs out and fades away.

Jesus turned the water of The Word of God into the wine of the Spirit.

If we are filled with the spirit, we can bring joy to the world. Joy is one of the fruits of the spirit. And it is limitless..'joy that overflows' Galatians 5 22-23

Jesus, didn't make just enough wine, he made 120-150 gallons of the stuff!
The very best wine.

But what really struck me was that Jesus changed something simple into something better, richer. The best.

I see that God changes us, when we ask him, when we obey, into the better versions of ourselves.

He wants to give us more fulfilling lives. To share his love with others. To share his peace and joy..To be his witnesses.

There are many examples of God changing people.

There is the familiar dramatic transformation of Saul meeting Jesus on the road to Damascus, and becoming Paul the Apostle.

Alice Cooper the Godfather of shock rock becoming a Christian in 2006 and completely changing. He turned away from his excessive rock and roll lifestyle.

For most of us it's a slower transformation.

Moses, for example. He was a murderer; he was not eloquent and needed his brother to speak for him. But, God used him in a most magnificent way. They became friends. Spent 40days together on a mountain! Through Moses Gods people were freed.

David waited years to become King after he was anointed.

For most of us we are aging into the finest of wines!!

Growing and transforming into the likeness of Christ, Moses, David and his disciples.
A life time of change.

We all know that knowing Jesus alters us **if we let it.**

We can forgive because we know we are forgiven.

We can get through the most difficult and painful situations with God by our side.

He does strengthen us and sustain us.

And all the while he is sewing the tapestry of our lives into something beautiful and honourable.

Something that from the back, looks a bit of a mess. But from the front shines out His astonishing and extravagant love.

It is quite scary to sit here and think about God changing us. But, He is already at work!
And if we take time to look back over our lives so far, we can identify Gods hand on us.
Where He was with us. Where he helps us grow into better people.

Let's recognise that God is in control. He is faithful. He never leaves us.

And He loves us too much to let us stay the same!

Circling back to our first reading, Psalm 62.....The Passion translation v 5

V5 'I am standing in absolute stillness, silent before the one I love, waiting for as long as it takes for him to rescue me. Only God is my Saviour, and he will not fail me'

Let's pray,

Lord, we sit before You, amazed at the generosity you show us.

Thank you that your time is not our time. Help us to be patient.

Thank you that with the power of your Holy Spirit, we are changed from the ordinary into extraordinary. That you see who we truly are and who we can become. Help us to accept your love.

And allow your slow transformation of us, into the best wine.

Help us to be the best we can be, for your glory,

In Jesus name,

Amen

Gilly Robinson, 16 January 2022