



## St Barnabas Cray

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# "Water to Wine: Jesus' Abundant Joy Revealed"

## Weekly Devotional Journey

### Monday - When Celebration Turns to Crisis

#### Morning Devotion

##### Today's Verse

On the third day a wedding took place at Cana in Galilee. Jesus' mother was there, and Jesus and his disciples had also been invited to the wedding. When the wine was gone, Jesus' mother said to him, 'They have no more wine.' (John 2:1-3 NIV)

##### Devotional Thought

There's something deeply human about this scene that draws us in. A wedding celebration—the kind that goes on for days, where the whole village turns up, where working people have saved for months to put on a proper feast. Then disaster strikes. The wine runs out, and with it, the joy threatens to drain away too. This isn't merely about running low on refreshments; it's about a young couple facing social disgrace before their marriage has properly begun. In that culture, hospitality failures could haunt a family for generations. Yet here we find Jesus, stepping into ordinary human crisis with extraordinary divine response. This miracle isn't primarily about alcohol—it's about Jesus

revealing who he is in the midst of our everyday disasters. How often do we find ourselves in similar moments? When our carefully laid plans crumble, when our resources run dry, when what should be our moments of greatest joy become tinged with anxiety and shame. The beauty of this story is that Jesus doesn't wait for the 'spiritual' emergencies. He cares about wedding receptions and social embarrassment and the small disasters that loom large in our lives. This is our God—the one who notices when the wine runs out, who steps into our crisis moments with divine generosity.

### Reflection Question

What 'wine running out' moments in your life—times when joy turned to crisis—might Jesus want to transform?

### From Sunday's Sermon

"This couple's reputation was on the line, before their marriage had barely started... Jesus understood that. He didn't want this young couple starting their marriage under a cloud of shame."

### Today's Application

Begin this week by honestly acknowledging the areas where your 'wine has run out'—perhaps in relationships that have lost their sparkle, work that feels drained of purpose, or dreams that seem exhausted. Rather than hiding these disappointments or pretending they don't matter, bring them consciously before Jesus. Write down three specific areas where you feel the joy or resources have been depleted. Throughout today, when you notice moments of lack or disappointment, pause and remember that Jesus cares about these seemingly small crises. Practice the spiritual discipline of invitation—actively asking Jesus into your ordinary struggles rather than waiting for the 'big' spiritual moments. Notice how Mary simply states the problem to Jesus without demanding a solution. Follow her example: present your needs honestly, then watch expectantly for how Christ might respond.

### Morning Prayer

Lord Jesus, you who turned water into wine at Cana, I bring you the places where my own wine has run out. The relationships that feel strained, the dreams that seem depleted, the joy that has faded into mere duty. Help me to see that no crisis is too small for your attention, no embarrassment too trivial for your care. Give me Mary's simple faith—to bring my needs to you honestly and then trust in your perfect timing and generous heart. Amen.

## Evening Devotion

### The God Who Notices

#### Evening Reflection

As this day draws to a close, consider how many small crises and disappointments Jesus witnessed throughout his earthly ministry—and how many he witnesses in your life today. The running out of wine at Cana wasn't a life-or-death emergency, yet it mattered to Jesus because it mattered to people he loved. This reveals something profound about God's character: he is not only the God of the grand cosmic plan but also the God of wedding receptions and social anxieties and the small moments that make up the fabric of our daily lives. Tonight, as you review your day, notice where God may have been present in the ordinary moments—the conversations, the small frustrations, the unexpected provisions. Perhaps the 'wine running out' in your life isn't meant to be a source of shame but an opportunity for Jesus to reveal his glory in new ways.

#### Evening Reflection

Looking back over today, where might Jesus have been present in the small, ordinary moments you initially overlooked?

#### Evening Prayer

Thank you, Lord, that you notice when the wine runs out in my life. As I rest tonight, help me trust that you are present in tomorrow's ordinary moments, ready to transform crisis into celebration.  
Amen.

## Tuesday - Abundant Grace, Overflowing Provision

### Morning Devotion

#### Today's Verse

Jesus said to the servants, 'Fill the jars with water'; so they filled them to the brim. Then he told them, 'Now draw some out and take it to the master of the banquet.' They did so, and the master of the banquet tasted the water that had been turned into wine. (John 2:7-9a NIV)

#### Devotional Thought

The scale of Jesus' provision at Cana is breathtaking when we truly grasp it. Six stone water jars, each holding twenty to thirty gallons—that's roughly 700 bottles of wine! This wasn't a modest top-up to get through the evening; this was provision on an almost ridiculous scale. And not just any wine, but wine so exceptional that the master of the banquet was astonished. Jesus could have created just enough to avoid embarrassment, but instead he provided abundantly, extravagantly, generously. This reveals something fundamental about God's character that we often struggle to believe: he doesn't do half-measures. When God provides, he provides abundantly. When he forgives, he forgives completely. When he loves, he loves lavishly. Yet how often do we approach God as if his resources were limited, his grace rationed, his provision grudging? We pray apologetically, as if we're asking too much. We live cautiously, as if his love might run out. But the God of Cana is the God of abundance. This doesn't mean he gives us everything we want, but it does mean that what he gives is always more than sufficient, always exceeding our expectations, always revealing his generous heart. The miracle points us beyond material provision to spiritual reality: in Christ, we have abundant life, overflowing grace, immeasurable love.

#### Reflection Question

In what areas of your life are you living as though God's provision is limited rather than abundant?

**From Sunday's Sermon**

"This wasn't just a piecemeal helping out in an emergency. This was Jesus' signature wine—the King of Heaven's own vintage! He gives generously, abundantly, extravagantly."

**Today's Application**

Today, practice living from abundance rather than scarcity. Notice when you catch yourself thinking in terms of 'not enough'—not enough time, not enough energy, not enough love, not enough grace. When these thoughts arise, remember the 700 bottles of wine and consciously choose to think from God's abundance instead. In practical terms, this might mean being more generous in your interactions—offering encouragement freely, giving your time without counting the cost, extending forgiveness without keeping score. Consider one specific area where you've been operating from scarcity thinking and deliberately choose one act of generosity today. Perhaps it's giving someone the benefit of the doubt, offering help without being asked, or simply being fully present in a conversation rather than mentally rushing to the next task. Let your generosity reflect the abundant heart of the God who saves the best wine for last.

**Morning Prayer**

Generous God, forgive me for the times I've lived as though your resources were scarce, your love limited, your grace rationed. Help me to grasp the abundance of your provision—not just materially, but spiritually. Transform my scarcity thinking into abundance living. May I give as generously as I have received, love as lavishly as I am loved, and trust as deeply as you are faithful. Amen.

**Evening Devotion****Reflecting on Divine Generosity****Evening Reflection**

Tonight, as you consider the day that's passed, look for evidence of God's abundant provision. It might not have been 700 bottles of wine, but perhaps it was a conversation that encouraged you, a

moment of unexpected beauty, a problem that resolved itself, or simply the gift of another day of life. God's abundance isn't always dramatic—sometimes it's as quiet as breath in your lungs or as ordinary as food on your table. The miracle at Cana teaches us to recognise that all provision, whether miraculous or mundane, flows from the same generous heart. As you prepare for rest, consider how you might have been a channel of God's abundance to others today, and how you might do so even more tomorrow.

### **Evening Reflection**

What evidence of God's abundant provision—both dramatic and ordinary—can you identify from today?

### **Evening Prayer**

Lord of abundance, thank you for the ways you provided for me today, both seen and unseen. Help me rest in the knowledge of your generous heart and wake tomorrow ready to reflect that generosity to others. Amen.

## Wednesday - Signs Pointing to Glory

### Morning Devotion

#### Today's Verse

What Jesus did here in Cana of Galilee was the first of the signs through which he revealed his glory; and his disciples believed in him. (John 2:11 NIV)

#### Devotional Thought

John doesn't call this a miracle—he calls it a sign. There's a crucial difference. A miracle is something extraordinary that happens; a sign is something extraordinary that points beyond itself to something even greater. The wine at Cana wasn't just about solving a social crisis; it was about revealing Jesus' glory, his divine nature, his identity as the long-awaited Messiah. The Old Testament prophets had spoken of overflowing wine as a sign of God's promised salvation arriving. Jesus was saying, 'I'm the one you've been waiting for.' But signs require eyes to see and hearts to understand. The servants knew something miraculous had happened—they'd filled those jars with water. The master of the banquet knew the wine was exceptional but had no idea where it came from. Only the disciples saw the sign for what it truly was: a revelation of Jesus' glory that deepened their faith. This challenges us to develop 'sign-seeing' eyes in our own lives. God is constantly at work around us, revealing his character, demonstrating his love, showing his power. But do we recognise these moments as signs pointing to his glory, or do we dismiss them as coincidence? The ability to see God's signs isn't about being gullible or seeing miracles everywhere; it's about developing spiritual attentiveness, learning to recognise God's fingerprints on the ordinary moments of life.

#### Reflection Question

What signs of God's glory in your life might you have dismissed as mere coincidence or good fortune?

**From Sunday's Sermon**

"This miracle is what John calls a 'Sign'—it's pointing to something much bigger. It's about Jesus revealing who he is, about God's generosity, and about the new life he's come to bring."

**Today's Application**

Cultivate 'sign-seeing' eyes today by practising spiritual attentiveness. Set three specific times during the day—perhaps morning, midday, and evening—to pause and ask yourself: 'Where have I seen evidence of God's character or activity in the past few hours?' Look for signs of his provision, his protection, his guidance, or his love working through people and circumstances. Keep a simple record of what you notice, even if it seems small or ordinary. Share one of these observations with a friend or family member, helping them to see God's activity too. Remember, signs aren't always dramatic—they might be as simple as a timely text message, an unexpected solution to a problem, or a moment of peace in the midst of stress. The goal isn't to manufacture spiritual experiences but to develop eyes that recognise God's ongoing presence and activity in your daily life. By evening, reflect on how this practice of attentiveness affected your sense of God's nearness throughout the day.

**Morning Prayer**

Lord Jesus, you revealed your glory through signs and wonders, yet I often miss the signs of your presence in my daily life. Open my eyes to see your fingerprints on the ordinary moments. Help me recognise your provision, your guidance, your love at work around me. Give me the faith of the disciples who saw the sign and believed. May my growing recognition of your activity deepen my trust and increase my wonder. Amen.

**Evening Devotion****Eyes Opened, Faith Deepened****Evening Reflection**

As you look back on this day of intentional sign-seeking, notice how awareness changes

everything. The same events that might have passed unnoticed yesterday become windows into God's character when viewed with attentive eyes. This is what happened to the disciples at Cana—they witnessed something that revealed Jesus' glory and their faith was deepened. Faith isn't a one-time decision but a growing recognition of who God is and how he works. Each sign we recognise, each moment we glimpse his activity, adds another layer to our understanding and trust. Tonight, let the signs you've noticed today settle into your heart, strengthening your confidence in God's ongoing presence and care.

### **Evening Reflection**

How has today's practice of looking for signs of God's activity affected your sense of his presence in your life?

### **Evening Prayer**

Thank you, Lord, for the signs of your glory I've witnessed today. Help these glimpses of your activity settle deep into my heart, strengthening my faith and increasing my wonder. Grant me continued eyes to see and a heart to believe. Amen.

## Thursday - From Purification to Celebration

### Morning Devotion

#### Today's Verse

Nearby stood six stone water jars, the kind used by the Jews for ceremonial washing, each holding from twenty to thirty gallons.

(John 2:6 NIV)

#### Devotional Thought

The detail about these stone water jars is crucial to understanding the deeper meaning of this sign. These weren't just any containers—they were specifically used for Jewish ceremonial washing, for purification rituals that marked the boundary between clean and unclean, acceptable and unacceptable. Jesus took vessels associated with religious duty and transformed them into instruments of celebration and joy. This transformation speaks powerfully to the heart of the gospel. Jesus doesn't abolish the law or dismiss the importance of holiness, but he fulfills it in ways that bring life rather than burden. Where the old system offered external cleansing through ritual, Jesus offers internal transformation through relationship. Where the law pointed out what made us unacceptable to God, Jesus makes us acceptable through his grace. The water of purification becomes the wine of celebration—this is the gospel in miniature. Many of us carry 'purification jars' in our spiritual lives—areas where we focus on religious duty, on what we must do to be acceptable to God, on the rules that govern our faith. But Jesus wants to transform these very areas from sources of burden into sources of joy. Prayer becomes conversation rather than obligation. Scripture reading becomes nourishment rather than duty. Church attendance becomes celebration rather than requirement. The Christian life isn't about perfect adherence to religious rules but about the ongoing transformation that comes from relationship with Christ.

#### Reflection Question

What 'purification jars' in your spiritual life—areas of religious duty or obligation—might Jesus want to transform into sources of joy and celebration?

**From Sunday's Sermon**

"At Cana, Jesus takes water used for Jewish purification rituals, and transforms it. At Calvary, he'll take the Passover and transform it into the revelation of God's saving love."

**Today's Application**

Identify one area of your spiritual life that feels more like duty than joy—perhaps prayer, Bible reading, church attendance, or serving others. Today, approach this area differently by focusing on relationship rather than obligation. If prayer feels like duty, try having a conversation with God about something you're genuinely curious about. If Bible reading feels like a chore, choose a passage that speaks to a current situation in your life and read it as a personal letter. If church feels routine, attend with the specific intention of encountering God and encouraging at least one other person. If serving feels burdensome, look for one small way to help someone that flows naturally from love rather than obligation. Throughout the day, notice the difference between approaching God from duty versus approaching him from relationship. Pay attention to how this shift affects your sense of joy and freedom in your faith. The goal isn't to abandon spiritual disciplines but to let them be transformed from purification rituals into celebration practices.

**Morning Prayer**

Lord Jesus, you transform the water of religious duty into the wine of joyful relationship. Show me where my faith has become more about obligation than celebration, more about rules than relationship. Transform my spiritual disciplines from burdens into blessings, from duty into delight. Help me approach you not as a demanding taskmaster but as a loving friend who desires my company and my joy. Amen.

**Evening Devotion****From Duty to Delight****Evening Reflection**

Tonight, reflect on how it felt to approach your spiritual life from relationship rather than obligation

today. Notice any resistance you encountered—both internal and external. Sometimes we're so accustomed to thinking of faith in terms of duty that joy feels almost suspicious, as if we're not being serious enough about God. But the transformation at Cana reminds us that God's heart is towards celebration, not burden. The same God who gave the law also provides the grace that fulfills it. As you rest tonight, let go of any guilt about finding joy in your faith. God delights in your delight in him.

### **Evening Reflection**

What did you discover today about the difference between approaching God from duty versus approaching him from relationship?

### **Evening Prayer**

Lord, thank you for the moments of joy and freedom I experienced in my faith today. Help me continue to see you as the God who transforms burden into blessing, duty into delight. May I rest tonight in your love rather than in my performance. Amen.

## Friday - The Wedding Feast of the Kingdom

### Morning Devotion

#### Today's Verse

Then the master of the banquet called the bridegroom aside and said, 'Everyone brings out the choice wine first and then the cheaper wine after the guests have had too much to drink; but you have saved the best for last.' (John 2:10 NIV)

#### Devotional Thought

The master of the banquet spoke more prophetically than he realised when he said, 'You have saved the best for last.' This isn't just about wine; it's about the entire arc of God's redemptive plan. Throughout Scripture, marriage is used as a picture of God's relationship with his people, and wedding feasts represent the joy of that relationship fully realised. The Bible begins with a wedding in Eden and ends with the wedding supper of the Lamb in Revelation. Jesus' presence at this wedding, and his provision of the finest wine, points forward to the ultimate celebration when Christ and his church are fully united. But there's also a present reality here. In a world where things typically deteriorate—where the good wine gets drunk first and we're left with the cheap stuff—Jesus operates by different economics. With him, the best is yet to come. This challenges our cultural narrative that life peaks early and then declines, that our best days are behind us, that we should expect less as time goes on. In God's kingdom, the trajectory is towards greater joy, deeper love, richer relationship. Even in the midst of current struggles, even when life feels like we're drinking the cheap wine, we can live with the confidence that God saves the best for last. This doesn't mean life gets easier, but it does mean it gets more meaningful, more purposeful, more shot through with divine grace.

#### Reflection Question

In what areas of your life do you need to remember that God saves the best for last, and how might this hope change how you live today?

**From Sunday's Sermon**

"The Bible starts in Genesis with a wedding—Adam and Eve. It ends in Revelation with another wedding—Christ and his Church, the 'wedding supper of the Lamb.' Jesus is saying: 'I'm in the business of love, commitment, and celebration.'"

**Today's Application**

Live today with 'best wine' hope—the confidence that God's story is moving towards celebration, not decline. Identify one area where you've been settling for 'cheap wine'—perhaps a relationship you've given up on, a dream you've abandoned, or a part of your character you've stopped believing can change. Take one concrete step today that reflects belief that the best is yet to come. This might mean having a difficult conversation you've been avoiding, taking a small step towards a neglected goal, or simply choosing gratitude over complaint in a challenging situation. Throughout the day, when you encounter disappointment or frustration, remind yourself that this isn't the end of the story. Practice speaking hope into situations that seem stuck or declining. Share encouragement with someone who seems to be going through a 'cheap wine' season of life. End the day by writing down three things you're looking forward to—both immediate and eternal—as a way of anchoring your heart in the truth that God saves the best for last.

**Morning Prayer**

Lord Jesus, bridegroom of your church, help me live today with the confidence that you save the best for last. When life feels like cheap wine—disappointing, bitter, inadequate—remind me that your story moves towards celebration, not decline. Give me hope that transforms how I approach relationships, challenges, and dreams. Help me be a person who brings 'best wine' hope to others, pointing them towards the ultimate wedding feast of your kingdom. Amen.

## Evening Devotion

### Anticipating the Feast

#### Evening Reflection

As this week of reflection draws to a close, let your heart settle into the great hope of the wedding feast to come. The wine Jesus created at Cana was just a foretaste of the celebration that awaits when all things are made new. Every moment of joy you've experienced this week, every sign of God's presence you've noticed, every transformation from duty to delight—these are all previews of the ultimate reality towards which God's story is moving. Tonight, rest in the knowledge that you are invited to the greatest celebration ever planned, and the host has promised that the best wine is yet to come.

#### Evening Reflection

As you look back over this week of reflection on the Cana miracle, what has most encouraged you about God's character and his plans for your life?

#### Evening Prayer

Thank you, Lord, for the hope of the wedding feast to come and for the foretastes of that joy you give us even now. As I rest tonight, help me carry this week's insights into the days ahead, living as one who knows the best is yet to come. Amen.