

## John 2:1–11 Sermon-Based Discussion Guide

**Purpose of Discussion:** To trust in Jesus for the better wine that actually makes our hearts glad.

**Sermon Refresher:** Jesus' first sign, as recorded by John, is surprisingly, saving from a catering disaster by changing 180 gallons of water into great wine. That tells us . . .

- They have no wine – We seek after happiness but by and large don't have it in our lives.
- Only Jesus has the real wine our souls need to be truly happy. He promises that life with him—in the new heaven and earth—is like the finest and best-aged wine and food at our wedding feast with him.
- To find our joy in him frees me up to do whatever he tells me.

### Discussion

1. Happiness is an over-arching pursuit for our culture. Sheryl Crow once sang, "If it makes you happy, it can't be that bad." Our culture believes, "Pursue whatever makes you happy." How do you see evidence of this pursuit around you? In what ways is that pursuit admirable? In what ways is it problematic?
2. Happiness, though, seems hard to come by. Dr. Armand Nicholi of Harvard remarks:

"I often ask my classes whether or not, from their observation and experience, people around them are happy. Invariably they answer no. Invariably, I express surprise. I point out that, compared with most people in the world, they possess everything—youth, health, intelligence, abundant food, clothes, a comfortable place to live, education, a promising future, etc. What in the world causes them to be unhappy?"

- Why, in your opinion, is happiness so scarce?

Read John 2:1–11.

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3. What cheap wine do you tend to drink? Maybe it's always looking for something new (e.g., new clothes, new job, new house, new relationship), and thinking that will satisfy us. Or, from another angle, what do you tend to consume in order to find happiness?
4. Wine and weddings are images the Bible uses to describe what eternal life is like, what the new heavens and new earth will feel like. Have people in your group read aloud Revelation 19:6–9; 21:1–4; and Isaiah 25:6–9.
  - What do these passages tell us about the new heaven and earth?
  - How should that shape and motivate us now?
5. Jesus' first sign is to turn 180 gallons of water into some unusually great wine to save a party from going dry. What does that signify about Jesus? It tell us, as Dave said, that Jesus came not to make us religious but so we could rejoice.
  - What do you tend to think was Jesus' purpose in coming? How does Jesus as the wine-maker perhaps change that?
  - What could you do this week to find and cultivate your joy in Jesus?
6. Dave said, "When you really believe in this Jesus you won't live like you used to live—like those who have no wine." Instead, we will (want to) want to do whatever he tells us (John 2:5). What might Jesus want you to do this week? What do you think he's telling you to do in life right now?

Note that it's not something you do in order to find your satisfaction in it apart from him, but precisely because you have drunk the best wine.

### Sharing and Prayer Time

- Pray to find joy and gladness in Jesus this week. Ask God to show people in the group the cheap wine they tend to go for and give all of you a taste for the best wine.

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- Pray for what people have shared about what Jesus might want them to do this week (Question #6).
- Read the passages from Isaiah and Revelation aloud again and praise God for salvation and this hope for the new creation.