

## John 1B

- Let's continue in the opening chapter of John's Gospel
  - John is explaining the relationship between John the Baptist and Jesus, using John the Baptist's own words
    - John is reinforcing that John the Baptist was just a man called to be a prophet in anticipation of the Messiah
    - It's the beginning of Jesus' earthly ministry
    - And it begins a week of events in chapters 1-2 that brings Jesus to the public's attention
  - John's role in announcing Jesus' ministry is the first event of the week
    - In last week's study, we saw John being interrogated
    - He denied he was the Messiah
    - And now we move to the second day of the week
    - As the Messiah arrives

[John 1:29](#) The next day he saw Jesus coming to him and said, "Behold, the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!"

[John 1:30](#) "This is He on behalf of whom I said, 'After me comes a Man who has a higher rank than I, for He existed before me.'

[John 1:31](#) "I did not recognize Him, but so that He might be manifested to Israel, I came baptizing in water."

[John 1:32](#) John testified saying, "I have seen the Spirit descending as a dove out of heaven, and He remained upon Him.

[John 1:33](#) "I did not recognize Him, but He who sent me to baptize in water said to me, 'He upon whom you see the Spirit descending and remaining upon Him, this is the One who baptizes in the Holy Spirit.'

[John 1:34](#) "I myself have seen, and have testified that this is the Son of God."

- The day begins with John in his usual place, baptizing in Bethany beyond the Jordan
  - And as he is at work baptizing, John looks up to see Jesus approaching

- At this John declares that Jesus is the Lamb of God, the One Who takes away the sins of the world
- John was making this declaration to those who were there with him in that moment
  - Those who had come to be baptized on that day
  - And the rest of his disciples who were waiting for the Messiah
- But notice in vs. 30-31 John begins to speak in the past tense
  - He says this He whom I said He comes after me
  - John is speaking in the past tense, because this isn't the first time that John has seen Jesus at the riverside
  - John baptized Jesus probably only a few days earlier at most
    - As John mentions in v.33, he witnessed the Spirit descend upon Jesus like a dove
- That scene is not recorded in John's Gospel, but it's given in the synoptic Gospels
  - Here's a brief excerpt from Mark

**Mark 1:4** John the Baptist appeared in the wilderness preaching a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins.

**Mark 1:5** And all the country of Judea was going out to him, and all the people of Jerusalem; and they were being baptized by him in the Jordan River, confessing their sins.

**Mark 1:6** John was clothed with camel's hair and wore a leather belt around his waist, and his diet was locusts and wild honey.

**Mark 1:7** And he was preaching, and saying, "After me One is coming who is mightier than I, and I am not fit to stoop down and untie the thong of His sandals.

**Mark 1:8** "I baptized you with water; but He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit."

**Mark 1:9** In those days Jesus came from Nazareth in Galilee and was baptized by John in the Jordan.

**Mark 1:10** Immediately coming up out of the water, He saw the heavens opening, and the Spirit like a dove descending upon Him;

**Mark 1:11** and a voice came out of the heavens: "You are My beloved Son, in You I am well-pleased."

- All four Gospel writers describe this moment when Jesus came to John to be baptized in water
  - And as he came up from the water, a theophany appeared
    - The Holy Spirit manifested Himself like a dove and descended upon Jesus
    - In conjunction with the arrival of the Holy Spirit, the Lord spoke words from the heavens
    - In John's Gospel we come to understand why Jesus was intended to be baptized by John
    - And we also come to understand the relationship between our water baptism and the Holy Spirit
  - First, Jesus received the Holy Spirit to enable Him to serve in His earthly ministry
    - The Gospels tells us that Jesus' ability to perform miracles was by the power of the Holy Spirit
    - When Jesus became a man, He willingly lowered Himself and setting aside His power to act in supernatural power
    - Jesus wasn't a superhero, a super human
    - He was truly a man, but by the power of the Holy Spirit He could accomplish great miracles
    - The arrival of the Holy Spirit was the moment that Jesus transitioned from carpenter's son to rabbi and Messiah
  - Secondly, Jesus comes to John to receive the Spirit, because John was the man appointed by God to identify the Messiah to the world
    - Those who were ready and waiting for the Messiah still needed the Lord to tell them Who the Messiah would be in the day He arrived
    - John's ministry was a ministry of calling attention to Jesus and naming Him as the Messiah
    - Jesus came to be baptized so that John's ministry could be made complete

- Finally, the water baptism Jesus received was to become a picture of the Spirit's arrival
  - As when He instituted the Last Supper communion meal, Jesus is blazing the path for the church in future years
    - Like our Lord, every believer receives an indwelling of the Holy Spirit
    - The very same thing the Spirit did for Jesus is still happening for believers today
  - We know the Spirit isn't in the habit of descending as a dove on each and every believer in their moment of faith
    - But every believer can and should submit to water baptism just as Jesus did
    - Jesus commanded as much
    - And His own baptism involved both water and a dove to make sure we understood the connection to our own baptism
  - A believer receives the Holy Spirit at the moment we come to faith in Christ
    - And at some later point, we submit to water baptism to picture the baptism of the Holy Spirit which we received at faith
    - Jesus' water baptism was a washing away of sin, but a demonstration of what He expected His followers to do as a symbol of Spirit baptism
    - Just as John says in v.33, John the Baptist applied a baptism of water alone, but Jesus brought a baptism of the Spirit
- Notice in v.31 John says that he didn't know who the Messiah was to be prior to the moment of Jesus' baptism
  - In fact, John goes even farther and says he didn't even recognize Jesus as Jesus approached John for baptism
    - This is a curious and striking detail
    - We know that Jesus and John were early cousins, since their mothers were related
    - They were born only 6 months apart

- Yet John had no idea his cousin, Jesus, was the Messiah
  - John didn't realize that Jesus was the Messiah until he witnessed the dove
- It's important to understand that the four Gospel writers record only two people as having witnessed the theophany of the dove and hearing the Lord's voice from the heavens
  - Only Jesus and John the Baptist witnessed these things
  - For anyone else who happened to be present in that moment, Jesus' baptism looked just like any other that John performed
  - The theophany was for the benefit of Jesus and for John
  - For Jesus, it confirmed for Him that the Father was bringing the Spirit to Him on this day to begin His ministry
  - And for John, it was the sign he had been promised so he could properly identify the Messiah
- After the baptism took place, John began testifying that Jesus was the Messiah
  - He told everyone what he had heard and seen, just as we see John recording here
  - This is exactly God's pattern of revelation
  - God gave one man a supernatural revelation of the Messiah
  - But the rest of the world was then to believe the testimony of the prophet sent by God
- John said Jesus was the Messiah, and men and women began to follow Jesus from the first day based on John's testimony
  - That's John's point in chapter 1 of his Gospel
  - It was John the Baptist's testimony that Jesus was the Son of God
  - The promised Messiah
- Based on John's uncertainty of who the Messiah would be, we must conclude that Jesus' true identity was entirely unknown to the world prior to the baptism
  - We know Jesus' earthly mother and father knew of His spiritual destiny because an angel told them at His birth, but it seems no one else did

- Certainly, we know Jesus own earthly brothers had little regard for Him while He lived with them
  - So if John the Baptist was in the dark about the Man he was called to announce, then certainly it must have been a secret to everyone else too
- This fact reinforces for us the true humanity of Christ: He lived an absolutely normal human life because He was fully human
  - As we said, Jesus was not a superhuman or Clark Kent figure who could stop bullets even when He wasn't dressed in tights
  - Apart from a few moments (like His birth and the time He was left behind in the Temple by His parents), His life was unremarkable
  - He truly was living as a man, without anything to suggest He was God and the Creator
  - Yes, Jesus was sinless, but apparently a person can live sinlessly without drawing too much attention to himself
    - I know the feeling (*joke*)
  - This would also explain why the Gospels contain so little detail of Jesus early years
    - Why record details of a mundane, ordinary life?
- Finally, take note that Jesus' ministry began immediately after He was baptized
  - We have already said that Jesus receive a baptism by the Spirit to equip Him for earthly ministry
    - And He took water baptism to establish a picture of the Spirit baptism
    - So it stands to reason that we should understand our own baptism in the Spirit as the moment we launched an earthly ministry
    - We were equipped by the Spirit and now we have a mission to serve the Lord
  - I wonder how many Christians truly begin their service from the first moment

- I suspect many of us took some time to figure out that we even had a mission
  - Perhaps some are still trying to figure that out
  - Don't hesitate to follow Jesus' example...it's never too soon to start serving someone in Christ's name
- So on this day, John testifies to his own disciples that Jesus is the Lamb of God
    - His purpose was to direct his disciples to leave him and to begin following Jesus
      - But apparently, not everyone took John's advice right away
      - So John records a third day in this week, when Jesus came back to the river to visit John again
      - And on this day, a couple of John's disciples heed John's advice and begin to follow Jesus

[John 1:35](#) Again the next day John was standing with two of his disciples,

[John 1:36](#) and he looked at Jesus as He walked, and said, "Behold, the Lamb of God!"

[John 1:37](#) The two disciples heard him speak, and they followed Jesus.

[John 1:38](#) And Jesus turned and saw them following, and said to them, "What do you seek?" They said to Him, "Rabbi (which translated means Teacher), where are You staying?"

[John 1:39](#) He said to them, "Come, and you will see." So they came and saw where He was staying; and they stayed with Him that day, for it was about the tenth hour.

[John 1:40](#) One of the two who heard John speak and followed Him, was Andrew, Simon Peter's brother.

[John 1:41](#) He found first his own brother Simon and said to him, "We have found the Messiah" (which translated means Christ).

[John 1:42](#) He brought him to Jesus. Jesus looked at him and said, "You are Simon the son of John; you shall be called Cephas" (which is translated Peter).

- On the third day, John sees Jesus again and repeats his declaration that Jesus is the promised Messiah, the Son of God
  - Imagine how thrilling it must have been to be among that first small group to know the identity of the Messiah
    - The Messiah is a Person promised since Adam and Woman fell in the Garden

- All Israel had been taught of this promised Deliverer
- Young girls grew up in Israel dreaming and hoping they might be privileged to one God selected to birth the Messiah
- Religious men were forever asking each other how to recognize the Messiah when He arrived
- And on this day, those at the river Jordan were learning for the first time that Jesus was to the Messiah
- Two of John's disciples leave John and seek to follow Jesus
  - They begin by just walking behind Jesus, following Him as He walked
  - They had not even approached Him, perhaps intimidated
  - Jesus notices He's being trailed, so He turns and asks them what they want
  - Immediately, they call him teacher, which John helpfully translates for his Gentile audience
- By calling Jesus rabbi, these men are acknowledge Jesus as a man of spiritual authority in their lives, a man they may wish to follow as a disciple
  - But they only ask Him where He is staying, which simply means we want to hang out with you
  - They aren't committing to be His disciples just yet, but they're curious and want to know more
  - All this tells us that they don't yet understand what John said or even what a Messiah was
  - They knew Jesus was the Messiah, but they didn't know Him as God incarnate
- The word Messiah just means anointed one
  - Israel saw prophets and kings as anointed by God
  - So Israel understood their kingly deliverer would be an anointed man

- Only by spiritual revelation could someone come to understand that Jesus was also God in the flesh
- And that hasn't come to these men yet
- In answer to their question, Jesus tells them to come and you will see
  - In the context of this narrative, Jesus is saying follow me to where I'm staying and you will have the answer to your question
    - But Jesus choice of words are revealing and purposeful
    - Anyone who wants to know Jesus must come to Him
    - We have to enter His house, so to speak
    - And then by coming to Jesus, we will see
    - We will have spiritual life and spiritual sight
    - This is the offer Jesus is making to these men, though they obviously don't appreciate His meaning at the time
  - John identifies one of the two men as Andrew (we don't know who the other man was...some speculate it was John himself)
    - Andrew eventually becomes one of the twelve disciples designated as apostles
    - And his first response to meeting Jesus is to go tell his brother, Peter, to come see the Messiah
    - What a wonderful first response to meeting the Messiah
    - Another example we would do well to follow
- At Peter's first meeting with Jesus, Jesus immediately identifies Peter by name and ancestry
  - The scene strongly suggests that Jesus was never told Peter's name nor his father's name
    - So when Jesus revealed this information to Peter, I'm sure Peter was a little surprised
    - And then Jesus goes the next step and changes Peter's name
    - His name was Simon, which probably comes from Simeon

- But now he is called Cephas, which is an Aramaic word for rock
  - Peter is the Greek word for rock
- Simeon you may remember was a man who acted rashly and impulsively at times
  - And Peter is showing acting much the same way in the years with Jesus
  - But later, Peter was the man who founded the early church in Jerusalem and beyond, truly a rock upon who's ministry the church began
- As we end chapter 1, we enter the forth day of this opening week in Jesus' public ministry

**John 1:43** The next day He purposed to go into Galilee, and He found Philip. And Jesus said to him, "Follow Me."

**John 1:44** Now Philip was from Bethsaida, of the city of Andrew and Peter.

**John 1:45** Philip found Nathanael and said to him, "We have found Him of whom Moses in the Law and also the Prophets wrote – Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph."

**John 1:46** Nathanael said to him, "Can any good thing come out of Nazareth?" Philip said to him, "Come and see."

**John 1:47** Jesus saw Nathanael coming to Him, and said of him, "Behold, an Israelite indeed, in whom there is no deceit!"

**John 1:48** Nathanael said to Him, "How do You know me?" Jesus answered and said to him, "Before Philip called you, when you were under the fig tree, I saw you."

**John 1:49** Nathanael answered Him, "Rabbi, You are the Son of God; You are the King of Israel."

**John 1:50** Jesus answered and said to him, "Because I said to you that I saw you under the fig tree, do you believe? You will see greater things than these."

**John 1:51** And He said to him, "Truly, truly, I say to you, you will see the heavens opened and the angels of God ascending and descending on the Son of Man."

- The day after meeting Andrew and Peter, Andrews decides to travel back to his home in Galilee
  - Your Bible might have the "he" in v.43 capitalized suggesting it was Jesus who decided to go to Bethsaida, but a careful reading of the text leads us to a different conclusion
    - First, notice in v.41, when Andrew brings Simon to meet Jesus, it says he "first" brought his own brother Simon to Jesus

- The word first suggests that Andrew brought two people to Jesus, and the first was his brother Simon
- Who was the second? Philip appears to be the second person
- But Philip lived back in Andrew's home town in the Galilee, so he asked Jesus to accompany him back home
- On the map this was a walk of about 20-30 miles, so it took most of that fourth day to travel there
- Once again Jesus tells Philip to follow Him
  - Interestingly, no one who is following Jesus at this point found Jesus of their own accord
  - Everyone has met Jesus because someone else introduced them to Jesus
  - And that chain of introductions goes back to John the Baptist, who initiated the introductions just as his ministry was intended to do
- And again, the patten repeats with Philip introducing Jesus to a friend called Nathaniel
  - When Philip find Nathaniel he announces Jesus by His earthly affiliation and then adds that this is the One that God's word has been talking about from the beginning
    - It's unclear to us how these men have become so convinced that this lowly man from Nazareth is in fact the Messiah, but they all get it
    - As we said, they aren't sure what Messiah means yet, but they do understand that Jesus is the One God promised to bring to Israel
    - And there is great excitement over this discovery and the need to share it with others follows immediately
    - What does it say that Andrew wanted to travel 20-30 miles the very next day to introduce Jesus to a friend
    - How far are we willing to go to do the same?
  - Nathaniel's response is decidedly less enthusiastic, and he utters one of the most memorable lines in all the Gospels - a line he probably regretted

- He asks if anything good could come out of Nazareth
- Nathaniel was probably reacting to the ridiculous thought that God would raise up someone as important as the Messiah from such an insignificant place
- This also shows just how lowly Jesus' beginnings were
- The Father chose to give His Son a human identity that would add nothing whatsoever to His appeal or credibility
  - If anything, Jesus' earthly origins detracted from His appeal
  - But that was in keeping with God's purpose in bringing salvation by faith and not by sight
  - He uses foolish things to shame the wise
  - It annoys me when Hollywood makes Jesus look like a rock star or a Calvin Kline model
  - Instead, you need to image someone who was probably shorter than you expect, and far less attractive
- Once again take note of Philip's response to Nathaniel's tepid response
  - Philip says "come and see"
    - If we want someone to understand who Jesus truly, we simply extend an opportunity for them to come to Jesus
    - And if they do, they will see for themselves that what we say is true
    - But unless and until they make that spiritual trip, there is nothing we can say to convince them
    - Our offer to come is far, far more important than any rational argument we can make to persuade them
    - In fact, trying to convince someone that Jesus is the Messiah before they are inclined to come is a reversal of the salvation call
      - It's come to Jesus so you can see Him as Lord
      - It's not see Jesus as Lord, so that you can come to Him

- In Nathaniel's case, he chose to come to Jesus
  - Notice that Jesus didn't come to Nathaniel
  - Nathaniel had to make a decision to come to Jesus so that He could have that experience of knowing Him
- And then as the encounter begins, Jesus initiates the conversation
  - He declares that behold, here comes an Israelite in whom is no deceit
    - And the word for deceit is also a euphemism for the name of Isaac's son, Jacob
      - Jacob meant deceiver
    - So Jesus essentially said here comes an Israelite in whom is no Jacob
  - What He meant was here's a man who has a true heart
    - His decision to come to Jesus has set his heart straight
    - This reminds us of John the Baptist's ministry, to make crooked paths straight
    - And John indeed did his job for Nathaniel
    - Nathaniel's heart had been made straight because John the Baptist sent Andrew to Jesus, Andrew sent Philip to Jesus, and Philip sent Nathaniel to Jesus
- After Jesus calls Nathaniel by name, Nathaniel is taken aback and asks Jesus how He could know him
  - Jesus, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, declares that before Jesus called Nathaniel, Jesus saw Nathaniel sitting under a fig tree
    - Once again, notice Jesus careful choice of words
    - First, He says before I called you...
    - But it was Philip that called Nathaniel
    - Only now we understand that Jesus Himself was the One issuing that call through Nathaniel
  - And so it is with us, as we endeavor to call others to know Jesus

- We may be the ones choosing our words, honing our techniques, and inevitably worrying about how to recruit the most followers for Jesus
- But the Bible testifies that we don't call anyone
- Jesus calls through us, and so it suggests that an emphasis on certain methodologies must be tempered by an appreciation that God can work through the mouth of a donkey
- We should move with the Spirit, freely changing our focus and methods as the Lord directs
- Secondly, Jesus' mention of a fig tree is interesting because of its connection to be called
  - We remember that a fig leaf was the way Man and Woman tried to cover their own nakedness after the Fall in the Garden
  - That clothing was insufficient from God's point of view
  - He provided animal skins, which imply a sacrifice was made for their sin
  - So before Jesus called Nathaniel, he was covered only by fig leaves
  - Now there is no deceit found in Him
  - Why? Because he came and saw Jesus
- Then Jesus offers Nathaniel a great promise, one that is true for every believer
  - Jesus told Nathaniel that he would see many greater things
    - Of course, Jesus was referring to the events Nathaniel would witness in the years with Jesus and afterward
    - But Jesus is also thinking of the marvelous things that await all those who believe in Jesus
    - We will rule and reign with Him in His coming Kingdom
    - And we will see His glory
  - In response to Jesus' demonstration of prophetic knowledge, Nathaniel exclaims that Jesus is the Son of God and King of Israel
    - This is a strong reaction, even under the circumstances

- The Jewish understanding of the Messiah didn't include a Triune Godhead
- This phrase is likely being uttered under inspiration of the Spirit
- Which makes sense, since Jesus had just declared that Nathaniel is a Israelite without deceit
- In other words, it seems as though the Lord declared that Nathaniel would speak truthfully
  - And thereafter the Holy Spirit inspired Nathaniel to make his declaration
- Finally, Jesus reacts to Nathaniel's strong statement asking if you are willing to make such a declaration on the basis on so little, just wait
  - Greater things are coming as we said
  - And then Jesus adds that all the disciples will see the heavens opened and angels of God ascending and descending on the Son of Man
  - Here's another interesting reference to Jacob's life
- As Jacob was in Bethel fleeing from his brother Esau, he wondered if God was going to take care of him

[Gen. 28:10](#) Then Jacob departed from Beersheba and went toward Haran.

[Gen. 28:11](#) He came to a certain place and spent the night there, because the sun had set; and he took one of the stones of the place and put it under his head, and lay down in that place.

[Gen. 28:12](#) He had a dream, and behold, a ladder was set on the earth with its top reaching to heaven; and behold, the angels of God were ascending and descending on it.

[Gen. 28:13](#) And behold, the LORD stood above it and said, "I am the LORD, the God of your father Abraham and the God of Isaac; the land on which you lie, I will give it to you and to your descendants.

[Gen. 28:14](#) "Your descendants will also be like the dust of the earth, and you will spread out to the west and to the east and to the north and to the south; and in you and in your descendants shall all the families of the earth be blessed.

[Gen. 28:15](#) "Behold, I am with you and will keep you wherever you go, and will bring you back to this land; for I will not leave you until I have done what I have promised you."

[Gen. 28:16](#) Then Jacob awoke from his sleep and said, "Surely the LORD is in this place, and I did not know it."

- In Jacob's dream, the ladder reflected God's promise to be with Jacob and to minister to him by way of angels
  - When Jacob awoke, his response was that surely God was in this place
    - And yet he says I didn't know it
    - Jacob hadn't realized how close God could be to him in his life on earth
    - God was capable and willing of descending from heaven and reaching down to the earth
    - He did so through intercessors, angels appointed to minister to the saints
  - But of course, in that dream was a picture of Christ Himself
    - Jesus is the intercessor Who came to earth to reveal the Father to men
    - And to make a way possible for men to enter Heaven
    - In other words, Jesus is the ladder in that dream, as he says in v. 51
    - While the angels ascended and descended on an ladder in Jacob's dream, now Jesus says they ascend and descend on Jesus
  - Jesus says you will see something that Jacob saw in a limited form
    - Only you will see it in its full form
    - Previously, God revealed Himself in a limited form to Israel, that is to Jacob
    - And now God was revealing Himself to an Israelite in the full form
    - And like Jacob, Nathaniel declares (in so many words) that the Lord is in this place, but he didn't know it
- This is only the fourth day, but already several disciples have been collected and the awareness is growing that Jesus is the Messiah of Israel
  - And in the first chapter, the identity of Jesus has already become John's dominant theme

- He's used no less than 16 different names or descriptions of Jesus' identity in this opening chapter
  - The point is to emphasize Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of Man, the Son of God
- Three days after the meeting with Nathaniel, Jesus is in Cana with his mother

**John 2:1** On the third day there was a wedding in Cana of Galilee, and the mother of Jesus was there;

**John 2:2** and both Jesus and His disciples were invited to the wedding.

**John 2:3** When the wine ran out, the mother of Jesus said to Him, "They have no wine."

**John 2:4** And Jesus said to her, "Woman, what does that have to do with us? My hour has not yet come."

**John 2:5** His mother said to the servants, "Whatever He says to you, do it."

**John 2:6** Now there were six stone waterpots set there for the Jewish custom of purification, containing twenty or thirty gallons each.

**John 2:7** Jesus said to them, "Fill the waterpots with water." So they filled them up to the brim.

**John 2:8** And He said to them, "Draw some out now and take it to the headwaiter." So they took it to him.

**John 2:9** When the headwaiter tasted the water which had become wine, and did not know where it came from (but the servants who had drawn the water knew), the headwaiter called the bridegroom,

**John 2:10** and said to him, "Every man serves the good wine first, and when the people have drunk freely, then he serves the poorer wine; but you have kept the good wine until now."

**John 2:11** This beginning of His signs Jesus did in Cana of Galilee, and manifested His glory, and His disciples believed in Him.

- This is the seventh day of Jesus' public ministry, and it seems appropriate that the first of Jesus' miracles would occur on the seventh day of His ministry
  - In fact, John generally doesn't include specific time references in his Gospel
    - This suggests that John had reasons to make clear that this event happened on Jesus' seventh day of ministry
    - We remember that John began his Gospel with obvious references to the first chapter of Genesis

- And if we think back to that first chapter, we also find that the chapter is structured as a series of days...six days to be exact
- And the start of the second chapter of Genesis is Day 7
- Likewise, we see the next chapter of John starting on Day seven of Jesus' ministry
- There may be no more significance than simply emphasizing once more that Jesus is the Creator
- The occasion is a wedding in Cana, which is a small town in the Galilee where Jesus has been staying
  - Jesus and the five disciples he's collected so far were invited as was Jesus' mother
  - It must be a wedding that involved a close family connection
  - That would explain why Jesus' mother chooses to involve herself and her Son in the affairs of the wedding
- We're told in v.3 that at a point the wine runs out
  - This is a bit surprising, since wine drinking was a highlight of any wedding
    - Perhaps more people attended than the host expected
    - Or perhaps the host simply did a poor job of estimating the need
    - In any case, the party is about to become a disaster
    - Not only was it a social disgrace to fail to care for guests in the right way, there were financial implications as well
    - In that culture, if you invited someone to a party or dinner, you were legally obligated to care for them properly
    - If you didn't, you would be expected to compensate them for their loss
  - So Mary turns to her Son and simply says "They have no wine"
    - When a mother, especially a Jewish mother, says something like this, it's not simply idle chit chat
    - She is expecting her son to recognize the seriousness of the problems and to do something to rectify the problem

- Perhaps her close connection to the host led her to want to help
  - The question we ask ourselves at this point is what exactly did Mary think Jesus would or could do about this problem?
    - John says in v.11 that this miracle was the beginning of the signs Jesus performed in Cana of Galilee
    - It seems to suggest Jesus hadn't yet done miracles
    - And since Jesus only received the Holy Spirit a week earlier, it stands to reason He wasn't in the habit of making wine miraculously
- So did Mary think Jesus would perform a miracle in this case?
  - It's hard to imagine that she expected anything other than a miracle
    - Consider that Jesus had no significant financial resources that we know of
    - And even if He did, He hardly could have procured wine on a moment's notice
  - Furthermore, in v.5 Mary all but anticipates that Jesus is going to work something miraculous
    - She tells the servants to do whatever Jesus told them
    - That would seem like an unnecessary things to say, since servants do what they're told naturally
    - But if Mary expected Jesus to perform a miracle, then it makes sense that she was preparing the servants for something unusual
- As I look at the entire scene, I conclude that Mary expected a miracle
  - Mary knows Jesus is the Messiah
    - She's known His true identity from the time of her conception
    - She's probably noticed that Jesus never went through terrible twos
    - He was an ideal teenager
    - And now she knows He has been baptized by John
    - Furthermore, she see that Jesus has disciples in tow at the party

- So she had every reason to believe that Jesus has begun His earthly ministry and was now prepared to act in the power and authority of His divine nature
- So like a typical proud mother, and a Jewish mother no less, she wants to advance the career of her Son and give him a kick start
  - So she asks Jesus to perform this little miracle
  - I don't know if she understood that Jesus would use water to make wine
  - But she seems to be confident Jesus can produce more wine somehow
- There is an interesting irony here
  - Mary is the only one who truly gets Jesus at this point
    - She knows His origins
    - She knows His destiny
    - She knows His power and authority
    - These are things no one else yet understands like she does
  - But then she is the one trying to misuse that authority and power
    - I realize Mary has good intentions, and she thinks she's doing the right thing
    - She assumes it's Jesus' desire to save the host's reputation at this party
    - But in reality, she's looking at Jesus as a genie in a bottle
    - She wants to rob the bottle, so to speak, and make a request, and expect Jesus to respond
  - More than anyone else, she should be sensitive to approaching Jesus in a manner consistent with His divinity
    - Instead, she treats Him most dismissively
    - And we are prone to the same mistake at times
    - We approach Jesus forgetting He is the Lord of the Universe

- We bring Him our concerns, which we are supposed to do, but we expect Him to respond like a genie who does our bidding
- But this is not how we approach Jesus
- Consider His response to His mother

[John 2:4](#) And Jesus said to her, "Woman, what does that have to do with us? My hour has not yet come."

[John 2:5](#) His mother said to the servants, "Whatever He says to you, do it."

[John 2:6](#) Now there were six stone waterpots set there for the Jewish custom of purification, containing twenty or thirty gallons each.

[John 2:7](#) Jesus said to them, "Fill the waterpots with water." So they filled them up to the brim.

[John 2:8](#) And He said to them, "Draw some out now and take it to the headwaiter." So they took it to him.

[John 2:9](#) When the headwaiter tasted the water which had become wine, and did not know where it came from (but the servants who had drawn the water knew), the headwaiter called the bridegroom,

[John 2:10](#) and said to him, "Every man serves the good wine first, and when the people have drunk freely, then he serves the poorer wine; but you have kept the good wine until now."

[John 2:11](#) This beginning of His signs Jesus did in Cana of Galilee, and manifested His glory, and His disciples believed in Him.

- He asks His mother what does the lack of wine have to do with Mary and Jesus?
  - This is a Jewish idiom that is hard to translate into English
  - It can be understood to mean "your concerns are not My concerns"
  - The problems of this wedding party have nothing to do with Jesus' earthly ministry
  - Jesus didn't voluntarily leave the right hand of the Father and lower Himself to take the form of man so He could cater weddings
  - The Holy Spirit didn't come upon Him and grant Him power to perform miracles so that He could accommodate everyday needs

- Jesus came to earth and displayed His power so He could validate His identity as Messiah
  - The miracles were always a means to an end in His ministry
  - Jesus showed signs and wonders to prove a message which He delivered in conjunction with those miracles
- But here Mary wanted the miracles done divorced from any message
  - Her concern was for the host's reputation rather than for Jesus' glory
  - That's why Jesus asks what does this have to do with us?
  - Mary's purposes were not in keeping with the Father's purposes, and therefore by definition her desires were sin
- We do this as well, more often than we realize
  - We declare that what we want is what God wants
  - We assume that just because we think something is good, well then certainly God must want it too
  - But we forget that God's definition and understanding of what's good is not the same as ours often times
- Look at how Jesus ends His comments to her
  - He says my time has not yet come
    - He's reminding Mary that the timing for Jesus' miracles is according to the Father's plan
    - So in this moment, she was acting according to her own will and not the Father's
    - Jesus was displaying His divinity before Mary in the way He highlights her behavior as sin
    - In a sense, He was acting as Judge, convicting Mary for having the wrong motives in making her request
  - But then notice Mary conveniently ignores Jesus' response and tells the servants to follow His instructions
    - What does Jesus do at this point?

- He goes through with the miracle
- Why does He do it if Mary was wrong?
- Well, making water into wine is not a sin by itself
  - Jesus did it discretely and without drawing any attention to Himself
  - In fact, the headwaiter credit the bridegroom, not Jesus
  - Only the servants knew what Jesus had done
  - So Jesus didn't violate the Father's will in performing the miracle, because He didn't use it to publicize His ministry prematurely
- Nevertheless, he obeyed His mother's request, because to do otherwise was to dishonor his mother
  - Therefore, the humanity of Christ respected His mother and complied with her request
  - As Divinity, Jesus had rebuked the sin of Mary
  - And now as Humanity, Jesus had obeyed his mother to avoid sinning
  - John shows us both sides of Jesus' nature in one succinct story
- As it ends, we see that Jesus' creative work is so superior that his product is the best wine possible