



Welcome to our Sunday Service (21/02/21)

Is God Enough?

Prepared by James Gregory

Water You turned into wine
 Opened the eyes of the blind
 There's no one like you, none like you
 Into the darkness You shine
 Out of the ashes we rise
 There's No one like you, none like you
 Our God is greater, our God is stronger
 God You are higher than any other
 Our God is Healer, awesome in power
 Our God, Our God

And if Our God is for us,
 Then who could ever stop us?
 And if our God is with us,
 Then what can stand against?

By Chris Tomlin



Happy Birthday Adam

(27th Feb)

God

Bless

You!

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5	5	10	15	20	25	30	35	40	45	50
6	6	12	18	24	30	36	42	48	54	60
7	7	14	21	28	35	42	49	56	63	70
8	8	16	24	32	40	48	56	64	72	80
9	9	18	27	36	45	54	63	72	81	90
10	10	20	30	40	50	60	70	80	90	100

Loving Father we ask that you would open our spiritual eyes afresh today, to enable us to see more of your glory and understand a little more of your love for us and the lengths you go to, to bring us home. Help each of us to be at home in your presence today. We love you Father, in Jesus name, Amen.

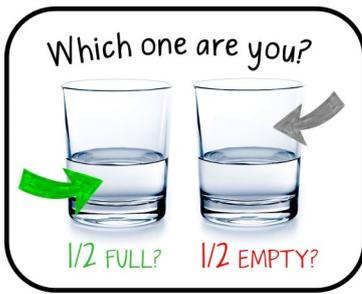
1On the third day a wedding took place at Cana in Galilee. Jesus' mother was there, 2and Jesus and his disciples had also been invited to the wedding. 3When the wine was gone, Jesus' mother said to him, "They have no more wine." 4"Woman, why do you involve me?" Jesus replied. "My hour has not yet come." 5His mother said to the servants, "Do whatever he tells you." 6Nearby stood six stone water jars, the kind used by the Jews for ceremonial washing, each holding from twenty to thirty gallons. 7Jesus said to the servants, "Fill the jars with water"; so they filled them to the brim. 8Then he told them, "Now draw some out and take it to the master of the banquet."

They did so, 9and the master of the banquet tasted the water that had been turned into wine. He did not realize where it had come from, though the servants who had drawn the water knew. Then he called the bridegroom aside 10and 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 till now."

11What 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. 12After this he went down to Capernaum with his mother and brothers and his disciples. There they stayed for a few days.



I want to start off this morning by thinking about optimists and pessimists. You know the definition of an optimist? It's someone who, after throwing themselves off a high building, shouts, 'so far, so good!' **Are you an optimist or a pessimist? Are you a glass half full kind of person or a glass half empty one?**



When you first heard there might be a pandemic coming did you say 'ah, it probably won't come to anything' or did you think 'this is the end of the world as we know it'? Did you say, 'I better make sure I have written a will' or 'I'm sure this will just blow over'? **Are you Tigger or are you Eeyore?**



What is your default way of seeing things?

Are you laid back and unruffled, or are you careful and well-planned?

Are you always well-prepared, thinking 'if we don't do something proactive this will be disaster' or are you, 'ah, it will all come out in the wash'?

Maybe you change in different circumstances - you are optimistic about finances but pessimistic about health, or optimistic about relationships but pessimistic about work.

And how are you feeling about life now?

Maybe this pandemic has made pessimists of all of us?

What has the last 12 months done to your optimistic outlook?

I was reading the psalms this week and I came across a pessimist's take on age and the passing of time followed by an optimist's. **Psalm 90** considers the fragility of our lives: *"You sweep us away like a flood... like grass that is renewed in the morning; in the morning it flourishes and is renewed; in the evening it fades and withers... The years of our life are seventy, or even if by reason of strength eighty; yet their span is but toil and trouble; they are soon gone, and we fly away."*

Psalm 92 has a totally different perspective on the same ideas: *"the righteous flourish like the palm tree... They are planted in the house of the Lord; they flourish in the courts of God. They still bear fruit in old age; they are ever full of sap and green, to declare that the Lord is upright; he is my rock and there is no unrighteousness in him."*

Is our 70 or 80 years of life like grass which quickly wilts or is it more like an abundantly fruiting tree?

Is the glass half empty or half full?

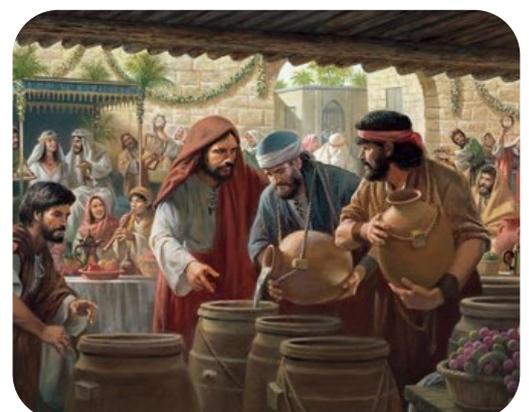
Are you an optimist or a pessimist?

Maybe there was an optimist to blame behind the scenes in the story of the wedding we heard from John 2?

'Do you think that will be enough wine for the party?'

'Yeah, I'm sure it will be fine! - so far, so good!'

But in fact, there isn't enough wine - they get to the end of the wine before they get anywhere near the end of the party.



This is very embarrassing for the host - you appear to be insulting your guests if you have no more wine to offer them; or it looks like that you don't love your daughter enough to celebrate her wedding properly; or maybe you don't have the finances to put on a proper do.

Mary tells Jesus about it and tells the servants to do whatever Jesus tells them. Jesus tells them to fill these massive stone jars with water. They do, and when they take the water to the master of the banquet the water has turned to the most wonderful wine. Maybe 800 to 1200 bottles worth!

Why the image of wine?

The wine here shows us God's abundant generosity.

God is more than enough for us.

God has given us more than we need.

God has given us abundant life.

This is what the wine represents.



But, has God given us more than we need? Has he even given us enough?

We often feel we live in a world of scarcity. We live in a world where there is not enough. We sometimes feel like God has asked us to make bricks AND find our own straw to make them with. We don't have the time or the energy or the skills or the opportunity or the platform to do the things God is asking of us.

We don't know enough or don't earn enough or believe enough.

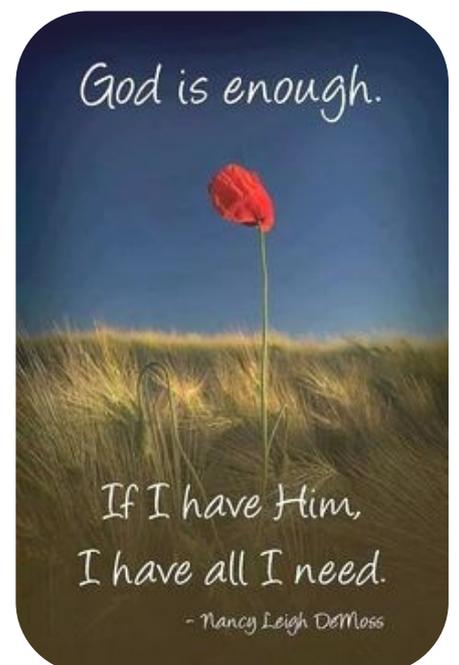
Maybe the fear of scarcity fuels our pessimism - we just don't think we have what we need to do what we need to do. And even if we have enough for now, we worry that we will run out in a moment. And, at root, our fear of scarcity is actually a fear about God - it rests on the fear that there is *not enough God*, that God is not enough for us, that God is stingy.

But, again and again, the Bible tells us that God HAS given us what we need - in fact he is generous, superabundant, and he has given us MORE than what we need. Jesus says later in John's gospel, '**I have come that they might have life and have it abundantly**' - Jesus promises us life invigorated and intensified; life which is immeasurably more than we can ask or imagine. Jesus comes and shows us that God *is more than enough for us*.

Now, Jesus doesn't promise us everything we *want*, or even necessarily everything *we think* we need. If you want a God who will give you everything you *want* you will need to put Jesus to one side and follow some prosperity preacher instead of Jesus - there are plenty to choose from. But Jesus *will invigorate and intensify your life* - giving you *everything you need*.

2 Peter 1:3; "His divine power has given us everything needed for life and godliness."

We are given everything we need to follow Jesus. And that means we are given everything we need.



We are not necessarily given everything we want or everything necessary for a long and comfortable life, free from suffering, disappointment, frustration, or loneliness and full of achievement, recognition, and contentment, but we are given all we need to follow Jesus.

God is more than enough for us, and God has given us more than enough - more than we need.

And so, of all the things that the metaphor of the wine could mean for us the one that matters most is that it shows us and reminds us that God is generous and kind, he is not a reluctant giver, he is not a skinflint. God has endless supplies of love and joy and peace. For you... right now. God has given us all we need for life and godliness - in fact, more than enough - like good wine poured out and overflowing. 800-1200 bottles of the best wine!

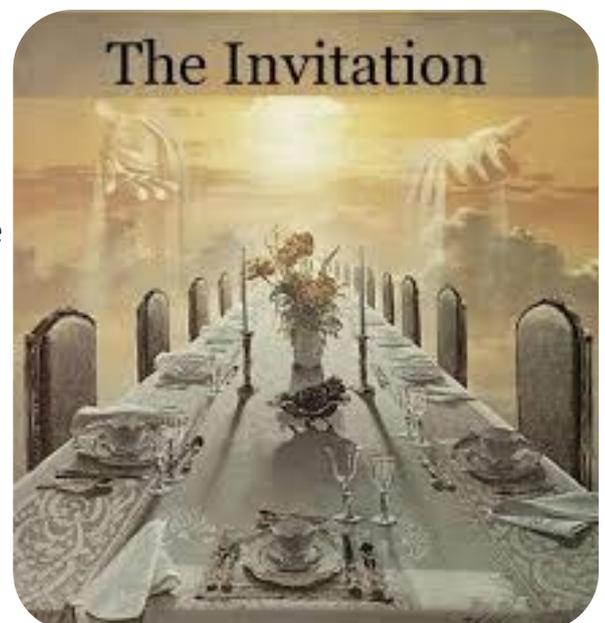
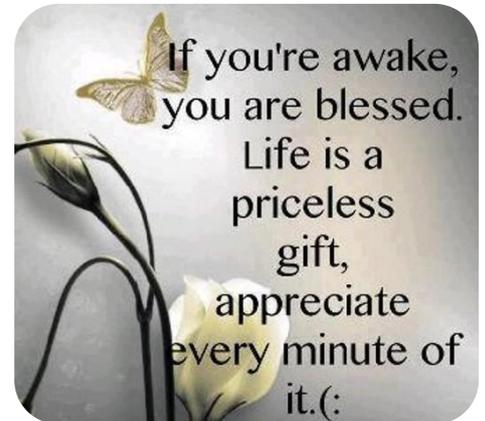
**Are you experiencing the overflowing abundance
of God right now?**

**Do you feel like your life is rich red wine,
full, fruity, invigorating?
Maybe? ...maybe not?**

Think about your life as a gift from God. If your life is a gift, are you unpacking the gift and using it and treasuring it? Or are you unhappy that it's not the gift you wanted? Are you missing out on the blessings of your life because you are not opening the gift?

I could maybe take this sermon in that direction, couldn't I? You know, we need a positive outlook; make the most of things; count your blessings; work on an attitude of gratitude. And there is real value in that stuff: when you are out on your daily exercise notice the budding new life, it will be good for your soul; rather than dwelling on all the things you CAN'T do right now find ways of being thankful for all the good things that you can still do; rather than dwelling on how YouTube depletes our experience of worship, focus on all the creative ways that the Holy Spirit can overcome those limitations. That sermon is not really a gospel sermon though, is it?

The point of the gospel is not to tell us how to make the most of life now - and it doesn't just tell us to buck up our attitudes (thank God!). The gospel is that Jesus has invited us to his banquet and that Jesus has provided all the wine (and party clothes) in advance. The gospel is the good news that *God is among us*, working out his plans and purposes in our world, our lives, our hearts. The gospel is the declaration of God's eternal goodness and provision, of his un-ending love and joy and peace. And the gospel is not just a word about life now it is also a declaration of the plans and future God has for us - it is the declaration of God's future breaking into our present.



What did Jesus initially say when his mother told him about the wine supply issue? 'My hour has not yet come.' Whenever Jesus talks about his 'hour' in John's gospel he means the cross.

When you know that Jesus has the cross in mind you see that the story of the wedding party in John 2 is also the story of Jesus' life.

Think of it as a play in four acts:

1. There's a party and everything is going well. 2. Then there is the concern that the wine might run out. 3. And then the wine does run out. 4. And then the miracle comes.

Jesus' life starts with a party - angels' songs, and shepherds, and gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh. But the wine runs low - people begin to turn against him. On Good Friday the rejection is complete, the wine has run out - 'It is finished', Jesus cries. But there is more. There is the miracle. The God who brings life out of nothingness brings life again from the grave. The grave is defeated by the power of life and love - by the power of Christ. Jesus is raised from the dead and suddenly everything is new, and all things are possible.

It's Jesus' resurrection that means our water is being turned into wine. It's Jesus' resurrection that means we can always trust that God will be more than we need, more than enough, more than we can ask or imagine. It's Jesus' resurrection that points us towards that final banquet we heard about at the beginning of our service, where we will see all that God is for us with our faces unveiled. What Jesus has done for us and on our behalf shows that God is good and trustworthy and sufficient for us now and forever - that God is much MORE than sufficient.

The story of the wedding in John 2 that is also the story of Jesus' life is your story too!

Maybe things were going fairly well (perhaps about this time last year!) Then came the sudden fear that this wine could run out. Then it really *does* run out and it seems life is over. But wait, there's more, there's a miracle here, there's resurrection, there's more life, more joy, new wine.

God has more for you.

God will take the water of your life and turn it into wine.

There are no limits on what God can do in you and through you.

Following Jesus does not mean accepting our lot, following Jesus means learning to want the limitless things that God gives us in Jesus.



We don't do church on Sundays to help us re-adjust to life as it is. We come because deep down we have this longing for more, this sense that there is wonder and life and grace behind and beyond what we see and experience now. We're beginning to see that life cannot be summed up by what we see and touch, there is more. We come knowing that God is always more than we ask or imagine and that he is generous and kind and wondrous and super-abundant. And we leave worship more aware of new hope, new possibilities, new dreams, new hunger for something else. We, who have tasted new wine, now thirst for more.

So, throw yourself upon Jesus who makes water into wine. Thirst for him, seek him, listen to him, love him. He is your life and your hope and your future.

Can you imagine yourself as one of those servants at the banquet? 'What have you got in your jars?' That's not just water!! It's smells more potent, its colour is deeper, it is richer than water.

What have you got in the stone jars of your heart, in your life right now? Is there more than water there?

What sort of person should a Christian be? Should Christians be pessimists or optimists? Are we just grass, ready to wither away , or are we like fruitful trees?

Christians should be pessimists, shouldn't we? Our central story is that God has come among us full of grace and truth but we couldn't cope with it and we have turned against him and executed him. There is not much to be optimistic about there! And yet, also at the centre of our story is the resurrection - that when we do the worst we can to each other, when we do the worst we can to God, God still has resources that we don't. God can bring life out of death.

But the point is, it doesn't matter if you are an optimist or a pessimist by nature, whether you feel like dried up grass or a fruitful tree, because what you are doesn't matter nearly as much as what Jesus is for you. What matters is that you are a Christian, you have given you heart and life to God through Jesus, and now you are held in an abundance of God's love and grace and peace. In Christ God has given us all we need for life and godliness. God is more than enough for us and has given us more than enough. We might come to the end of our resources, but God is never lacking. God has resources that we don't - he is a resurrection God. Our faith is in God's ability to bring life out of death rather than our own ability to do the best that we can.

The glass is not half-empty, in fact it's not even half full. The glass is over-flowing... and it's not even just water! This is top quality wine! This is joy and peace and love. We didn't deserve it, we don't earn it, we don't have to secure it. God has given us what we need from God's resources.

You don't need to be an optimist or a pessimist.

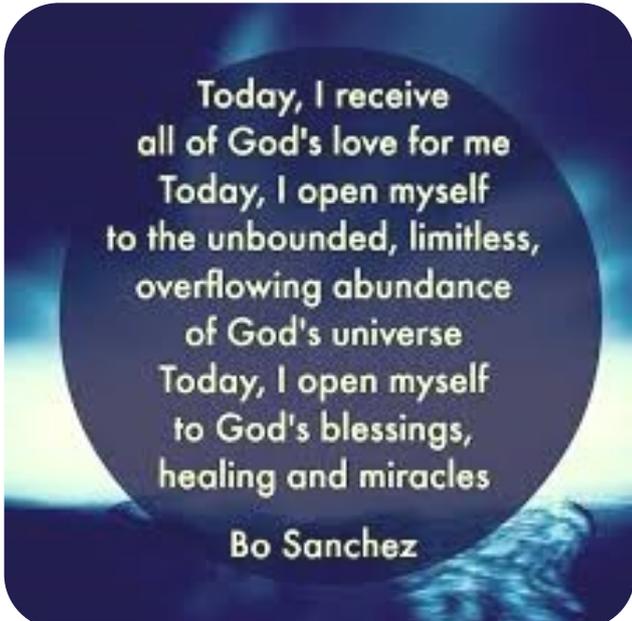
But you can be a realist.

God is giving you everything you need for life and godliness.

God is giving you an abundance of new wine.

Thanks be to God.

**May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ,
the love of God and the fellowship of
The Holy Spirit be with us all, now
and evermore. Amen**



Today, I receive
all of God's love for me
Today, I open myself
to the unbounded, limitless,
overflowing abundance
of God's universe
Today, I open myself
to God's blessings,
healing and miracles

Bo Sanchez