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JOHN 2

John Series

Open your Bibles to John 2. What we've been doing in the gospel of John is we're studying this gospel verse by verse. That's our desire is to go verse by verse through the passage.

John opens his gospel with his desire. This is what his desire is. Unlike the other gospel writers (Matthew, Mark, and Luke), John's desire is that we would get to know and believe that Jesus is for us. He introduces his gospel unlike the other gospels. Matthew introduces his gospel with the genealogies. Luke introduces his gospel with the nativity scene. John introduces his gospel by saying Jesus is God, Jesus is Creator, Jesus is the light, He is the author of light. He's trying to give us reasons why we should believe in Jesus. Then he talks about finding Nathaniel and Philip and Andrew and Peter and how God is specifically interested in each one of those people, just like He's interested in us.

John is setting the stage for us. He's setting the stage so that we'll come to the conclusion that yes, God is interested in me too. God wants to embrace me and he wants to love me in a very personal way. That's what he's doing.

In chapter 2 we go into a miracle. This is the first of seven miracles shared in the gospel of John. The purpose of sharing this miracle is so we'll see that God is powerful, that God is great, God does miracles. He cares about the very small things that we think maybe we shouldn't even pray about. Maybe this isn't a God thing. Maybe the fact that we ran out of wine at the wedding, we shouldn't pray to God about that. Well, Jesus is interested in that stuff.

So let's look at the passage. John 2:1: *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.*

The way we do weddings in America is a bit different than what they did in the culture of the day. When I lived in Kenya I think the Kenyan culture was much more similar to ancient Hebrew culture, the culture of the Jewish time back in Jesus' time. There were a lot of things that were very similar about Kenyan weddings. For example, there were arranged marriages. You know in America the average wedding costs between eighteen and twenty-two thousand dollars? That's how much a wedding cost today. These guys are getting ready to get married, so I just want to point that out to them. Eighteen to twenty-two thousand is the average wedding.

But I want you to know, to offset the cost in Bible times what they would do is that when someone had a party, when someone had an event (this is true in Kenya too) all of the friends would come over and they would be the caterers. They would be the people who were the

waiters and so on. So in that case, the whole community would come out and celebrate and help the people.

I often was the guest of honor in Kenya. I would go to a place and I'd be over at someone else's house to eat and they would have their friends and family over. They were the ones in the kitchen in the back. They were the ones serving all the food so me as a guest could be with the host and we could all be out there. That's how they were doing all this.

I wonder if Mary was one of those people who would come over to help with the bridegroom and the bride and all the wedding feasting was going on. I imagine that was the case. Because Mary seems to have some significant role here beyond just a participant at the wedding. She seems to have some role because she's going to say to Jesus, "We need help. We've got a problem here." It seems that she has some kind of responsibility in the midst of this. Maybe she's like my friends in Kenya; came along to support and help make this thing happen.

Notice it says in verse 2 *and Jesus and his disciples had also been invited to the wedding*. Very important. You've got to remember it's always important to invite Jesus to the wedding. A successful marriage is made of three people, not two, and only one is perfect. You do the math. Because sometimes what we do is we think the other person's perfect, so we put demands on our mate. The key is invite Jesus into the wedding. We invite Jesus and then we're able to rely on Him and what He's doing in our mate and what He wants to do in our lives. Three people make a marriage successful. I like it that it says *and Jesus and his disciples had also been invited to the wedding*.

Verse 3: *When the wine was gone, Jesus' mother said to him, "They have no more wine."* We can surmise from Jesus' response that Mary is asking Him to solve the problem somehow. She must know about His power and so she's asking Him to solve the problem.

Verse 4 says, *"Woman, why do you involve me?" Jesus replied. "My hour has not yet come."* This may sound kind of harsh. We can't pick up on the tone of voice just right in the passage there. You'd have to hear it. But just by saying the word 'woman' it gives the impression that he's setting her off somehow. That doesn't have to be the case.

We see that He uses the word 'woman' other times when this lady comes to Him concerned about her daughter. Jesus says to her, "Woman, you have great faith." So it's not always putting off; we just don't get the tone there. The woman at the well, he calls her 'woman.' It's not necessarily something that's putting her off, but He's really saying to Mary, "Hey mom, don't be anxious. We're not quite ready here. When that time comes I will furnish the supply. In the meantime we just need to wait."

I think what he's saying here is there is a heavenly Father now that dictates the timing, not the parent. There's some difference here in the parental response that the parental relationship is now no longer governing, that now it's the heavenly Father who's dictating and governing what he needs to do. Yet his mom says, notice verse 5, *His mother said to the servants, "Do whatever he tells you."* That is good advice for any of us. If Jesus speaks, do what He says. I like that.

I was working with a young person recently and the young person had some problems. Twelve years old who had some mean issues in his life, so as I'm counseling with him, I said to him, "Does God speak to you?"

He said, "No."

I said, "Would you like Him to speak to you?"

He said, "Yes."

So I said, "Here take my Bible and open to this verse and read it."

He read the verses and I said, "What is God saying to you?" And he read the verses again. And so I said, "No, what is God saying to you out of those verses?" He didn't know. I said, "Give me the Bible. I'm going to show you. Watch what I do here because God will speak to me through this passage right now. I just want to illustrate it to you. This isn't some metaphysical woo-woo kind of thing. This is God speaking. This is how He speaks. He speaks through His word."

I read the verse. After I read the verse I said, "Okay. This verse talks about valuing someone else's interest more than your own. Hmm. As I think about it in my own life, my wife has an event coming up this week and I need to remember that her interests are more important than mine and I need to value her in this time. God has just spoken to me. Here. You try." I gave him back the Bible.

He reads this and after he's done reading, I said, "What is God saying to you?"

He says, "I think God is saying He wants me to share my electronic toy."

I said, "Great! God has spoken to you. But that's not the only question. I asked you a question, do you want God to speak to you, but that's not the only question. The second question is when He speaks will you be willing to listen, will you be willing to do what He says? That's what's important." Because God does speak to children. God speaks to adults. We want kids to be connected to God and His word so they can hear God speak. But it's one thing to hear God speak; it's another thing to do what He says.

His mother said to the servants, "Do whatever he tells you to do." I don't think Mary knows what Jesus is going to do. But she knows who to go to. I think sometimes we don't know what Jesus is going to do, but we know who to go to. We know we need to come to God and we know we need to come to Christ because He has a plan. He knows what's going on.

Next verse. Verse 6: *Nearby stood six stone water jars, the kind used by the Jews for ceremonial washing, each holding from twenty to thirty gallons.*

These were decorative pots that were used. If you were going to hold twenty to thirty gallons, a gallon weighs about eight pounds. So do the math. You're talking about 160 to 200 some pounds. You've got a lot of weight. Plus the stone itself. So that's a lot of weight. You can't imagine them taking the stone water pot down to the river, filling it up, and bringing it back. No, no, no. That's not going to happen. They're going to go to the well or they're going to go to the river, wherever they're going to get the water and they're going to fill it up and bring it and pour it into the stone water pots.

These were empty because they were ceremonial. Notice what it says. There were *six stone water pots, the kind used by the Jews for ceremonial washing, each holding twenty to thirty gallons*. In those days they would wash ceremonially. It was not just wash to be clean, but it was symbolic of washing and getting themselves ready for something. In this case a wedding. So they had six water pots there. All the guests had been washed.

This is basically how it went. I can explain this to you because this is how it was in Kenya. When I was on a worksite and we were building something and then it was time for lunch, the women would arrive bringing all of the food and the water because there's no water except what you're going to draw from the river or you got from the well. So they're bringing it all here. They pour water into a pitcher and as we're all standing around, they come with a pitcher and they pour the water and you rinse your hands quickly and carefully because there's only so much water in that pitcher. You're washing your hands, getting all the dirt off and everything and then your hands just dry. You don't touch anything. You hold your hands out like this. You don't greet anybody by shaking hands. You leave your hands like this until you eat.

I saw something I wanted to take a picture of so I got my camera and I took a picture of something. The lady was back there with the thing, she's pouring water on my hands because she wants my hands to be clean before we eat. Now that was just regular cleanliness, but they would wash not only their hands, they would wash the utensils, the pots, everything that needed to be washed. It would be clean and cleansed and so these pots were empty. They had to go down and fill the water, bring it up, fill up the pots. So I can imagine that the stone water pots took a bit of time to fill up.

Verse 7: *Jesus said to the servants, "Fill the jars with water"; so they filled them to the brim.* These servants are obedient. I really like that because that's what's going to be really key here in the miracle that's going to take place. They filled them to the brim. They did exactly what they were told. They filled them all the way up. Not just get the minimum done and say they're filled.

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. He did not realize where it had come from, though the servants who had drawn the water knew. The impression is these servants knew a lot more about the miracle than the head waiter knew. Then he 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 till now."

Verse 11: *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.*

I wonder what the servants thought as they were taking the water. "Why are they asking me to fill these things with water? They need wine here, not water." Then they ask him to take some, dip it out of there and take it to the head waiter. "I'm going to be embarrassed when I get there and I'm taking water to the head waiter when he's looking for wine." The custom was to put the best wine first and then when people had a little bit more to drink and their taste buds were kind of satiated then they would give the rest of the wine out there.

I'm just wondering where did the miracle happen. When did it happen? Did it happen when they poured the water into the thing and it came up to a certain height? Was it water when they took it out and were carrying it out to the head waiter? I imagine that's the case. Somewhere between there and getting to the head waiter it all turned into wine.

It just reminds me, no matter where it took place that obedience is going to be key for the miracles that we need in our lives. You want to see a miracle in your life? Then you want to obey God. When we're sensitive to the Lord, when He speaks to us and then we do what He says and we obey Him, then we set the stage for great things to happen. God wants to do miracles in our lives just like He wanted to do a miracle here. But He uses people to do it. Sometimes God just does amazing things. Boom! It happens. But many times what God does is He involves you and me in the process. Our job is to be obedient.

It might be embarrassing sometimes. Oh no, I've got to take this water to the head waiter here. "Here's some water! Don't know what we're doing here." But in the midst of that, the waiter says, "Whoa, look at this." And the servants going, "Whoa, look at this," and the blessing comes to the servants who are able to receive the miracle and see what happens. They are a part of what happened.

God's going to do a miracle anyway. God's going to work among the people in your life. God's going to take Jesus to the people in your neighborhood. He's going to do all kinds of things. You have the privilege to choose to be a part of that or not. These guys were obedient and they went forward. In the midst of that obedience, a miracle took place.

I just think about Peter. In order to see the miracle walking on the water, he had to get out of the boat. Noah in order to see the miracle of God rescuing all the people, he had to build that boat.

God works in our lives. What is He asking you to do? It might be a little tough, but we obey Him, we do what He asks us to do and then in the midst of that the miracle takes place.

Alright. Now we've got to take a break because I know some of you are stuck on this wine thing at the wedding. Was it wine or was it grape juice. Let's talk about this for a minute.

The Greek word used for wine here is wine. That's what it is. It's wine. The head waiter doesn't say, "Wow, this great grape juice." He doesn't say that. He's impressed with the quality of drink which implies that it was wine. That's what it was. Some will use this text to justify drinking alcohol for themselves. Let's just step back for a moment and ask some questions about what the Bible says about such things, about drinking alcohol.

Number one, the Bible does not say that drinking alcohol is wrong. It does say that drunkenness is wrong. It talks about alcohol in the sense that alcohol is dangerous, but it doesn't say that it's wrong. The Bible warns about drinking. In fact, the fact that the Bible warns about drunkenness implies that they drank wine and you could get drunk. Otherwise, why would there be these warnings in the Bible about such things. The reality is each person needs to make a decision for themselves about how they're going to handle this thing.

We call this one of the gray areas in life. When you can watch a certain kind of movie or you can not go to church on a Sunday morning or whether you can do this or that or whatever it is. Things that are not spelled out specifically in the Bible. God is going to work in your life and help you make a decision about what to do.

Some people might ask the question, how much can I drink and still be godly? Wrong question. We don't say how much wrong can I do or how much can I do before I get into trouble? That's not what we're asking. What we need to do is what does God want for me in my life? Can I drink one beer while I watch the football game? Look, you've got the same Holy Spirit that I have in me. Ask Him! He'll tell you what you can do with all those things. He'll help you understand what's okay within that regard.

I wrote a Bible study for this purpose just helping people understand how do we measure or decide what we're going to do in these gray areas of all kinds of things. What are you going to do in this situation? There are six different principles I put in this Bible study that we need to consider all at the same time and when we consider those then God can speak to us. If you want that Bible study, email me. I'll send it to you. I think Sue might even have some of them at the table back there. You can ask her. It may be back there. If not, just email me. I'll get it to you.

The idea here is that there's wine going on. There's wine at the party. They're having wine. What's the point of John telling us that the head waiter's so impressed with the wine? I think the reason is because he wants us to see when Jesus does a miracle He does it right. He does a good one. These guys were pleased with the miracles that took place in this situation. That's verse 11.

Let's going on to verse 12. *After this he went down to Capernaum with his mother and brothers and his disciples. There they stayed for a few days.*

As we look at the geography of this land, Capernaum was right at the top of the Sea of Galilee. Cana is a little bit south and to the west, but notice the passage says *they went to Capernaum*. That's because this is pretty high, but this goes down in sea level down in Capernaum by the Sea of Galilee. So that's why it means they *went down to Capernaum*.

When you think of Capernaum you can think of cap. If you can't think of where is Capernaum, think of cap because it's at the cap of the Sea of Galilee, right at the top of the Sea of Galilee, right on the shore there. Notice also it says in the verse that He went down to Capernaum with His mother and His brothers and His disciples. What that obviously means is that Mary had other children. I just want to point that out here in the passage that she had other children. Capernaum's going to be the place where Matthew had the tax collectors stand and where Jesus is going to call him as well.

Verse 13: *When it was almost time for the Jewish Passover, Jesus went up to Jerusalem.* Here we are. Down at the bottom here is Jerusalem. But it says He went up from Capernaum up to Jerusalem. Why? Because Jerusalem is 2500 feet above sea level. So when they're thinking location, north, south, east, west is not on their mind. What they're thinking is elevation.

They went up to this place in Jerusalem and the disciples as they get closer to Jerusalem are probably thinking, “This is going to be great.” If He serves wine down there in Cana, wait till we see what He’s going to do in Jerusalem. I can hardly wait! People are going to love this wine thing. This is going to be great!”

Next verse, verse 14. He’s in Jerusalem now. *In the temple courts he found people selling cattle, sheep and doves, and others sitting at tables exchanging money. So he made a whip out of cords, and drove all from the temple courts, both sheep and cattle; he scattered the coins of the money changers and overturned their tables.*

I think the disciples are probably a little bit surprised. This is not a way to win friends and influence people. Maybe creating some wine might have been a better idea than this overturning the money changers’ tables, but Jesus is on a mission.

Let me explain to you what’s going on here and why Jesus is so upset in this situation. The Passover was a celebration where people would come from all over the world. It was an annual feast. Remember coming from the old Passover from Exodus when the celebration came and God rescued them out of the land of Egypt. God protected them and it was a beautiful thing that took place there.

Then every year they would celebrate the Passover remembering God’s provision, remembering God’s sacrifice. Remember the blood on the doorpost were placed there. Remember the sacrifice that was made for your provision. Remember the sacrifice that was made for your protection, for your deliverance. And every year people would celebrate that. They would celebrate it in their homes or if they could they would go to Jerusalem. So on this weekend, on this week of Passover the city population would swell to five times its size because people would be guests from all over the place coming to celebrate.

If you were a Jewish person from Greece and you were coming to Israel for this celebration, you might even bring your own lamb. Your lamb would be one that was spotless without blemish, a young lamb and you would bring this lamb that you would raise and you would set apart from the rest of the lambs because it was a perfect lamb, a great one to give to God as a celebration.

You would bring it and you’d bring it onto the temple area. You would bring it before the priest because the priest would have to inspect the lamb to make sure it was a worthy lamb, a lamb worthy of the sacrifice. The priest would look it over and say, “Yes, you can offer that sacrifice.” Then the priest would take you over to the altar.

That lamb would be sacrificed. The blood would flow out and you’d be reminded of the provision of God and the sacrifice that was made. You’d be reminded of Leviticus and all of the sacrificial laws there about the sacrifice of a lamb. Beautiful things would happen. You would be so grateful for God’s protection. You’d walk away with a great worship experience saying, “Yes. This is Thanksgiving. Yes. Thank you, God, for what you’ve done for me.”

Well, that’s how it was supposed to go, but that wasn’t how it was going at the time of Jesus because the priesthood had become corrupt. What would happen was the priest would examine

the lamb that you brought and raised for the last year and they would say, “It looks like a little scar down here,” or “the hair’s not right over here. This is not an adequate lamb. This is not a worthy lamb. You don’t want to offer this to God, do you?”

Of course if you’re a worshiper, a sincere worshiper, you’re coming before God and you say, “Well, if the priest doesn’t approve of this then I don’t want to be offering this lamb.” So you say, “No, that’s okay.” The priest would say, “Well we just happen to have special deal today. We have over here a bunch of lambs that are approved lambs and they are on sale today. So you can go ahead and buy a lamb over here.” So you’d go over and find a lamb and say, “Okay I’ll take that one.”

You go to the cashier to pay and the cashier says, “That’s great, but we don’t accept Greek currency. We don’t even accept Israeli currency. We only have one currency on the Temple Mount and that is the temple currency. You must pay in temple currency. I’m sorry. You have to go to the money changers.” Okay. So they go over to the money changers and say, “I need to exchange some of my Greek currency for temple currency,” and they would charge them a huge exchange rate.

So by the time they’re done and they go buy their lamb and they get ready to sacrifice, they’re paying a huge amount for a lamb they shouldn’t have even had to pay for. They walk away from that whole worship experience saying, “This is not worship for me. I don’t like this.” And they were tainting the worship of these worshipers who were coming.

There are people today who get really turned off by church. They get turned off by the religious system because religious leaders who have sin or pride or whatever misuse their rule and they mess with people’s heads. They create problems for them and they corrupt the worship of the worshiper. That is deadly for these people because you know as I do there are people who say, “Those people in those churches are hypocrites. I don’t want to have anything to do with them.” They don’t want to have anything to do with Christianity because somewhere along the lines some church messed with them and misused the spiritual authority that they have.

That is what Jesus is looking at and saying, “That is wrong.” Jesus is upset with that. Terrible thing that is going on.

Verse 16: *To those who sold doves he said, “Get these out of here! Stop turning my Father’s house into a market!” His disciples remembered that it is written: “Zeal for your house will consume me.”*

People were coming to God and it was no longer a place of prayer for them. It was just messed up with all this merchandising that was going on and they lost the real meaning of this worship, what it means to think back on the Passover, what God did for them. It’s a beautiful thing when they do that, but people can become disillusioned spiritually when we look at people.

I just want to encourage you, if you have been in that situation, you want to get your eyes off the people who are sinful people, get your eyes on God, and try to get to a place where you can worship the Lord in a way that accents your worship and develops that in your life. Don’t let

people hinder your ability to worship. There are some churches that are so legalistic. They've got so many rules and regulations that by the time you do all those things you've lost this whole sense of righteousness, of what God has for you.

It's all external. It's not internal. God wants us to be internally motivated to serve Him, internally motivated to do what's right. That's why He placed the Holy Spirit inside of us. That's what God does. We want to be focusing on that.

When the church becomes a place where the sin messes with the worship, that's where we have something that damages people's hearts and God hates that. The passion that you see in Jesus now as He comes in and clears the temple is that same passion that Jesus has for every one of us. He wants us to be open in our worship. He wants us to enjoy Him and to be able to enjoy what's going on in our relationship with Him.

There's something else going on too. Every Passover what they would do is the first thing they would do in every family is go around and get rid of leaven out of their house, all of the sin out of the way so they could enjoy the Passover celebration.

Jesus is coming in now and He's getting rid of the leaven. It's Passover time. He's saying get rid of the sin. Let people worship. Let's let them see who God is and how God protects us and how God works in our own hearts.

I think the disciples must have been shocked by what Jesus did. I think they're standing back going, "Whoa. I don't know. Do I know this guy?" They're looking at this going, "Whoa. This is not what I had in mind." But I think this is the first of many times when the disciples are going to be shocked with Jesus. Because Jesus doesn't always act in the way we expect. Amazing. And we'll see that several times. They saw Him turn water into wine. Maybe they're imagining he's going to be a popular guy, but He has something else very important in mind.

Let's go to verse 18. *The Jews then responded to him, "What sign can you show us to prove your authority to do all this?"*

Jesus answered them, "Destroy this temple, and I will raise it again in three days." We know what that temple is. It's Jesus going to be crucified and be raised in three days. But they didn't know that. They're in the temple area. He's saying, "Destroy this temple, and I will raise it again in three days."

Verse 20: *They replied, "It has taken forty-six years to build this temple, and you are going to raise it in three days?" But the temple he had spoken of was his body. After he was raised from the dead, his disciples recalled what he had said. Then they believed the scripture and the words that Jesus had spoken.* I'll come to that verse 22 in just a minute. I think it's a very significant verse for us.

But let me just explain that Herod's temple was a magnificent structure. It was gold overlaid in all kinds of different ways. When the sun set on the Temple Mount the glistening coming off the gold would blind your eyes. It was just such a beautiful setting and it took many, many years. It

still isn't finished at this point. Forty-six years so far to build it and it's going to take another six years to complete it. It was quite a beautiful place.

But what God is doing in the midst of this whole temple thing is worship. Whether you worship in a magnificent structure like the temple itself and bring your sacrifice or you worship in a high school or a middle school, the most important thing is what's going on in your heart, that God is drawing you into that opportunity to worship.

In fact, this idea of the temple we've got to take into the New Testament and understand what He's talking about now because in the New Testament the word 'temple' is used to describe what goes on inside of us. Because we do not have to go to a tabernacle now. We don't have to go to an altar. We don't have to go to a priest because now Jesus says or the Bible says that we are the *temple of the Holy Spirit*.

1 Corinthians 6:19-20 says this: *Do you not know that your bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own; you were bought at a price. Therefore honor God with your bodies.* Wow. Really interesting to see the passion Jesus has about clearing the physical temple, how much so might He have for our own lives.

Here's another verse. 2 Corinthians 6:14-16: *Do not be yoked together with unbelievers. Be careful how you partner up with someone who's not a Christian. For what do righteousness and wickedness have in common? Or what fellowship can light have with darkness? What harmony is there between Christ and Belial? Or what does a believer have in common with an unbeliever? What agreement is there between the temple of God and idols? For we are the temple of the living God.*

If Jesus was so zealous about cleaning the physical temple so that people could worship God how much more passion does he have about our own hearts? I'm convinced that there are things in our own lives where there are tables that need to be overturned and God says, "I want that area of your life. Let's get rid of it. Let's clean that area of your life up."

God has a passion because He wants us to have open worship before Him. He knows what things get in the way. He knows that some of that hypocritical stuff, some of that damaging stuff can hinder our ability to worship the Lord fully in our lives. He's very interested in cleaning up our lives so that we can be worshipers before God. We are the temple and God wants that cleaned out. So the application today may be to focus on past church experiences or people that you know that have been burnt out by church. Or maybe the application for you is something that God wants to do in your own heart, to clean up your own heart so that worship can take place.

Let's finish these verses. John 2:23 says, *Now while he was in Jerusalem at the Passover Festival, many people saw the signs he was performing and believed in his name.*

That's interesting. They saw the signs and believed. I think that's one of the reasons that God does miracles, to encourage our faith. He does miracles so that we can see Him, we can see His power, so we'll be encouraged and say, "Ah. I believe in God. That's powerful what God does. I

am so grateful that I serve a living God that is active and working in my life.” I’m sure that that’s one of the reasons that miracles take place.

But if you go back to verse 22 notice the belief comes a different way. In verse 23 it says they *saw the signs and believed*. Notice in verse 22 – *Then they believed the scripture and the words Jesus had spoken*. Sometimes the miracles don’t seem to be there. Sometimes the emotions aren’t there. But the scriptures are and we believe the scriptures and we allow them to work in our lives. That’s what’s happening here. They saw the signs that were performed and they believed in His name, but the disciples were the ones who believed in the scriptures and they recognized the power of the scriptures. That’s what we want to do in our lives.

Verse 24: *But Jesus would not entrust himself to them, for he knew all people*. That means He wouldn’t commit Himself to them. He wouldn’t rely on their opinions. He wouldn’t let them determine what He was going to do. He didn’t say, “Well let’s see. What would bring the greatest benefit to my popularity here? Should I do the water into wine thing here?” No, he doesn’t ask those kinds of questions like the disciples might. Jesus is asking different questions because He’s saying, “How can I serve the Father?” Not how can I please people. That’s what it means there.

And then verse 25: *He did not need any testimony about mankind, for he knew what was in each person*. He knew what was in each person. We’re going to see that develop.

As John is writing his gospel, his intent is to help us believe that Jesus is God and we can put our trust in Him. That’s his desire, so he tells us about Jesus is God right at the beginning. He leads us through the passage in chapter 1, helping us know how He met each person individually. He does this miracle to help us see that God is concerned about the small things, even the fact that we ran out of some of the drink at the wedding. God is concerned about those small things in our lives. He’s concerned about our worship as we go into the cleansing of the temple. And now we see at the very end that He knows everything about us. He knows what’s in each one of our hearts.

God knows us and we should be asking the question, “Wow. Does God know me?” We should be asking the question because in the next chapter, in John 3, we’re going to come to that verse. If you’ve memorized any verses in the Bible, you probably memorized John 3:16 and that’s going to tell us how we can now accept Jesus Christ into our lives, how we can be part of His family. We’re going to learn what it means to be born again in chapter 3. He’s leading us to the invitation which is next week.

Today he leaves off in chapter 2 and he’s saying He knows the hearts of all mankind. He knows every person. He knows your heart; He knows what’s going on. He knows what needs to be cleaned up in your life and He has a special package of blessing, a specialized package of blessing just for you.

That’s cool. I love to think about that. God has a Scott package that’s just for me. He wants to give it to me. I just need to come before Him and accept that and receive Him. The special Scott package is different than the package for you. Every one of us has a different package and God’s

grace is different for each one because God knows everybody's heart. He knows what's inside every person.

That's what he says in verse 25. *For he knew what was in each* person, including me and you. God does that. And when we think about what God has done then we think about the blessings that He wants to give to us. All the things that He's done. When we think about God's blessings, we think about all the things that are given to us, we are drawn to worship Him, we are drawn to serve Him, we are drawn to thank Him.

We are celebrating Thanksgiving this week and as we do we are going to be drawn to bless Him. We are going to be drawn to thank Him. We are going to be drawn to focus on Him and what He's done for us in our lives.

I want to continue our worship together as we sing and worship God. We're going to lift up our praise before the Lord. I just want to prepare you for Thursday, for Thanksgiving. That your heart will be ready for what will take place on that particular day as we worship the Lord. I trust that God will speak to you in the midst of this. If you'd like prayer for something in your life in the midst of these songs – these songs are kind of upbeat songs, not real meditative songs, they're songs that get us ready for Thanksgiving – but in the midst of that if God is speaking to you and you want some prayer, go to the prayer counselors. They'll be on the side. They'd love to pray for you and get you connected in a special way with the Lord this morning.

Let's worship God and bring attention to His grace and thanks in our heart as we're preparing our hearts for this week.

[PRAYER] Heavenly Father, we just come before you now and we thank you for what you've done for us. We thank you for the general things like health and for creation and for having food and freedom and all those things that we'll think about in our lives. But we also think about the special things you've done for us specifically because you've sent Jesus Christ to die for us. We thank you for the spiritual things you're doing inside of our hearts, that you're growing us, drawing us closer to yourself. Lord, we thank you. We're grateful for everything you've done. We lift up our praise to you now in Jesus' name, amen.