

2024 TALK, SHORT ALL-AGE TALK, JOHN 2:1:11

A WEDDING, SOME WATER JARS, THE BEST WINE, THE FIRST SIGN

Another curious tale with Jesus at the centre of it. The '1st sign', even before Jesus has begun his ministry. But Jesus already has started gathering disciples. And, we are told, as a result of this first sign, Jesus' disciples 'believe in him'.

What kind of sign is this? Is it a big, red, flashing neon sign which Jesus carries around with him saying: 'Here is the Messiah'? Is it a sign which proves Jesus is God's Son? Is it a sign removing any doubt that Jesus was sent by God? Even John the Baptist later wondered whether Jesus was the Chosen One of God.

Signs from God are not like this. They are not proof. They need to be read and understood. They need to be read as part of a bigger story. We need to ask God for wisdom. For discernment. Because, as you know, in this world there are plenty of signs. They all demand our attention. And they point us in all sorts of directions. They can lead us to all sorts of different conclusions.

Here's a sign in Hemel, I stumbled across in my travels this week. (SHOW HEDGEHOG SIGN). My first reaction was: no point. Won't make any difference. But then I thought again. It's beside a park, a main road and a school, so it is in an important location, for the community, for young people and for hedgehogs. It's a sign which shows that Grovehill's children are concerned for God's creation. It might not make a difference, this sign tells us something important.

This first sign associated with Jesus, is at a big family & community celebration. This is very important. This tells us about why Jesus came. It tells us God wants to bring us joy. And fullness of life. Wine is from grapes. An important crop for the people of God. An important sign of the wonderful work of God in creation. A sign of the secret work of God's Kingdom. A sign of human beings working in co-operation with God & his creation. A reminder that God works miracles. Not just extraordinary miracles. But the 'ordinary' miracle of life - every day.

And like the guests at this wedding at Cana – creation sings & dances to God's tune! Do we hear this music? Are we joining in the dance? So much more to say about this story. But let's finish with the astonished words of the master of the banquet, who has *no clue* where this miraculous wine came from. But the servants – they know. He asks the groom: 'Why have you saved the best til

last?'... God has sent us Jesus. 'God saves the best til last'. We have this hope – the hope of a new world in & through our Saviour, Jesus Christ. Alleluia !.