

the  Venues
Go Deep

Close Encounters

“Aint No Party Like a Jesus Party”

May 3, 2015

What is the most unusual wedding you’ve been to?

Read John 2:1-11

What is your first reaction to the story?

1. Here’s your sign.

Silly question but important to understanding this passage: What is the purpose of a sign?

Read John 2:11 and John 20:30

What is John trying to point to by including this “sign”?

Read John 2:4-5

How do you interpret Jesus’ words to his mother?

How do you suppose Jesus felt about his mom’s suggestion that he do something about the wine?

Read John 2:6-10

These water pots were used for the required purification rituals of the Jewish faith – after sex, after a woman’s menstruation, before entering the temple, before using cooking utensils, certain skin conditions, abnormal discharge of bodily fluids, after contact with a corpse or a grave, for some a daily ritual. The purpose was not physical cleaning but a symbolic spiritual cleansing – to be rid of guilt, to make oneself worthy.

What is the significance of Jesus using these water pots for his miracle?

How do John 1:16 and Romans 14:1-17 help us understand what Jesus was doing?

Read Amos 9:13; Isaiah 25:6 and Joel 2:24

What does wine symbolize in these passages?

What, then, is Jesus saying by turning the water used for religious ritual into wine?

2. Invite Jesus to your thing.

Jesus was invited to the wedding. His presence made all the difference in the world. *To what in your life do*

you need to invite Jesus? What in your life needs His miraculous touch?

What do we learn from Mary's comment in John 2:5?

3. Trade the temple for the table.

Read John 2:12-22

In the first story, Jesus makes wine to keep the party going.

In this story, Jesus makes a whip to shut down a church service.

The Jewish faith was centered in the Temple. The Temple was built on exclusion, and a pecking order. Only the High Priest could go into the Holy of Holies. Only the priests could go into the Holy Place. Jewish men were seated closer to the altar than Jewish women. Gentiles were seated furthest away.

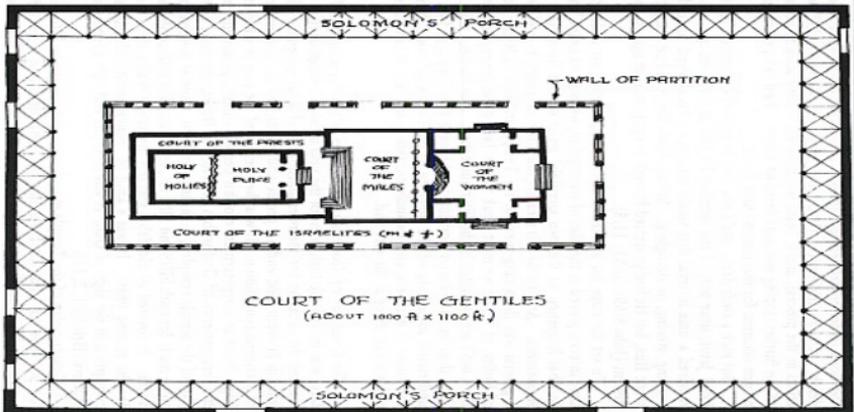


Figure 21. Basic Layout of the Temple Area.

Read John 2:18-19 – *How do you interpret Jesus' words?*

Read John 2:20-22 – *Contrast Jesus as a temple with the Jewish temple.*

The teaching suggested that Jesus is telling us to trade the temple for the table, to trade rituals for a party.

What do you think of that interpretation? Solid? A bunch of hooey? Interesting and deserves more research?

If that interpretation is solid, what does a table where a feast is held say about Jesus' view of following Him?

What does it say about how we should live our lives?

...about how Jesus sees and relates to us?

...about how we should relate to people?

...about how we should "do church"?

What is your take-away from this study?