A Comforting Biblical Adjective

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[0:00] let's pray father would you open our hearts to hear your word this evening in christ's name i'm in oh nice to see you happy new year everybody uh if you are new here this evening my name is aaron i'm the minister here and oh g'day mate oh yeah this is donald yeah give that you wave for the people donald wave he's from new zealand old friend wow good to see her sorry just a little bit of a surprise what have you been up to uh great guy one of the greats one of the new zealand greats gets an arm good guy okay well good evening uh as you can see um child our kids church is off tonight because it's uh we're just having a break for a couple of weeks so back on next week if you've come here with children i put an announcement on facebook um if you're here expecting child care tonight and you're with your children peace to you over this during this sermon it's a bit shorter than normal so i'm sure you'll be fine right so we're studying mark the gospel of mark but um we're taking a break and we'll be back back with mark next week so this week i wanted to look at one of the readings for epiphany you know like the church calendar is broken up into different kind of segments that benj talked about and they have different readings that kind of relate to the different parts of the church calendar most of the year we kind of don't track with it but um important times we kind of track with it so this is one of the important ones right uh so we're looking at so one of the readings in the lectionary for epiphany is this passage in john it's a great passage so let's just get let's get uh let's get straight into it be helpful to have your bibles open for this i'll be following the text pretty closely on the third day there was a wedding at cana in galilee and the mother of jesus was there and uh and so were the disciples so jesus disciples his mom they're off to a wedding uh we don't know who it was probably a relative fairly good chance it was a relative now back in the days weddings were quite long a ceremony might happen in an afternoon and then the party would go on for like you know three or four days and uh the groom had to sort of pay for everything so we see in verse three there there is a catering crisis uh when the wine ran out to the mother of jesus said to him they have no wine there was a uh i thought about a catering crisis at my own wedding when i was when i was studying this my wife is here somewhere my mother-in-law actually who was here remembers this because we had a wedding cake and the mother-in-law and sister-in-law were in charge of bringing the wedding cake to the wedding and it was in the trunk uh of the car and it was we got married up in furry creek which is near squamish right quite a windy road so apparently uh when they got to the wedding reception they opened up the trunk to get the cake out and uh the top of the cake had just sort of sort of just slid and off you know and apparently it was quite a interesting it was like one of those moments where they kind of just they're both getting stuff out and they both lift up the trunk and they both kind of stand there looking at it going oh and i didn't hear about this for weeks because they got the chef and he came in grabbed it and sorted it all out no problem right so no major drama for us not compared to the embarrassment of the groom in our story here right who is uh he's he's uh he's in trouble in a in a culture where hospitality is king this is um this is a total disaster so mary says to jesus they have no wine now there is something behind those words something behind those words she wants to get the groom some help and she knows who jesus is she knows jesus is extra special right and so she's like

they have no wine so uh you know if you could just uh magic fingers just get something happening here would you just gonna do your thing right get something happening that's that's basically behind what she's saying here you might think well you're reading you're totally reading into this but no i'm not reading into it because it's the only it's the only uh it's the only way to read this that makes sense of christ's response to her because it's a rebuke verse 4 and jesus said to her woman what does this have to do with me my hour has not yet come it sounds like a non-sequitur but it's not we'll get there okay um uh that's latin don't worry about it uh so two important things are tied up in this interaction uh first christ's relationship with his mother right and secondly christ's plan for revealing

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who he is so one at a time uh the first is the mother the mother issue so what does this have to do with me that is a much that's the translation it's actually a much softer version of the greek the original greek reads literally like this what to me are you woman what to me are you woman this so he's saying this to his mum so the way it's translated it makes it sound it makes it sound more like um what has this problem got to do with me but it's actually it's more along the lines of who are you who are you with regards to me see she wants she wants him to fix the wine problem she's coming to him as his mother and he's saying i'm not your magic boy if we were going through john we'd get a much kind of clearer picture of this because it's a bit of a trend it's it's we'd often see jesus distancing himself from from mary and it seems a bit mean sometimes but it's basically it's trying to he's trying to reorient her heart because she must come to him like everybody else uh she must come to jesus a sinner needing forgiveness there there is no inside track just because she's a mum so that's the first issue the the mother thing right um i think that's secondary to this one here which is christ's plan for revealing who he is so she says fix this and he says who are you to tell me how and when i'm going to kind of reveal who i am and and do my things right and so jesus is basically saying here it's like uh it if i did some big public outing of myself with this miracle that everyone sees like what you want me to do mum i would be famous for here is the son of god come to save people from embarrassing social faux pas come to do cool tricks come to do miraculous things that kind of help people every now and then now we end up he does do the miracle in the end but it's private the only people that realize it when you if you look closely at the story the only people who see it are the slaves and and uh the disciples and and mary of course he does say something quite profound in in the way he does it but he doesn't want this to be this massive public defining thing because his message is not watch me do amazing stuff his message is like watch me die i've come here to die that's what the my hour has not come thing is about right my hour has not yet come every time that word that the word hour is used in john jesus is talking about the cross so he's going i'm not going to reveal myself
now to everyone because they'll misunderstand what i'm all about my my glory it's going to happen i'm i'm going to do this great revealing the uh the climax of my glory revealed will be me on the cross but it's not going to happen now a small group of people will see something amazing and that's how i want it and as christians as readers of god's word we get the benefit of uh being one of the witnesses to this so like i said he goes ahead and he solves the no wine issue anyway and and and we see a similar thing happening in a sermon a few weeks ago right where the the syrophoenician woman and mark who who comes to jesus and says heal my daughter and and uh jesus says no i'm not going to do that and but he heals her anyway and he did that to draw faith out of this person and i think i think jesus is doing this with mary as well he resists he rebukes and it draws faith out of her reorients her heart and we see it demonstrated in verse 5 when she says you know to the to the servants they do whatever he tells now let's get to the actual miracle itself okay verse 6 here now there were six stone jars uh water jars that were for the jewish rites of purification each holding 20 or 30 gallons um i love these little details they just they're just going to lend support to the idea that this really is kind of eyewitness you know people remember these details so six huge vestibules so this is hundreds of liters of water right and uh they were used for ceremonial washing at the wedding and uh this is a bit of a nod what this is about it's a bit of a nod to the jewish ritualistic practices uh before folks could enter the temple to kind of meet with god they had to do ceremonial washing and uh uh it was a reminder to them that they needed to be clean to come before a holy god now the washing was just symbolic it didn't actually do anything it was more pointing to the need that people had right so jesus uses these jars to kind of present uh an old uh the old order of jewish law and custom one which he is actually going to replace it's going to change it's going to turn over that he is going to be the means of cleansing verse 7 jesus said to this to the so the servants fill the jars with water and they filled them to the brim it's important and he said to them now draw some out and take it to the master of the feast so they took it so at some point the water was turned into wine and he took a sample to the master of the feast this is like the head waiter or the emcee or the like at the paid event planner same and and then we see this amazing thing happens verse verse 9 and 10 and when the master of the feast tasted the water now become wine and did not know where it come from the master of the feast called the bridegroom and said everyone serves the good wine first and when people have drunk freely then in the poor wine but you have kept the good wine until now folks this miracle is a miracle of abundance i mean there's a lot of stuff going on here but one of the things that's trying to show us one of the things that's trying to make clear to us is is the abundant nature of this miracle here the jars were filled to the brim it

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was really really good wine wine which was never normally served eyes on me never normally served at this point of the wedding so it's a miracle of abundance but abundant what like i see jesus is trying to tell us something by doing by doing this right because it's been recorded we can read it and try and understand it he's not just trying to rescue a groom in an embarrassing situation although he does do that jesus miracles are never just naked displays of power right neat tricks to impress
they point beyond themselves and in this case they're pointing to or referencing lots of these old testament prophecies about the coming kingdom uh so back in the back in the old testament these these prophets right and a lot of them spoke during uh the time when israel was in exile when they were like captured people they're kind of like slaves or kind of like you know they were enslaved people right and uh and these prophets would would have these visions a lot of them were judgment ones but a lot of them set out this future how they had a vision of the future and and the future was wonderful and it talked about a day in the future when god would bring his people back from captivity would restore them and god would be with his people and the land would be filled with peace and joy etc it's wonderful wonderful time and one of the significant marks of that day according to amos and jeremiah and isaiah is this an abundant supply of very high quality wine isn't that cool it's one of the pictures god uses to describe what the kingdom of god will look like an abundant supply of really high quality wine and through this miracle jesus is saying that time has come i'm beginning the kingdom i'm beginning the rescue and here is a little clue that it's happening okay short summary and finish there are tons of applications and lots of significant points to make in this passage right and i've just only i've selectively picked a couple here i mean there's the mum stuff about there's no inside track coming to jesus right um but i just want to focus on one as i finish here just for two minutes my hour has not yet come this is what christ says right it's not time for me to die jesus says to his mother and he's saying this is the big thing i've come to do but not yet however i am going to tell you something about the cross i am going to tell you something about the cross through this sign through this amazing miracle water from temple jars becoming hundreds of liters of really good wine water jars filled to the brim served at a time when good wine wasn't normally served it means that one of the qualities of salvation that christ will bring through the cross one of the adjectives is abundance abundant salvation i mean it's the same it's the syrophoenician sermon all over again to be honest you know like we preached out preached out a few weeks ago right and if you weren't here there's this woman who's syrophoenician historically enemies of god comes to jesus says heal my daughter and jesus says i'm not going to take food from the children and give it to dogs and she says yes but even the dogs you know eat the crumb crumbs that fall off the table and and her point her point is this it's that she sees the abundant nature of salvation on offer she's like there is so much grace there is so much mercy the cross did so much it's just fallen off it's just fallen off the table like i'm just happy with just you know i'm just happy with the crumbs of salvation i'm just happy with the crumbs of grace because that's enough it's more than enough it's it's abundant and it's something we need to hear a lot and i'm glad that this passage reiterates what we preached a few weeks ago because i know i can hear a message i can preach a message like this right and i can feel really great on monday morning about it and by about you know two in the afternoon i'm starting to think of oh man am i really forgiven you know like i'm
trying to earn my salvation again so what i'm trying to do now is when i think about these words grace mercy forgiveness salvation when i think about those words i try and remember to add the biblical adjective of abundant there is abundant forgiveness and i hope you hear that if you don't feel forgiven if you feel dirty or feel shameful or you're constantly disappointed in yourself i hope you hear that forgiveness is is more than enough for you abundant grace abundant mercy abundant forgiveness so when you think of those words remember don't think of them in isolation abundance i think that's what christ is trying to teach us here in the passage can i get a hearty amen amen your seal or sit or kneel with me and when i say lord in your mercy if you would respond with hear our prayer hi

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