



# Refresh Small Group Series

Week One: Jesus Turns Water into Wine



## SCRIPTURE 1

### John 2:1–11

*(New International Version)*

1 On the third day a wedding took place at Cana in Galilee. Jesus' mother was there, 2 and Jesus and his disciples had also been invited to the wedding. 3 When 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."

5 His mother said to the servants, "Do whatever he tells you."

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

7 Jesus said to the servants, "Fill the jars with water"; so they filled them to the brim.

8 Then he told them, "Now draw some out and take it to the master of the banquet."

They did so, 9 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. Then he called the bridegroom aside 10 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."

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.



### John 2:1–11

*(First Nations Version)*

1 Three days later there was a wedding in Village of Reeds (Cana), in the territory of Circle of Nations (Galilee). Bitter Tears (Mary), the mother of Creator Sets Free (Jesus), was there. 2 Creator Sets Free (Jesus) and the ones who walked the road with him were invited as guests to the wedding.

3 During the celebration, they ran out of wine. [This would have been a great embarrassment to the groom and his family.]

So the mother of Creator Sets Free (Jesus) said to him, "Son, they have no more wine."

4 "Honored woman, he said to her. "Why are you telling me? Is this our concern? It is not yet my time to show who I am."

5 But his mother turned to the helpers and said, "Do whatever he says." [They looked to him and waited for his instructions.]

6 There were six traditional stone water pots, used for purification ceremonies, that could hold large amounts of water.

7-8 "Fill them to the top," Creator Sets Free (Jesus) told them, "and take some to the headman of the feast." They filled the pots until they could hold no more and did what he said.

9-10 The water had turned into wine. The headman did not know where it had come from, but the helpers who were serving the wine knew.

The headman took a drink and called to the groom, "Everyone serves the best wine first, and after the guests have had enough to drink, they bring out the watered-down wine. But even though you served good wine at first, you have saved the best wine for last."

11 This was the first of the signs through which Creator Sets Free (Jesus) displayed his power. When his new followers saw this, their trust in him grew stronger.

## DISCUSS 2

### Encounters with Jesus

In their culture, hospitality was a top value. It would be a great dishonor to run out of food or wine.

- *A pool full of top-notch wine is more than enough for this wedding. Why do you think Jesus makes so much? And why such excellent wine? What does this reveal about Jesus and his generosity?*
- *Turning water into wine is probably the last thing you would expect from someone like Jesus. Interestingly, it caused the disciples to put their trust in him. Why do you think they responded this way?*
- *They likely had new questions about Jesus as a result. What questions do you have about faith or Jesus?*



## APPLY 3

In this story, Jesus responds generously to a moment of scarcity. Where in your life are you “running out of wine” or feeling empty? We are going to invite Jesus into the places where we feel like we are running out.

### Spiritual Practice

Sit in a comfortable position, and breathe slowly. Scan your body from the top of your head to your toes.

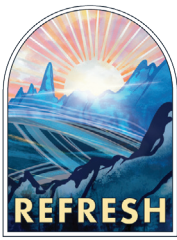
Where do you feel any tightness or pain? As you name that place, say, “Welcome, Jesus, welcome,” and let any tension go. Breathe deeply. Release. Then think of any issues in your life that you would like to share with Jesus. Name the issues and say, “Welcome, Jesus, welcome.”

*(\*Borrowed from ‘Spiritual Disciplines Handbook’ by Adele Ahlberg Calhoun)*



### Throw a Party

As we saw in the video, when we follow Jesus, our joy overflows to others. A great place to share joy is at a party. Let’s be like Jesus and throw a party for our friends and acquaintances on campus and extend Jesus’ hospitality for others. You can get ideas for your party in our “*Top 10 ways to make your ministry more fun*” article. Each of us can help make this party better!



# Refresh Small Group Series

Week Two: Jesus Advocates for a Vulnerable Woman



## SCRIPTURE 1

### John 8:2–11

*(New International Version)*

2 At dawn he appeared again in the temple courts, where all the people gathered around him, and he sat down to teach them. 3 The teachers of the law and the Pharisees brought in a woman caught in adultery. They made her stand before the group 4 and said to Jesus, “Teacher, this woman was caught in the act of adultery. 5 In the Law Moses commanded us to stone such women. Now what do you say?” 6 They were using this question as a trap, in order to have a basis for accusing him.

But Jesus bent down and started to write on the ground with his finger. 7 When they kept on questioning him, he straightened up and said to them, “Let any one of you who is without sin be the first to throw a stone at her.” 8 Again he stooped down and wrote on the ground.

9 At this, those who heard began to go away one at a time, the older ones first, until only Jesus was left, with the woman still standing there. 10 Jesus straightened up and asked her, “Woman, where are they? Has no one condemned you?”

11 “No one, sir,” she said.

“Then neither do I condemn you,” Jesus declared. “Go now and leave your life of sin.”



### John 8:2–11

*(First Nations Version)*

2 Early in the morning at the sunrise, he returned again to the sacred lodge. All the people began to gather around him, so he sat down and once again began to teach and tell his stories. [Across the plaza a cloud of dust was rising from a group of people who were walking toward Creator Sets Free (Jesus) as he was teaching. They were forcefully dragging a woman along with them. He could see her tears and the look of terror on her face.] 3 It was the scroll keepers and the Separated Ones (Pharisees).

They brought the woman to Creator Sets Free (Jesus) and forced her down on the ground in front of him and all the people. 4 “Wisdomkeeper,” they said, “we found this woman in the very act of being unfaithful to her husband. 5 Drawn from the Water (Moses) instructed us in the law to throw stones at her until she dies. What do you have to say about this?”

6 They were putting him to a test, so they could have a way to accuse him. [The crowd was silent and waited to see what he would say, but he said nothing.] He bent over and with his finger wrote something in the dirt. When he did not answer right away, the Separated Ones (Pharisees) became angry and kept questioning him.

7 Creator Sets Free (Jesus) looked up at them and said, “The one who has done no wrong should be the first to throw a stone at her.” 8 He then bent over and again began to write in the dirt with his finger.

9 When they heard his words, they all stood there silently. Then, beginning with the elders, one at a time they dropped their stones and walked away. Soon all were gone except for Creator Sets Free (Jesus) and the woman.

10 He stood up and looked at her. “Honored woman,” he said. “Where are the ones who were accusing you? Is there no one who finds fault with you?”

11 The woman looked up timidly into his eyes and said, “No one, Wisdomkeeper.”

“Then I also find no fault with you,” he said to her. “You may go your way, but take care not to return to this broken path you have been walking.”

## Encounters with Jesus

- Describe the past few hours of this woman's life. What might she be thinking and feeling at this point?
- What is going on for the mob? What is their goal?
- What do you like about how Jesus handles this crazy scene? Describe the impact that verse 7 has on the crowd. Why?



In the video, we see that when we turn our backs on Creator, we turn on one another and violence is the result. In this story, we see this playing out between the mob and the woman.

Sometimes we relate to the woman in this story, and sometimes we relate to the mob. Jesus wants to love you like he loves this woman. Think of an area in your life where you want to hear Jesus say to you, "Then neither do I condemn you..."

*Please try both of these spiritual practices together in your group.*

### Spiritual Practice: Prayer

Each of us is beautiful in the eyes of God, but sometimes we are critical of ourselves and others. Our souls carry these burdens.

Pick one of these emotions that you have experienced most this week. We are going to invite God into our souls and feelings.

- Anger
- Numbness
- Loneliness
- Anxiety
- Sadness
- Other

Pray this prayer: "Jesus, I have been feeling (emotion). Please speak to me about this right now (pause).

Fill me with your love. Share with the group which one you picked and how you felt during prayer."

### Spiritual Practice: Reflection

Sometimes we are more like the mob. It is easy to want to throw the first stone at those who irritate us, just as the crowd sought to condemn the woman in the passage. Who do we condemn with our words or actions?

It takes courage to put down our rocks and admit that we too are not sin-free. We are all a work in progress, and we need Jesus to daily open our eyes to our selfishness. When we do that, he can transform our criticalness into compassion.

This week, let's pay attention to our internal monologue. Who do you look down on?







### SCRIPTURE 1

#### John 13:4–14

*(New International Version)*

4 So he [Jesus] got up from the meal, took off his outer clothing, and wrapped a towel around his waist. 5 After that, he poured water into a basin and began to wash his disciples' feet, drying them with the towel that was wrapped around him.

6 He came to Simon Peter, who said to him, "Lord, are you going to wash my feet?"

7 Jesus replied, "You do not realize now what I am doing, but later you will understand."

8 "No," said Peter, "you shall never wash my feet."

Jesus answered, "Unless I wash you, you have no part with me."

9 "Then, Lord," Simon Peter replied, "not just my feet but my hands and my head as well!"

10 Jesus answered, "Those who have had a bath need only to wash their feet; their whole body is clean. And you are clean, though not every one of you." 11 For he knew who was going to betray him, and that was why he said not every one was clean.

12 When he had finished washing their feet, he put on his clothes and returned to his place. "Do you understand what I have done for you?" he asked them. 13 "You call me 'Teacher' and 'Lord,' and rightly so, for that is what I am. 14 Now that I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also should wash one another's feet.



#### John 13:4–14

*(First Nations Version)*

4 Knowing all of this, during the meal Creator Sets Free (Jesus) got up from the table, took off his outer garments, and wrapped a cloth around himself like a sash. 5 He poured water into a vessel and, one by one, he began to wash the feet of his followers and dry them with the cloth. [This was a task reserved for only the lowest servant of the household.]

6 He came to Stands On the Rock (Peter), who said to him, "Wisdomkeeper, are you going to wash my feet?"

7 "You do not understand now what I am doing, but later you will," he answered. 8 "No!" Stands On the Rock (Peter) lifted his voice, "This can never be!"

Creator Sets Free (Jesus) looked deep into his eyes and said, "If you refuse this, then you have no part in who I am." 9 "Wisdomkeeper," he answered back, "if this is so, then wash my hands and head also!" 10 Creator Set Free (Jesus) replied, "If you have already had a bath, only your feet need washing, and then you will be clean all over. Now, you are all clean. Except for one."

11 He said this because he knew who would betray him. After he had finished washing all their feet, 12 he put his outer garment back on and sat down again at the table. "Do you see what I have done?" he said to them. 13 "You are right to call me Wisdomkeeper and Chief—because I am. 14 If I, your Wisdomkeeper and Chief, have washed your feet, then you should wash each others' feet. 15 So follow my footsteps and do for each other what I have done for you.

## Encounters with Jesus

- What do you like about Jesus in this passage?
- What is going on for Peter? Why does Peter refuse to let Jesus wash his feet in v.8? Why might it be uncomfortable to have Jesus kneel in front of you and wash your feet?
- Peter was very real with Jesus in this passage. What good comes from Peter's vulnerability?
- After Jesus washes their feet, he calls them to serve others sacrificially. How do you feel about "washing other people's feet?"



Please try both of these spiritual practices together in your group.

### Spiritual Practice: Prayer

How are we like Peter? When are we stubborn with Jesus and God? Peter wants to follow Jesus on his terms. Jesus will have none of it. Jesus' way, or not at all.

We don't like asking for or accepting help. We hate feeling needy or burdensome.

Jesus invites us to be vulnerable with him. What are your real questions? It takes courage to ask honest questions and set aside our stubbornness. Let's schedule a time right now to talk more.

### Spiritual Practice: Service

In the video, Jesus gives us living water, and we get to do the same for others. In this passage, the disciples similarly receive from Jesus and then are asked to do the same for others. Let's do this on campus. What act of sacrificial service would you like to do together?

Pick one that you will do together this week:

#### Serving together on campus:

- Pick up trays at the dining hall that have been left for the staff to clean up.
- Group grocery shopping trip

#### Serving together out in the community:

- Serve together in a soup kitchen
- Clean up a park or trail



# Refresh Small Group Series

Week Four: Jesus Responds to Doubts



## SCRIPTURE 1

### John 20:24–29

*(New International Version)*

24 Now Thomas (also known as Didymus), one of the Twelve, was not with the disciples when Jesus came. 25 So the other disciples told him, “We have seen the Lord!”

But he said to them, “Unless I see the nail marks in his hands and put my finger where the nails were, and put my hand into his side, I will not believe.”

26 A week later his disciples were in the house again, and Thomas was with them. Though the doors were locked, Jesus came and stood among them and said, “Peace be with you!” 27 Then he said to Thomas, “Put your finger here; see my hands. Reach out your hand and put it into my side. Stop doubting and believe.”

28 Thomas said to him, “My Lord and my God!”

29 Then Jesus told him, “Because you have seen me, you have believed; blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed.”



### John 20:24–29

*(First Nations Version)*

24 Looks Like His Brother (Thomas), one of the original twelve followers, was not there when Creator Sets Free (Jesus) showed himself to the others. 25 They told him, “We have seen the Wisdomkeeper with our own eyes.”

But he said to them, “Unless I see the nail marks in his hands, and put my finger into them, and put my hand into the hole in his side, I will not believe.”

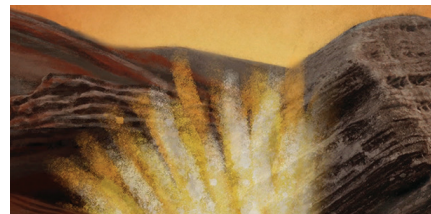
26 Eight days later his followers were gathered together again, and Looks Like His Brother (Thomas) was with them. The doors were all locked, but Creator Sets Free (Jesus) came in and stood before them all.

“Peace be with you,” he said. 27 Then he turned to Looks Like His Brother (Thomas) and said, “Look closely at my hands and touch my scars with your finger. Put your hand into the wound in my side. Then put away your doubts and trust in me.”

28 “You are my Honored Chief and my Creator,” he said. 29 “Now you believe, because you have seen me?” he said to him. “A greater blessing will rest on the ones who have not seen but still believe.”

## Encounters with Jesus

- What is going on for Thomas in v. 25? Why does Jesus say this in v. 27?
- Do you think Thomas actually touches the hole in Jesus' hand? Why or why not?
- What does Jesus mean in v. 29?
- Allowing yourself to grow in hope is an emotional risk. Why was Thomas initially unwilling to take this risk?
- What are you learning about doubt in this passage? What do you like about how Jesus addresses Thomas' doubt?



## Spiritual Practice: Considering Faith in Jesus

The Gospel of John was originally written in Greek. "Believe" in the Greek can also be translated to "trust". Jesus is inviting Thomas (and us) in verse 29 to believe in him and trust him with our lives. Let's consider together what this means.

