

–Chapter 1–
Mother Doesn't Always Know Best
Jesus and Mary at the Wedding at Cana

The Big Picture:

Mary was able to trust Jesus because she knew he was trustworthy. The key to trusting God is in knowing Him. The more we understand his faithfulness, his goodness, his justice, and his mercy, the greater our ability will be to give our concerns over to him.

Discuss:

“While we know what Mary saw and heard in the days surrounding his birth, we don’t know how much she really understood. We are only told she “treasured all these things, pondering them in her heart.”

Is it possible to have faith without understanding? What needs to be in place before faith can be had? What did Mary have that allowed her to trust?

“His initial refusal in both accounts is really a means to an end. He is driving them further in their trust relationship with him. His puzzling words are merely a way to move them forward.”

Can you think of a time in your life that God worked in the same way? He did something completely unexpected that challenged what you thought about him? How did this ultimately affect your relationship with him?

“Beginning his ministry with this particular miracle was strategically brilliant. It defined his intentions toward the religious ideas currently in place, defying the pharisaical concept of holiness. It set the tone for what was to follow, symbolizing what his coming would bring. Something fresh. New. Better.”

Part of the reason Jesus was so soundly rejected by the religious leadership of his time was that he threatened the cultural ritual/routine. The gospel always has a cultural context at the time it is presented. Yet culture quickly changes, in some cases making the gospel seem irrelevant. What cultural baggage have you attached to the gospel message? How can you detach the message from your cultural expectations?

“We may have a faulty assumption that will lead us to a faulty conclusion. We all have ideas about who God is and what he is like. We base our expectations of how he will act on those ideas. Then when God acts in unexpected ways, we become disillusioned with him. But God did not let us down. Only our faulty, preconceived ideas of God disappointed us.”

Have you been disappointed by faulty assumptions about God? What misunderstanding did you have? How did you learn you were incorrect in your idea? What did you learn about God to contradict your assumption?

Moving Forward:

1. God has revealed himself in many ways. Our primary source is the Bible. All we need to know about Him is in black and white in the pages of his word.

Read Psalm 103. List out everything we can know about God from this psalm.

Put a star by the things that most help you to trust him with your issues. Explain why each of these is important to you.

2. Paul tells us another way God reveals himself in Romans 1:18-20. What is it? What do you learn about Him as you observe this particular revelation?

3. What are other avenues that God uses to reveal himself to us?

4. While the process of learning about God can be difficult, since that knowledge often comes through experiencing disillusionment or disappointment, God uses the struggle to produce something wonderful in us. What are the results? See 2 Corinthians 4:17-18.