

Sunday, January 19, 2025

## Scripture Reading: John 2:1-11

*Joy is that deep settled confidence that God is in control  
of every area of my life. —Paul Sailhamer*

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Today's Bible reading tells the story of Jesus' first recorded miracle: the transformation of water to wine at the wedding in Cana. I wonder if the attendees received wedding invitations?

This reminds me of a passage in Isaiah 55: "Ho, everyone who thirsts, come to the waters; and you that have no money, come, buy and eat! Come, buy wine and milk without money and without price" (v. 1). Sounds like an invitation, doesn't it?

In verses 1-3 of Isaiah 55, the prophet utters a dozen imperative verbs, a full one-third of which are the command to "come." Come to the waters; come, buy and eat; come, buy; come to me, he cries. And then he adds, "Seek the LORD while he may be found, call upon him while he is near; ... return to the LORD, that he may have mercy on [you] and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon" (vv. 6-7). Again, this sounds like an invitation.

So, if you received a wedding invitation, how would you respond? The three most popular RSVPs are "joyfully accepts," "regretfully declines" or "not sure."

God knows who we are and invites us to attend the feast that's been prepared for us "before the foundation of the world." To that end, we might pray — in the words of the liturgy:

*By your Spirit make us one with Christ, One with each other,  
And one in ministry to all the world, Until Christ comes in final victory  
And we feast at his heavenly banquet.  
Through your Son Jesus Christ, With the Holy Spirit in your holy church,  
All honor and glory is yours, Almighty Father, Now and forever.  
Amen!*

So, how shall we respond? Joyfully accepts? Regretfully declines? Or not sure?

—Timothy Merrill

*Prayer: Teach us, good Lord, to serve you as you deserve; to give and not to count the cost;  
to fight and not to heed the wounds; to toil and not to seek for rest; to labor and not to ask for  
any reward, except that of knowing that we do your will. Through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.*

—Ignatius of Loyola

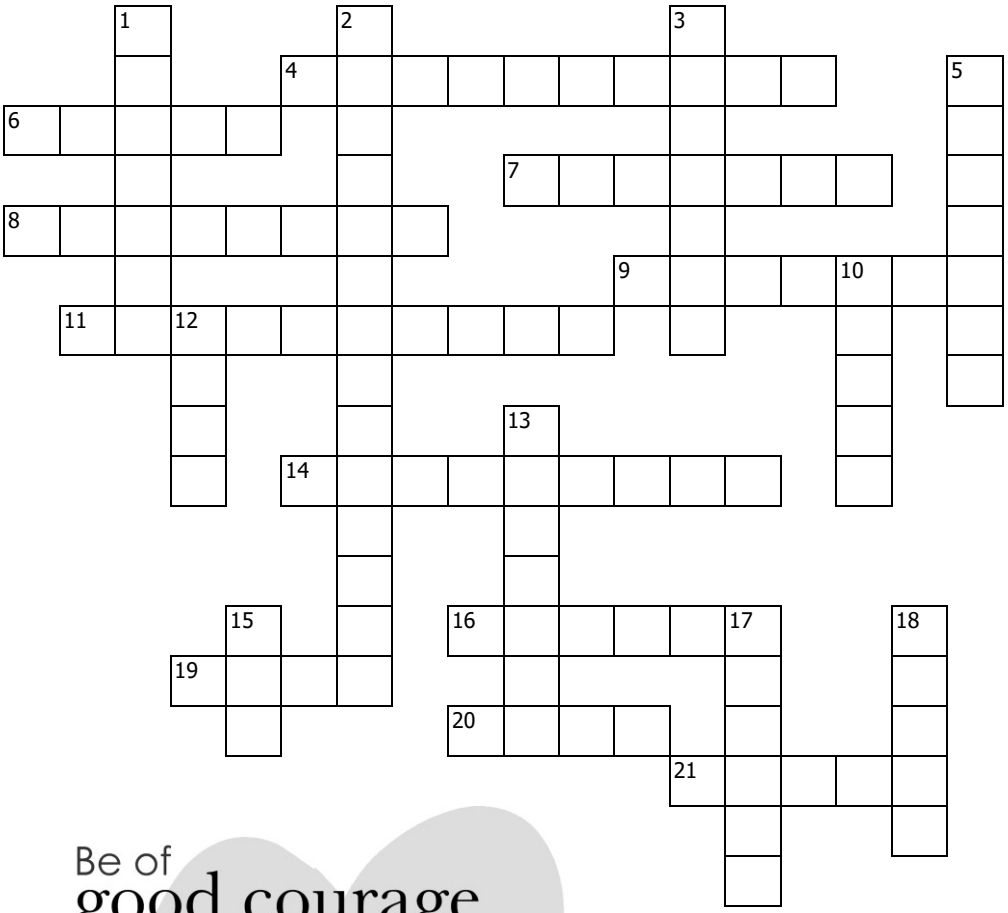


**Daily Bible Readings**

- Sunday:** Matthew 8-11
- Monday:** Matthew 12-15
- Tuesday:** Matthew 16-19
- Wednesday:** Matthew 20-22
- Thursday:** Matthew 23-25
- Friday:** Matthew 26-28
- Saturday:** Psalms 4-6

## DANIEL, A SERVANT OF GOD

In the book of Daniel, we read of a young man who was extremely gifted and also committed to serving God, no matter how difficult the challenges. Use the clues to complete the crossword puzzle.



### CLUES

1. Shadrack was thrown into this, 3:20
2. A king who went mad, 4:33
3. A friend of Daniel, 1:6
4. Saw handwriting on the wall, 5:9
5. Daniel's weeks, 9:24
6. Persian king, 10:1
7. Interpreter of Daniel's vision, 8:16
8. One of three friends, 3:19
9. Capital city of Chaldea, 1:1
10. What the den was full of, 6:16
11. Daniel's menu preference, 1:12
12. Animal with horn between its eyes, 8:5
13. A chief prince, 10:13
14. One of the last kings of Judah, 1:1
15. Number of horns on the fourth beast, 7:7
16. The Mede king, 5:31
17. The king made one for the people to worship, 3:14 (NRSV)
18. A word on the wall, 5:27
19. The second of four beasts, 7:5
20. Feet of ..., 2:33
21. What was cut from the mountain, 2:45 (NRSV)

Be of  
good courage  
and he shall  
**strengthen**  
your heart.  
Psalm 27:14