

## *Jesus calling Mary, 'Woman,' in John 2:4*

One of the words used in Scripture for 'woman' is the Greek word **γυνή** (pronounced 'goo-NAY'). This is the word which Jesus used to address Mary in John 2:4 after Mary had informed Him that the wine had run out at the wedding in Cana.

Some have speculated that Jesus used somewhat of a 'rough' term in talking to Mary - perhaps like when an angry man says, '*Woman, you better start listening to me!*' Others, however, say that Jesus' use of 'woman' here was a term of respect - and they use this passage to try and uphold their belief that Mary was almost god-like in nature. And so – *as always* – what's most needed is a closer examination of The Bible Itself in order to discover the truth.

The word **γυνή** (goo-NAY) itself means 'woman,' but when used in the vocative case, it is a term of respect and endearment. (*The vocative case is the case of direct address, as in, “O Rachel, why didn't you listen to me before?” We aren't merely speaking about Rachel – we are speaking to her.*) It is the vocative case which Jesus uses in John 2:4. And thus, He is indeed addressing Mary with a term of respect/endearment.

But that is not the only place where The Lord Jesus used the vocative case of **γυνή** (goo-NAY) to show respect and endearment to a woman. In addition to John 2:4, here are other occasions when The Savior used the vocative case of **γυνή** (goo-NAY):

- Matthew 15:28 – said to a *Canaanite* woman
- Luke 13:12 – said to a disabled woman whom Jesus heals
- John 4:21 – said to the *Samaritan* woman
- John 19:26 – said to Mary
- John 20:13,15 – said to Mary Magdalene

Additionally, Peter uses the vocative case in Luke 22:57 when speaking to a servant-girl. Therefore, we can see that The Bible records several instances of 'woman' being used in the vocative case, showing respect and endearment. Jesus indeed used that form in speaking to Mary, but He also used that form when addressing a *Canaanite* woman as well as a *Samaritan* woman – this reveals that The Lord Jesus showed care for women whom many other Jews most likely despised.

We must take the whole of Scripture, and therefore recognize that Jesus addressed women – Mary, as well as others – with endearment and respect. *O What a Loving Savior He Is!*

### References:

- Vine's Complete Expository Dictionary of Old and New Testament Words, Copyright © 1985 by Thomas Nelson, Inc., Publishers, pp.681-682
- Strong's exhaustive Concordance of The Bible, James Strong, Hendrickson Publishers, p.1181