

JESUS' FIRST SIGN: WATER TO WINE

John 2:1-11

Most weddings have memorable moments. Some of these are funny and some are embarrassing. Today we will see an unforgettable incident at a wedding Jesus attended.

1. THE FAMILY SCENE: A WEDDING – John 2:1,2

- Jesus honored marriage – Matthew 19:4-6. *“The Bond and Covenant of Marriage was established by God in creation, and our Lord Jesus Christ adorned this manner of life by His presence and first miracle at a wedding in Cana of Galilee” – Marriage Ceremony.* Like today, a wedding was a major social event in first century Israel. The wedding marked the end of the betrothal period. The groom and his friends would go to the bride’s house and escort her and her attendants to the groom’s house where the actual ceremony and banquet/supper occurred – Matthew 25:1,5,6. Then the marriage celebration often lasted for a week. The groom and his family were responsible for all the expenses of the celebration.
- Jesus’ mother, Jesus, and His disciples, were all there and invited to the wedding. Perhaps the bride or groom was a relative of Mary and Jesus, or at least close friends.

2. THE SERIOUS SITUATION: NO WINE – John 2:3-5

- Jesus is told by His mother that “they have no wine.” This is a serious embarrassing social problem in that culture, and could lead to lifelong stigma, or even lead to a lawsuit. Hospitality was extremely important in the ancient world. Jesus’ response to Mary is not rude to her. “Woman” is similar to “ma’am” or “madam”. It has been translated as “dear woman.” It is the same phrase Jesus uses to address Mary from the cross – John 19:26. It is also how He addresses the Samaritan woman – John 4:21. Jesus doesn’t call her ‘mother’ because now that His ministry has started, human relationships are no longer the same – Mark 3:31-35. But the phrase “what does this have to do with me” does express a distancing from His mother. It is at least a gentle rebuke. He is saying “don’t tell Me what to do in my God-led ministry.” Jesus is guided by His Father and not by people, not even His family – John 5:30; 8:29. By “His hour” has not yet come Jesus means His death and glorification – John 7:30; 8:20; 13:1; 17:1. The Hour is why Jesus came to earth. He came to give His life on the cross for our sin.
- Mary’s statement “Do whatever He tells you” is a great expression of her own faith and trust in Jesus. It should be our attitude toward Jesus today! *“No one ever received better instructions from anybody in all history than these servants received from the mother of Christ when she told them to follow Jesus’ orders. That exhortation has application beyond the immediate task those servants had to do.” – R.C. Sproul, John.*

3. THE MIRACULOUS SUPPLY: ABUNDANCE AND BEST – John 2:6-10

- Wine is a symbol of joy and celebration – Psalm 104:15; Proverbs 3:10. Paul tells Timothy to drink a little wine – 1 Timothy 5:23. But drunkenness is always condemned in the Bible – Proverbs 20:1; 23:29-35; Ephesians 5:18. Some try to say it had to be unfermented grape juice, but as my Greek professor at Moody said “wine means wine.” *“Wine was the staple drink in the ancient Near East. Due to the warm climate and the lack of any means of refrigeration or purification, fruit juice tended to ferment. The result was an alcoholic beverage....wine was*

commonly diluted with water to one third to one tenth of the strength. Though the Bible does not forbid drinking wine and in some cases commends it... it strongly condemns drunkenness ...- John MacArthur, John.

- The six stone water pots were used for Jewish purification and washings – Mark 7:3,4. Guests would have used the water to wash their hands and utensils used at the wedding. Stone was used because they did not have to be broken when impure – Leviticus 11:33-34. Jesus makes the unclean clean. He also miraculously makes the water into wine, *“perhaps the best wine ever served at a wedding.”* It was also an abundant supply, up to 180 gallons. It is a free, vast, overflowing supply, just like God’s grace – John 1:16.
- Because John mentions purification, there is a contrast here between the Old Covenant and Jewish ways of purification, and the new wine of the gospel Jesus brings – John 1:17. The water of ceremonies has been replaced with something far better. External cleansing and traditions give way to internal cleansing. Jesus brings the new and better Covenant written in His own Blood – Hebrews 9:10-15a. Those cleansed by Jesus will enter into the Ultimate Wedding Feast Celebration to come.

4.THE CHRIST-HONORING SIGNIFICANCE: REVEALING JESUS’ GLORY – John 2:11

- Turning water into wine was the first sign Jesus did. A sign points to the power of God in Jesus. *“John prefers the simple word ‘signs’: Jesus’ miracles are never simply naked displays of power, still less conjuring tricks to impress the masses, but signs, significant displays of power that point beyond themselves to the deeper realities that could be perceived by the eyes of faith.” – D.A. Carson.* Jesus as the Agent of Creation created the best wine instantly with no grapes, fermentation, sun, etc. Jesus is the unique Son of God: trust Him! In John 2-4 Jesus is replacing old with new: wine in place of water; a new temple (John 2:12-25), new birth (John 3), a new well of water (John 4), and new worship (John 4:24-26). Jesus Himself is like the wine He made, the new is the best. God saved the best until now and His name is Jesus!
- The only proper response to this revealing of Jesus’ glory is faith – John 1:14. Discipleship begins with faith in Jesus. The purpose of the signs in the Gospel of John is faith in Jesus– John 20:30,31.

Concluding Applications:

- Have you been purified in your heart by the blood of Jesus Christ?
- Are you doing whatever Jesus says to you?
- Do you see the glory of Jesus on the pages of the Bible and does it lead you to faith and worship?
- Are you honoring marriage? – Hebrews 13:4.