

wine making

john 2.1-11

We are going to be spending some time with Jesus in John chapter 2 this evening.

Here we will see Jesus perform the first miracle of His incarnation, turning water into wine, to manifest His glory and to set the tone for His earthly ministry.

It's a great story and has a lot for us to think about, so let's look at our text and see what we see.

John 2.1-11 - On the third day there was a wedding in Cana of Galilee, and the mother of Jesus was there. Now both Jesus and His disciples were invited to the wedding. And when they ran out of wine, the mother of Jesus said to Him, "They have no wine." Jesus said to her, "Woman, what does your concern have to do with Me? My hour has not yet come."

His mother said to the servants, "Whatever He says to you, do it."

Now there were set there six waterpots of stone, according to the manner of purification of the Jews, containing twenty or thirty gallons apiece. Jesus said to them, "Fill the waterpots with water." And they filled them up to the brim. And He said to them, "Draw some out now, and take it to the master of the feast." And they took it. When the master of the feast had tasted the water that was made wine, and did not know where it came from (but the servants who had drawn the water knew), the master of the feast called the bridegroom. And he said to him, "Every man at the beginning sets out the good wine, and when the guests have well drunk, then the inferior. You have kept the good wine until now!" This beginning of signs Jesus did in Cana of Galilee, and manifested His glory; and His disciples believed in Him.

One of the biggest mistakes we can make as God's people is thinking that the Lord isn't interested in interacting with us on a day-by-day basis. As we see the things God says in His word and the way He reveals Himself to us it's clear that He wants to continually speak to us and impact our lives and invest Himself into our hearts. The Bible says that there's never a time when God leaves us or abandons us - He's always there, ready to speak and ready to interact and be the focus of whatever is going on in our lives.

I think sometimes we perceive God as an auditor. That He makes the rounds from time to time and gives an evaluation and leaves us things to work on.

But that's now how God presents Himself. He says that He is a loving Father and a jealous husband.

Spurgeon once wrote:

"The Lord Jesus Christ, of whom I now speak, is very jealous of your love, O believer. Did he not choose you? He cannot bear that you should choose another. Did he not

buy you with his own blood? He cannot endure that you should think you are your own, or that you belong to this world. He loved you with such a love that he could not stop in heaven without you; he would sooner die than that you should perish; he stripped himself to nakedness that he might clothe you with beauty; he bowed his face to shame and spitting that he might lift you up to honor and glory, and he cannot endure that you should love the world, and the things of the world. His love is strong as death towards you.”

Now, we look at a story like the one in John 2 and, as Christians we get excited and desire that God would work in our lives powerfully and dramatically like He did at this wedding in Cana.

The good news is that God *wants* to work powerfully and supernaturally in our lives. He’s absolutely clear on that point - that He wants to take your life and my life and use it to confound this world and magnify Himself.

So, how does that happen?

Well, in this story there are 3 elements that paved the way for the Lord to manifest His power and glory. There were 3 things that the people around Jesus did that made this great sign possible. Not because God is limited or bound by us. It’s not that God is Tinkerbell and only has power when we clap our hands enough.

But the Lord chooses and delights to work through willing vessels. Some companies ship by land, some by sea, some through the air. The Lord can do all things, but He loves to ship through His people here on the earth.

And the people He uses are the people who are interested and have an active faith, people who *pursue* Him.

So, looking at this wedding we discover the 3 things that paved the way for God to work.

The first was that Jesus was ***invited*** to the party.

John 2.1-2 - On the third day there was a wedding in Cana of Galilee, and the mother of Jesus was there. Now both Jesus and His disciples were invited to the wedding.

You know, you can look up Mickie and Minnie Mouse’s address at Disneyland and send them a wedding invitation when you get married. And if you do, they’ll send you a note and a signed picture and a little button. You can write to Cinderella and Prince Charming too and get something a little different.

But, getting together a guest list for your wedding is an interesting process, isn’t it? There are people you absolutely have to invite, some people you wish you *didn’t* have to invite. There are people who are right on the cusp - you’d like them there, but you just might not have the room. It’s tough. People always end up getting their feelings hurt. There’s not a lot you can do about that.

On a devotional level, in regular life we send out invitations as well. Through our choices and activities and habits we invite certain guests into our lives and our homes.

I was thinking about this and I was realizing that I'm very quick to invite Jesus to the funerals of my life but sometimes I'm not as quick to invite Him to the weddings. Meaning that we're fast to invite Jesus to deliver us from struggle or hurt or suffering, the tough parts of life, but sometimes we completely forget to invite Jesus to direct us in our celebrations and just our regular, everyday living.

But a significant key to this miracle taking place was that Jesus needed to be invited! If we want the Lord to work in our lives, we got to invite Him in to get His hands on us and be in control of our activities. We've got to determine every day to invite Him to speak and direct and send us as His servants. He knocks on the door of our hearts waiting for an invitation in.

John 2.3-4 - And when they ran out of wine, the mother of Jesus said to Him, "They have no wine."

Jesus said to her, "Woman, what does your concern have to do with Me? My hour has not yet come."

The situation was presented to Jesus and His response was, "What does your concern have to do with Me?"

That is a *great* question for us to filter our goals and our plans and our habits and our activities through. Whatever I'm doing, whatever I'm pursuing, what does Jesus have to do with it? How does this behavior or desire or activity or action concern Jesus and His Kingdom?

That's an important question for us to consistently ask ourselves because it's easy for us to get busy with stuff, even good stuff, but stuff that may not be the most needful.

Remember, Martha was busy with much service. It was a good thing to be busy with. But Jesus said Mary did the more needful thing, she did the *better* thing by concerning herself with the presence of Jesus.

The best things we can do, the best investments we can make are the things that concern Christ and His Kingdom. And we will discover those things as we invite the Lord to have His way in us.

The second element that paved the way for the Lord to do this great work was that the servants made what they had available.

John 2.5-6 - His mother said to the servants, "Whatever He says to you, do it." Now there were set there six waterpots of stone, according to the manner of purification of the Jews, containing twenty or thirty gallons apiece.

God can speak a whole cosmos into existence out of nothing, but when He works in our lives, He loves to work with what we've got.

Some people have much, some have little. There's always someone who has much more, there's always someone who has much less. The *amount* is inconsequential in the hands of God. What matters is what we make *available* to Him.

Whether it was the rod in Moses' hand or the one sword in all Israel that Jonathan had, David's sling and 5 smooth stones or the widow's few drops of oil, the young boy's sack lunch of 5 loaves and 2 fish, or 6 plain water pots, we all have something in our hands, at our disposal, meager as it may be, but the Lord sees it and says, "That's what I want to use to manifest My glory...can I have it?"

It's not that He needs it. It's that He wants us to orient our lives around Him, making anything and everything available to be filled by Him so that it can then be poured out to others. And nothing is too meager. A little river rock was used to save a nation. A little cup of oil saved a family.

But if we want God to work in us and through us then we have to give Him controlling interest over the things in our lives. Our hearts, yes, but then as He grows in us the Lord must have controlling interest over our time and our treasure and our talents. Our bank accounts, our hobbies, our energy, none of those things are meant to be separated from our faith. They're meant to be submitted to God so that He can take them and supernaturally multiply them for His purposes in blessing others and rescuing the lost. And it is an exciting thing to realize that God can take something as insignificant as your lunch and use it to manifest His glory. But only if we make those things available to the Lord and not try to hoard them away from Him.

So we see that first, you might say they were agreeable to the Lord. Jesus was invited to the wedding. Then they made the pots available. And third, they were biddable as servants.

John 2.7-8 - Jesus said to them, "Fill the waterpots with water." And they filled them up to the brim. And He said to them, "Draw some out now, and take it to the master of the feast." And they took it.

Jesus said, "Do this," and they did it. Will we do the Lord's bidding?

These servants really shine in this story. There's no protest. No doubt. No criticism. Just obedience.

And you can see that it was a diligent obedience. They filled the water pots up to the brim. It wasn't just "Ok, I'll do what You say." It was, "I will obey as much as I possibly can. And when You give me something else to do, I'll do it." "Draw some out now and take it to the master of the feast," Jesus said.

A person who loves God is going to obey His commandments. The Bible says it again and again. And not obligatorily, but diligently and passionately.

2 John 1.6a - This is love, that we walk according to His commandments.

We've got to drive out the idea that we have any independence from God. We belong to Him and are sustained by Him. He says in His word that we live by every word that proceeds from His mouth. So, if we want to enjoy the abundant life that He has planned, and if we want the Lord to work in our lives, then we've got to obey and do His bidding.

Any way of life that only has me crossing paths with God from time to time is not a way that leads to what the Lord wants for us. It can't lead to fulfillment or reward. Instead, it will lead us to the same place the Rich Young Ruler ended up - sorrowful and distant from Jesus.

What God wants is to interact with us and impact our lives every day, not only so that we can grow and bear fruit and be blessed, but so that others might see Him as His glory is manifest in our circumstances.

We see that in verse 9:

John 2.9-11 - When the master of the feast had tasted the water that was made wine, and did not know where it came from (but the servants who had drawn the water knew), the master of the feast called the bridegroom. And he said to him, "Every man at the beginning sets out the good wine, and when the guests have well drunk, then the inferior. You have kept the good wine until now!" This beginning of signs Jesus did in Cana of Galilee, and manifested His glory; and His disciples believed in Him.

It's interesting that this is the first miraculous sign that Jesus performed as the GodMan. This was the beginning of His public ministry.

What would we have chosen for His first miracle? We like to open big. Whether it's a batting order or the start of a record or the beginning of a trial. That opening sets a tone. I don't think we would've chosen this miracle as the one that starts them all off.

F.B. Meyer comments on this and says:

"Is it not wonderful that this was our Lord's first miracle! Had we been asked to select the one which seemed most appropriate to stand as the frontispiece of his earthly ministry, we should have selected the raising of Lazarus, the calming of the storm, or the feeding of the hungry crowds; but who would have chosen this? The inventive genius of man would have conceived an introductory scene which combined the chief features of the Transfiguration and of the giving of the law. How different is the simplicity of this incident!"

Jesus is many things. But His intent most of all is to be God *with* us. This scene in Cana shows the heart of a God whose desire is to spend our lives loving us. He wants to be *with us* today. He wants to go somewhere with us and use something in our lives for His glory and His purposes. He is concerned with filling us up and spilling us out. And He is able to do that if we will invite Him to spend today with us, if we'll make our lives and everything in them available to His controlling interest and if we will do His bidding as diligent, loving, obedient servants.

So now, as we spend time in communion with the Lord, talking through prayer to a God who is here with us even now, let's allow Him to fill us up and manifest His glory in and through our lives.