

“Jesus Begins to Reveal His Glory”
(John 2:1-12)

I. Introduction.

A. Orientation.

Last time,

We saw John point to Jesus as the Lamb of God –

The only sacrifice God has provided for sin,

The only payment He will accept for our souls.

Two of his disciples heard him and followed Jesus.

One of the two – Andrew – first found his brother, Simon,

And told him they had found the Messiah.

When Jesus saw him, He said his name would be changed to Cephas or Peter,

Because of what the Father would later reveal to him at Caesarea Philippi

About who Jesus really was.

Jesus then went into Galilee and found Philip,

And called him to follow, and he did.

Philip immediately went out and found Nathanael,

And told him they had found the one Moses and the prophets were pointing to:

Jesus of Nazareth.

At first, Nathanael didn't want to believe

Because the Messiah was to come from Bethlehem, not from Nazareth.

But when he came to Jesus, he changed his mind.

Jesus first showed him that He knew him:

“Here is an Israelite that is genuine; that isn’t just putting on an act.”

Nathanael asked him, “How do you know me?”

He said, “Before Philip called you; when you were under the fig tree, I saw you.”

Since his heart was already the Lord’s, this was all the proof he needed.

Nathanael said, “You are the Son of God, You are the King of Israel.”

Jesus said, “Because I said I saw you under the fig tree do you believe?”

You will see greater things than these . . . You will see the heavens opened

And the angels of God ascending and descending on the Son of Man” –

Just as the Lord sent His angels to minister to Jacob and to watch over him

When he was on his way to Paddan-Aram,

So He would send His angels to minister to His Son and through Him,

Bringing down new revelations in word and miracles/signs.

B. Preview.

This morning, we see the first of these miracles/signs

By which He would reveal who He was,

That John chose to record to prove that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God.

Let’s consider three things from our text:

First, the setting: Jesus and His disciples are invited to a wedding.

Second, the miracle: Jesus turns water into wine.

Third, the result: His disciples believed in Him.

II. Sermon.

A. First, we see Jesus and His disciples present at a wedding celebration.

In verses 1-2, we read, “On the third day there was a wedding in Cana of Galilee, and the mother of Jesus was there; and both Jesus and His disciples were invited to the wedding.”

John tells us this took place on the third day,

Which means it could have been the third day after they arrived in Galilee,

Or that it was a three day journey from where they had been.

But on this particular day, there was a special event – a wedding,

Perhaps that of a friend of the family or a relative,

Because Jesus’ mother was there,

And He and His disciples were invited.

We should note that Jesus’ ministry had already begun.

We’ve seen that He’s gathered four of His disciples.

It’s likely by this time that He had all twelve.

It’s also possible that there were others following Him

Who also attended the wedding, since the word “disciple” is a broader word than “apostle.”

Another thing we should note is what this says about marriage:

It is an honorable institution, a covenant ordained by the Lord,

For the mutual care, love and support of a man and a woman,

And our Lord showed it to be honorable by attending this event.

It's becoming increasingly rare today to see a man and a woman get married –
Even more so for a man and a woman to keep themselves sexually pure before they
do,

And to keep their marriage pure after they do.

But that is what God desires for you,

And this is what you will do, if you love Him.

We'll look more at marriage this evening.

And so first, we see Jesus present at a wedding celebration, in order to honor that
event.

B. Next we see the first miracle John records by which Jesus reveals His glory: He
turns water into wine.

1. In verse 3, we read, “When the wine ran out, the mother of Jesus said to Him,
‘They have no wine.’”

John tells us a minor crisis rose at the celebration.

Apparently, those who planned it didn't count on so many people

Or that the people would be so thirsty.

They likely had the same problem we have today –

You invite so many, perhaps you ask for an RSVP to help you plan, but don't
really know how many to expect.

Being concerned about how this would affect the celebration,

And obviously knowing by this time what Jesus was capable of doing,

Mary came to Him to see if He might do something about it.

What she said wasn't to inform Jesus, but to ask something of Him, “They have
no wine.”

It's clear this is how Jesus understood her, which is why He says in reply,
 "Woman, what does that have to do with us?" (v. 4).

Jesus wasn't reproving His mother,

But merely pointing out that, not being the host or the headwaiter,

He wasn't responsible for the wine, and neither was she.

He further reminded her, "My hour has not yet come" (v. 4),

The hour when He would clearly reveal who He was – God's Messiah –

And in so doing turning up the world's hated,

And so be rejected and nailed to a cross.

When His brothers will later challenge Him to reveal Himself at the Feast of
 Booths, He will say again, "My time is not yet here, but your time is always
 opportune" (7:6).

When He will later teach in the treasury of the Temple, John will point out that
 He wasn't arrested because it was not yet time, "These words He spoke in the
 treasury, as He taught in the temple; and no one seized Him, because His
 hour had not yet come" (8:20).

But that time would come when He would clearly reveal who He was, and so lay
 down His life.

He says in John 12:23-24, "The hour has come for the Son of Man to be
 glorified. Truly, truly, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the
 earth and dies, it remains alone; but if it dies, it bears much fruit" (12:23-24).

Even though Jesus wasn't yet willing fully to reveal who He was,

He was still willing to help the celebration in a guarded way.

In verse 5, we read, "His mother said to the servants, 'Whatever He says to you,
 do it.'"

Again note, Mary didn't compel Jesus to do what He was about to do,

She didn't call the servants to force His hand,

But did so when she saw that He was willing.

If you're going to provide more wine, you need a place to put it.

In verse 6, we read, "Now there were six stone waterpots set there for the Jewish custom of purification, containing twenty or thirty gallons each."

These waterpots were provided by the host

For the ceremonial washing of the hands and feet of the guests.

Apparently, they were empty because those invited had already used the water they contained.

Jesus said to the servants, "Fill the waterpots with water.' So they filled them up to the brim. And He said to them, 'Draw *some* out now and take it to the headwaiter.' So they took it *to him*. When the headwaiter tasted the water which had become wine, and did not know where it came from (but the servants who had drawn the water knew), the headwaiter called the bridegroom, and said to him, 'Every man serves the good wine first, and when *the people* have drunk freely, *then he serves* the poorer *wine*; but you have kept the good wine until now'" (1:7-10).

Notice: water went in, but wine came out,

And not just any wine, but the best wine.

Was this some kind of trick? Were these specially prepared waterpots?

We don't read about the people complaining they had to wash their hands and feet in wine,

Which would have been the case if the waterpots were somehow made "miraculously" to produce wine.

Did the disciples go out and buy 120 to 180 gallons of wine and fill them while the servants watched?

No. They poured water into empty waterpots, and immediately drew wine out.

Jesus had performed *a miracle*.

He did something that only God could do.

2. Let me draw your attention to two things:

a. First of all, Jesus *made wine*.

Some of us were undoubtedly raised in homes or attended churches

Where we were told that wine is evil and should never be drunk –

That was the case in my particular upbringing.

I also remember hearing a popular television evangelist rebuking those

Who believed or taught that Jesus could ever have had anything to do with alcohol.

But notice again, *Jesus made wine*.

The word used means a “fermented beverage made from the juice of grapes” (Louw-Nida).

It’s the same word Paul uses in Ephesians 5:18, “And do not get drunk with wine, but be filled with the Spirit.”

Whatever the alcoholic content of this wine, it could make you drunk.

But far from condemning its use, the Lord not only made wine on this occasion, He made the best wine.

He also used wine to institute His Supper.

It’s no more sin to drink wine than it is to make it.

Jesus made wine, and so it can’t be sinful.

b. But second, even though it isn’t sin to make wine or drink it, it is to get drunk.

Again Paul says, “*Do not get drunk* with wine, but be filled with the Spirit” (Eph. 5:18).

When you drink too much wine, it takes control of you.

But God’s Spirit alone is the One who must do this

If you are to live the kind of life that pleases Him.

The Jews understood this, which is why no one at this wedding was said to be drunk.

That's not what the headwaiter was talking about when he said to the bridegroom, "Every man serves the good wine first, and when *the people* have drunk freely, *then he serves* the poorer wine; *but* you have kept the good wine until now" (v. 10).

He didn't mean you begin serving a lesser quality wine when everyone is too drunk to know the difference,

But that after you've had enough of the good wine

You won't be able to distinguish the fact that what you're drinking is lower quality because your taste buds won't be as sharp.

Just think about how good the first bite is of anything you really enjoy eating,

And how that enjoyment goes downhill after that first bite;

Or how you need to rinse your mouth between sips when you're tasting different types of wine.

Jesus would never have provided more wine to a group of people that were already drunk.

It's not a sin to drink, but it is to get drunk.

Jesus not only made wine, He made the best wine.

C. Finally, we see the result of the miracle: Jesus revealed His glory and His disciples believed.

John writes, "This beginning of *His* signs Jesus did in Cana of Galilee, and manifested His glory, and His disciples believed in Him" (John 1:11).

This brings us to the reason John recorded this event:

Jesus turned the water into wine as a sign – a miracle to show who He was.

Remember what John wrote at the end of this Gospel: "Therefore many other signs Jesus also performed in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in

this book; but these have been written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing you may have life in His name” (20:30-31).

Who can turn water into wine? Only God can, and He did.

Could he have done this through someone who was merely a man? Of course.

He provided for a poor widow through Elijah by causing a bowl of flour and a jar of oil not to run out (1 Kings 17).

He provided for another widow through Elisha to keep her two children from being sold into slavery by causing a jar of oil to fill several containers (2 Kings 4).

But God would never do such a miracle to confirm a lie – only the truth.

That’s exactly what He was doing for Jesus.

What did Jesus claim of Himself?

To this point, He hasn’t said anything too specific

Because His hour had not yet come.

But He did tell Nathanael that he would see the angels of God ascending and descending on Him (John 1:51).

He also didn’t deny what John the Baptist said of Him, “This is the Son of God” (John 1:34);

And, “Behold, the Lamb of God” (v. 36).

Or what Nathanael said to Him, “You are the Son of God; You are the King of Israel” (v. 49).

Jesus confirmed what he said, “Because I said to you that I saw you under the fig tree, *do you believe?* You will see greater things than these” (v. 50).

In this miracle of changing water into wine, Jesus was revealing who He was:

He was showing us something of His glory, as John wrote earlier, “And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us, and we saw His glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth” (v. 14).

And it had the effect it should have on those who were privileged to see it:

“This beginning of *His* signs Jesus did in Cana of Galilee, and manifested His glory, and *His disciples believed in Him*” (John 1:11).

It’s also possible that some of the servants believed,

Because they too saw this miracle.

To those who have – to those who have faith –

More shall be given – more evidence to confirm their faith.

But to those who don’t have – who don’t have faith –

Even what they have will be taken away – they will not be given more evidence.

Just consider what the Jewish leaders will do with what they see.

“After this He went down to Capernaum [which would become His hometown], He and His mother and *His* brothers and His disciples; and they stayed there a few days” (v. 12).

Let me close by applying this as the Spirit intended.

Jesus did this miracle to show who He was: He is the Son of God.

The power by which He did this miracle was really His own:

It wasn’t power He possessed in His humanity, but in His deity.

The One who created the heavens and the earth with a Word – “Let it be” –

Commanded that water be put into pots and that water become wine.

It may seem like a small thing, but just try it someday and see how far you get.

In doing this miracle, Jesus revealed His glory –

The glory He has as the only begotten of the Father,

Full of grace and truth.

Has the Spirit of God opened your eyes to see that glory?

If He has, you know these words are more than dead letters on a page –

You know they are true.

If you do see it, does it have the effect on you that it had on His disciples?

Does it strengthen your conviction that He is the Christ, the Son of God?

Does it strengthen your faith?

Your resolve to trust Him alone?

To give yourself to Him

And to follow Him wherever He may lead you?

If the Spirit is at work in your heart, it will!

If you don't see it, then pray that the Lord would open your eyes.

As long as you are blind to His glory, you are lost and on your way to judgment.

Pray that the Lord would give you His Spirit,

So that you may turn from your sins,

And believe in the Son of God,

And that believing you may have life. Amen.

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