

Miracle at Cana; John 2:1-11

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. When the wine ran out, the mother of Jesus said to Him, "They have no wine." And Jesus said to her, "Woman, what does that have to do with us? My hour has not yet come." His mother said to the servants, "Whatever He says to you, do it." Now there were six stone waterpots set there for the Jewish custom of purification, containing twenty or thirty gallons each. Jesus said to them, "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." This beginning of His signs Jesus did in Cana of Galilee, and manifested His glory, and His disciples believed in Him.

Context

We are going to be in John chapter 2 today. As you are turning there I'm going to set up the context of this section. John was the last gospel written and it was written John the son of Zebedee and he refers to himself as the disciple that Jesus loved.

John starts off Jesus ministry with a wedding. Theologically this is symbolizing the new covenant and how the church is the bride of Christ. We could spend hours just looking at the symbolization of the wine and blood of Christ and the wedding and the church. I will touch a little on the symbolization but I'm going to concentrate on the text and what is happening here.

In chapter 1 of John we learn that Jesus has been baptized and John the Baptist has prophesied that Jesus is the Messiah and will take away the sins of the world. Jesus has started gathering his disciples and according to John at the time of this wedding, he has John, Andrew, Peter, Phillip, and Nathanael. Chapter 1 ends with Jesus in Bethsaida

Miracle at Cana; John 2:1-11

on the banks of the Jordan river and he is heading to Galilee and specifically Cana which is about 22 miles away. So let us now go to John 2

3rd Day

On the third day there was a wedding in Cana of Galilee, Looking at verse 1 we see that it was the third day. That would be the third day since Nathanael was introduced to Jesus (John 1:45).

Relationship

I think it's important that we notice the wording here in verse 1 & 2 so we can establish the relationship Jesus has to the bride and groom.

Verses 1 & 2. *And the mother of Jesus was there. And both Jesus and His disciples were invited.* I believe that from this reading we can safely gather that Mary was close to these people, which will become even more obvious in a minute, but Jesus and His disciples were invited as a side note. Kind of like saying "Yeah Mary your son and His friends can also come."

Wedding Ceremony

Before we go any farther we need to make sure we understand what a wedding ceremony looked like. Today if a man and woman get married there will be a wedding ceremony and then a reception. Then the couple goes off on their honeymoon and all we had to invest in their marriage was a few hours of our time. It wasn't this way then.

In Genesis 29 we read of Jacob marrying Leah and discovering that it was not Rachel as he thought. Let's look at Genesis 29:21-22

Miracle at Cana; John 2:1-11

Then Jacob said to Laban, "Give me my wife, for my time is completed, that I may go in to her." Laban gathered all the men of the place and made a feast.

So we see that there was a large ceremony going on and in the next few verses we find out that the next morning Jacob realizes he married the wrong daughter. He goes to Laban asking what have you done. After the excuses are out of the way they strike up a deal and now let's look at verse 27 *Complete the week of this one and we will give you the other also.*

The wedding was to last a week. In the time of Jesus this was still the tradition a wedding would go anywhere from three days to a couple of weeks. People would quit work and stay at the wedding the whole time. Now the host was responsible for feeding and carrying for his guest. To fail at this would bring a lifetime of shame to the family.

So now back in John 2:3 *When the wine ran out, the mother of Jesus said to Him, "They have no wine."* Mary is concerned about the couple running out of wine. This is what I was saying about her probably being close to the couple. She is concerned about the family being shamed. So she goes to her son Jesus and tells Him.

Deity

Jesus responds, *"Woman, what does that have to do with us? My hour has not yet come."* The first thing that jumps at us is that Jesus calls Mary Woman. That sounds harsh coming from the Son of God. The same God that said honor your father and mother¹. To understand why Jesus answered this way there are a few things we need to look at. First what does, "My hour has not yet come" mean. What Mary is asking for is a miracle. A miracle can only be done by God or someone God has sent.

¹ Exodus 20:12

Miracle at Cana; John 2:1-11

Let's look at Exodus 7:8-11

8Now the LORD spoke to Moses and Aaron, saying, 9"When Pharaoh speaks to you, saying, 'Work a miracle,' then you shall say to Aaron, ' Take your staff and throw it down before Pharaoh, that it may become a serpent.'"

10So Moses and Aaron came to Pharaoh, and thus they did just as the LORD had commanded; and Aaron threw his staff down before Pharaoh and his servants, and it became a serpent. 11Then Pharaoh also called for the wise men and the sorcerers, and they also, the magicians of Egypt, did the same with their secret arts.

Notice the magicians did not perform a miracle they used secret arts. They used illusions and trickery. There are a couple of shows on today with young magicians. David Blaine and Criss Angel are two you may have heard of. They do magic tricks that seem impossible. Yet if you go online you can often find out exactly how they did it.

My daughter came home from school one day and she was so proud she learned a magic trick. She had her mom pull a card out of the deck of cards, look at it, and she told her to put it back. My daughter then went through the cards and handed my wife the card she had picked. She turned to me and told me to pick one. As I put the card back in the deck I rotated it, because she had rotated the deck so mine would be in upside down. All of this while distracting her so she wouldn't see that I knew what she was doing. She went through the deck trying to find the card because while she was trying to trick me by rotating the deck so the card would be turned the other way I tricked her by turning my card.

Miracle at Cana; John 2:1-11

Magic is tricks and illusions but miracles are from God. Even when Peter healed the cripple in Acts 3² He did it in the name of Jesus. The same with Paul in Acts 16³. Miracles signify deity and Jesus hour to reveal to the world that He was sent by God had not yet come.

Separation

Now let's look at why he called Mary **woman**. We see Jesus say Woman and we think wow that's kind of rude. If I walked up to one of these pews and said, Woman, move over." She is going to think what a jerk, because we are used to hearing something more along the lines of, "excuse me ma'am, may I sit here."

Let's quickly look at other places Jesus uses the word woman. In Matthew 15 a Canaanite woman came up to Jesus asking Jesus to remove a demon from her daughter. In verse 28 Jesus says in praise of the woman's faith "*O woman, your faith is great; it shall be done for you as you wish.*" Or Luke 13:12 "*Woman, you are freed from your sickness.*" The woman in caught in adultery "*Woman, where are they? Did no one condemn you?*"⁴ All of these are spoken in compassion. The last one I want to look at is as Jesus is on the cross he looks down and *when Jesus then saw His mother, and the disciple whom He loved standing nearby, He said to His mother, " Woman, behold, your son!"*⁵

Woman is a title of respect like us Tennessee southerners would use ma'am.

Okay woman is a respectful title, but why is Jesus using it instead of mother.

Back to John 2 verse 4 *And Jesus said to her, "Woman, what does that have to do with*

² Acts 3:6

³ Acts 16:18

⁴ John 9:10

⁵ John 19:26

Miracle at Cana; John 2:1-11

us? *My hour has not yet come.*" Jesus is respectfully telling His mom that He will do this but this signifies His deity and He is no longer son to her but God. And she understands,

Faith

His mother said to the servants, *"Whatever He says to you, do it."* Now there were six stone waterpots set there for the Jewish custom of purification, containing twenty or thirty gallons each. Jesus said to them, *"Fill the waterpots with water."* So they filled them up to the brim.

I'm going to go with 20 gallons because it's a nice round number that falls in with what most commentators and translators feel a firkin is which is the KJV word here. So 6 x 20 is 120 gallons of water. Water weighs around 8 pounds a gallon. So Jesus asked the servants to walk to the well and bring back 960 pounds of water. That would be 40 trips to the well with 3 gallons of water. Or 40 trips carrying 24 pounds each. Sounds like a lot of work to me.

What I'm trying to make evident here is that Jesus is about to perform a miracle but it took a lot of faith for the servants to do the work required. If they did not believe that this man was going to do something they would not have done everything necessary to get the water. Second Jesus could have made the pots full of wine without water. Think back to the story of Elisha and the widow's oil⁶. Jesus did not have to have the servants to help but he wanted to show what faith can do.

It takes faith to believe that the God that created the universe. That the God that created man and said I will take care of you just do not eat of that one tree in this beautiful garden I have created. That God after seeing man sin and casting man out of the

⁶ 2 Kings 4:1-8

Miracle at Cana; John 2:1-11

garden. It takes faith to believe that that this same God would say, "I'll fix this for you" and then send His son to live a life perfect and unblemished. It takes faith to believe that this man whom you have never met. Think about this if you do not know Jesus you are in the same place as these servants that do not know Him. This man that you don't know would suffer beatings, shame, and being hung on a cross for me and you. This God that you don't know created the word and then said I will take the punishment upon myself for you so that you can be with me in a marvelous heaven. That is what faith is believing in Him whom you have not known.

A Big God

So let's move on to verses 8-10

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."

That last section there verse 9, *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)* Look closely at what is said here. The servants knew. Those who served Jesus saw the miracles. Everyone there got the benefit of the miracle, but only the servants got to see God. Are you a servant or are you just enjoying the miracles. Do you come to church and serve so that you can see God or do you just come to enjoy the wedding.

Miracle at Cana; John 2:1-11

Verse 10 *"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."* I'm not going to break that verse down; I believe it's pretty self explanatory. But we do need to see that when God provides for us he will do it in a big way and it will be better than we can or should expect. Jesus created more than enough wine. 120 gallons! This would be plenty to finish the week and it was even better than what would have been considered good. Think of Jesus feeding the four thousand and the five thousand. There were leftovers.

So let's look at what we have seen today and then I will wrap it up.

1. Pray and receive.

Mary asked for a miracle and Jesus said that it was not time for Him to perform miracles. But He did it anyways. Think about this God did something that was not necessary for His plan, simply because someone with faith asked Him to. Jesus tells us in Matthew 7 that we being evil would not give our children who ask for bread a stone so just imagine how much more a holy and heavenly father would do for us if we just ask.⁷ Matthew 17 Jesus tells us with the faith of a mustard seed we can move mountains. Now to truly pray and receive we have to have faith and discernment. If I pray that when I get home there will be a new Camaro in my carport it isn't going to happen because no matter how much faith I have I would be praying for the wrong reason. But if a missionary prays that God will provide for an orphanage that has run out of supplies , then that missionary should not be surprised when a truck full of supplies suddenly pulls up. Pray and receive.

⁷ Matthew 7:9-11

Miracle at Cana; John 2:1-11

2. God will provide in a big way.

Jesus did not have to make 120 gallons it did not have to be the best wine that these people would ever taste, but if God is going to show up. He is going to do it in a big way. We just have to have the faith to do the work required. I think that a large problem today is churches and Christians doubt what God can do. We have VBS and think if we can just have one child get saved that would be great. We serve a big God though! Why not pray , Lord I want to see a child saved for every member of this church. Now remember we have to do the work. We have to invite, teach, and encourage. We have to have the faith to carry that 960 pounds of water. But why do we not trust God to provide in a big way. Jesus told us the harvest is ready but the workers are few. Let's work and expect God to show up in a big way.

3. And Lastly Jesus blood will purify us from our sins.

let's go back and look at the symbolization in the waterpots in verse 6 ."*Now there were six stone waterpots set there for the Jewish custom of purification, Let's think back to Mark 7:3 For the Pharisees and all the Jews do not eat unless they carefully wash their hands, thus observing the traditions of the elders;* Jewish people would do ceremonial washings before eating. These washings would remove ritual impurities. The reason it is mentioned that these waterpots are used for purification rituals and the reason Jesus fills them with wine is because the wine represents His blood. Remember the last supper *And when He had taken a cup and given thanks, He gave it to them, saying, "Drink from it, all of you; for this is My blood of the covenant, which is poured out for*

Miracle at Cana; John 2:1-11

*many for forgiveness of sins.*⁸ It is the blood of Jesus that purifies us and makes us Holy so that we can be in the presence of a holy God.

Everyone in this room is a sinner. I'm here to tell you, I fail. I deserve Hell as much as anyone in this room. I try and fall. And it doesn't matter how good you think you are. God looks down and sees a sinner. There is greed, envy, selfishness and that's just name some of the bad sins in this room. Everyone of us fails to be a holy and righteous servant of God. Everyone in here is a sinner and the wages of sin is death⁹. But God is merciful. God sent His Jesus to suffer His wrath. Jesus voluntarily gave His life for you and me so that we could be forgiven. And it's simple. It's simple!

All you have to do is confess Jesus as Lord and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead¹⁰. That's it. So I'm going to ask if you have accepted Jesus as Lord. If you have, are you living a life that shows Jesus has purified you? Are you living a life that is holy and pleasing? If you haven't here is a chance, God wants you to be purified from your sins¹¹, just call out Jesus is Lord and salvation is yours.

⁸ Matthew 26:27-28

⁹ Romans 6:23

¹⁰ Romans 10:9

¹¹ 1 Timothy 2:3-4