

The Gospel of John: Part 7, The Wedding

John 2:1–12 (ESV) — *1 On the third day there was a wedding at Cana in Galilee, and the mother of Jesus was there. 2 Jesus also was invited to the wedding with his disciples. 3 When the wine ran out, the mother of Jesus said to him, “They have no wine.” 4 And Jesus said to her, “Woman, what does this have to do with me? My hour has not yet come.” 5 His mother said to the servants, “Do whatever he tells you.” 6 Now there were six stone water jars there for the Jewish rites of purification, each holding twenty or thirty gallons. 7 Jesus said to the servants, “Fill the jars with water.” And they filled them up to the brim. 8 And he said to them, “Now draw some out and take it to the master of the feast.” So they took it. 9 When the master of the feast tasted the water now become wine, and did not know where it came from (though the servants who had drawn the water knew), the master of the feast called the bridegroom 10 and said to him, “Everyone serves the good wine first, and when people have drunk freely, then the poor wine. But you have kept the good wine until now.” 11 This, the first of his signs, Jesus did at Cana in Galilee, and manifested his glory. And his disciples believed in him. 12 After this he went down to Capernaum, with his mother and his brothers and his disciples, and they stayed there for a few days.*

Context

We have finally made to the second chapter of John. We will be looking at the first 12 verses. This is the beginning of Jesus’ ministry.

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.

The Gospel of John: Part 7, The Wedding

In chapter 1 of John we learned 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 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 at Cana in 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. Jesus also was invited to the wedding with his disciples.* 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.

The Gospel of John: Part 7, The Wedding

In Genesis 29 we read of Jacob of Jacob working 7 years to earn the right to marry Laban's daughter. Let's look at Genesis 29:21-22

Then Jacob said to Laban, "Give me my wife that I may go in to her, for my time is completed." So Laban gathered together all the people 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 in return for serving me another seven years."

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 caring 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 this have to do with me? 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 Gospel of John: Part 7, The Wedding

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.

Let’s look at Exodus 7:8-11

Then the LORD said to Moses and Aaron, “When Pharaoh says to you, ‘Prove yourselves by working a miracle,’ then you shall say to Aaron, ‘Take your staff and cast it down before Pharaoh, that it may become a serpent.’ ” So Moses and Aaron went to Pharaoh and did just as the LORD commanded. Aaron cast down his staff before Pharaoh and his servants, and it became a serpent. Then Pharaoh summoned the wise men and the sorcerers, and they, the magicians of Egypt, also did the same by 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,

¹ Exodus 20:12

The Gospel of John: Part 7, The Wedding

which she couldn't 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.

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 a woman at say a theater 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, great is your faith! Be it done for you as you desire.*" And her daughter was healed instantly.⁴ Or Luke 13:12 "*Woman, you are freed from your disability.*"⁵ The woman in caught in adultery, "*Woman, where are they? Has no one condemned you?*"⁶

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 saw his mother and the disciple whom he loved standing nearby, he said to his mother, "Woman, behold, your son!"*⁷

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

² Acts 3:6

³ Acts 16:18

⁴ Mt 15:28.

⁵ Lk 13:12.

⁶ Jn 8:10.

⁷ Jn 19:26.

The Gospel of John: Part 7, The Wedding

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 this have to do with me? 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

(John 2:5-7) His mother said to the servants, "Do whatever he tells you."

Now there were six stone water jars there for the Jewish rites of purification, each holding twenty or thirty gallons.⁷ Jesus said to the servants, "Fill the jars with water." And they filled them up to the brim.⁸

I really would love for you to see a pictureⁱ of a water pot. I found a picture online of a water pot in the ruins of Corinth. When you see it sitting there you can truly grasp how big they are. Picture what you are expecting and go bigger. An average bathtub holds between 50 and 60 gallons of water before overflowing. So if it is half full then you can see the amount of water in one of these water pots.

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. If you want you can do the math with 30 gallons. So 6×20 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.

⁸ Jn 2:5-7.

The Gospel of John: Part 7, The Wedding

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 oil⁹. 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 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 world 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, "Now draw some out and take it to the master of the feast." So they took it. ⁹ When the master of the feast tasted the water now become wine, and did not know where it came from (though the servants who had drawn the water knew), the master of the feast called the bridegroom ¹⁰ and said to him, "Everyone serves the good wine first, and when people

⁹ 2 Kings 4:1-8

The Gospel of John: Part 7, The Wedding

*have drunk freely, then the poor wine. But you have kept the good wine until now.”*¹⁰

That last section there verse 9, *When the master of the feast tasted the water now become wine, and did not know where it came from (though 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.

Verse 10 *“Everyone serves the good wine first, and when people have drunk freely, then the poor wine. But you have kept the good wine until now.”* We 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.

Alcohol

Now just to save any questions that might be distracting you, let’s talk about the wine. Is it a sin to drink alcohol? If you have been to most Baptist churches very long you have heard the sermons on how all alcohol is from the devil and you are going straight to hell if you so much as look at it. There is a problem with that though. The bible does not exactly say that. Now hear me out and do not hear what you want to hear and not listen to all I say. I also have heard the sermons on how the Israelites’ water was not of the same quality as ours and the fermentation was to make it drinkable and it was watered down, so it did not have much alcohol content. Now it is true that the wine was often watered down. As a matter of fact the Talmud records the rabbis

¹⁰ Jn 2:8–10.

The Gospel of John: Part 7, The Wedding

arguing over how much water is required to make the wine okay. But if you have ever had Jack and coke you know that just because it is watered down does not mean you can't get drunk.

Let's look at what the bible says. Let's remove all our presuppositions whether we think it is okay or not.

Verse 10 that we just read basically says, most of the time people serve the chardonnay first and then when everybody is drunk and does not care we slip them the Boones Strawberry Hill. Obviously there was some alcoholic content involved. The Pharisees trying to find a reason to not listen to Jesus call Him a drunkard (Matthew 11:19). They wouldn't have said that if the wine did not have alcoholic content. Paul tells Timothy to drink wine for his stomach(1 Timothy 5:23). So obviously the bible teaches that alcoholic beverages in their self are not a sin.

But, you knew there was a but right. But it also says in 1 Corinthians 6:10 no drunkard will inherit the Kingdom of Heaven. So the question becomes at what point are you crossing the line to being a drunkard, which begs the question, "Why are you drinking?" The bible does not say you can't drink, but it does say it's not the best idea you ever had.

*Wine is a mocker, strong drink a brawler,
and whoever is led astray by it is not wise.¹¹*

It lowers your inhibitions. How many have heard stories of a woman waking up and regretting she slept with that guy last. Most of the time she doesn't even remember his name. Normally those stories involve alcohol. In Genesis Lot gets drunk because his wife has died and he is trying to drink away the pain. What happens? He knocks up not one but two of his own daughters.¹²

¹¹ Proverbs 20:1 ESV

¹² Genesis 19:30-36

The Gospel of John: Part 7, The Wedding

Alcohol causes you to do stupid stuff. We just came back from a vacation in Gatlinburg, as we started walking the streets on Friday night my son started saying ‘I see drunk people.’ He wasn’t saying that because they blended in with the sober people. In Genesis Noah got drunk and his son posted nude pictures of him on the internet¹³. Okay the internet wasn’t around, but that is what the big deal was. While he was drunk his son snuck the wives and brothers in to sneak a peek at dad plastered and naked on the floor.

And lastly in the words of the great philosopher Ozzy Osbourne, “Wine is fine, but whiskey’s quicker. Suicide is slow with liquor.”¹⁴ Alcohol in abundance kills you and I believe all you have to do is look at Ozzy in a commercial to see that is a fact.

As the Apostle Paul says in the NLT translation of 1 Corinthians 10:23 “(You say, “I am allowed to do anything”—but not everything is good for you. You say, “I am allowed to do anything”—but not everything is beneficial.” Let’s move on

The Virgin Mary

After this he went down to Capernaum, with his mother and his brothers and his disciples, and they stayed there for a few days.

I’m going to mention verse 12 and then review what we talked about. I mainly bring this verse up to help counter what the Catholic Church teaches about Mary. If you do not know the Catholics teach that Mary was forever a virgin. This is obviously false and is easy to disprove using scripture. Starting right here, obviously Jesus had brothers. *with his mother and his brothers*. If you turn to Mark 6:3, you’ll read; *Is not this the carpenter, the son of Mary and brother of James and Joses (Joseph) and Judas and Simon? And are not his sisters here with*

¹³ Genesis 9:20-22

¹⁴ Ozzy Osbourne, *Suicide Solution*, 1980

The Gospel of John: Part 7, The Wedding

us?"¹⁵ So we see He also had sisters. James and Jude wrote epistles in the New Testament. Okay you may have heard a pastor mention in introducing a sermon on those 2 books that they were Jesus' step or half brothers. This is because Joseph was not his father, God was. Mary was his mother just as she was to his brothers and sisters. Okay, Catholics are used to this argument and they will say that these brothers and sisters were with Joseph and a previous wife. There is no scriptural evidence for that plus there is more scriptural evidence for these children belonging to Mary and Joseph.

Let's look at Matthew 1:24-25 *When Joseph woke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him: he took his wife, but knew her not until she had given birth to a son. And he called his name Jesus.*¹⁶ Notice it said knew her not until she had given birth to a son...Jesus. So Joseph did not live a life married to a woman that always had a headache. She remained a virgin until Jesus was born and then the honeymoon and many children came.

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

¹⁵ Mark 6:3 ESV

¹⁶ Matthew 1:24-25 ESV

The Gospel of John: Part 7, The Wedding

and heavenly Father would do for us if we just ask.¹⁷ 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 Harley 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.

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 water jars there for the Jewish rites of purification*, Let's think back to Mark 7:3 (*For the Pharisees and all the Jews do not eat unless they wash their hands, holding to the tradition of the*

¹⁷ Matthew 7:9-11

The Gospel of John: Part 7, The Wedding

elders,¹⁸ Jewish people would do ceremonial washings before eating. These washings would remove ritual impurities. The reason it is mentioned that these water pots 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 he took a cup, and when he had given thanks he gave it to them, saying, "Drink of it, all of you, for this is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins."*¹⁹ 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. Every one of us fails to be a holy and righteous servant of God. Everyone in here is a sinner and the wages of sin is death²⁰. 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 dead²¹. 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 sins²², just call out Jesus is Lord and salvation is yours.

¹⁸ Mk 7:3.

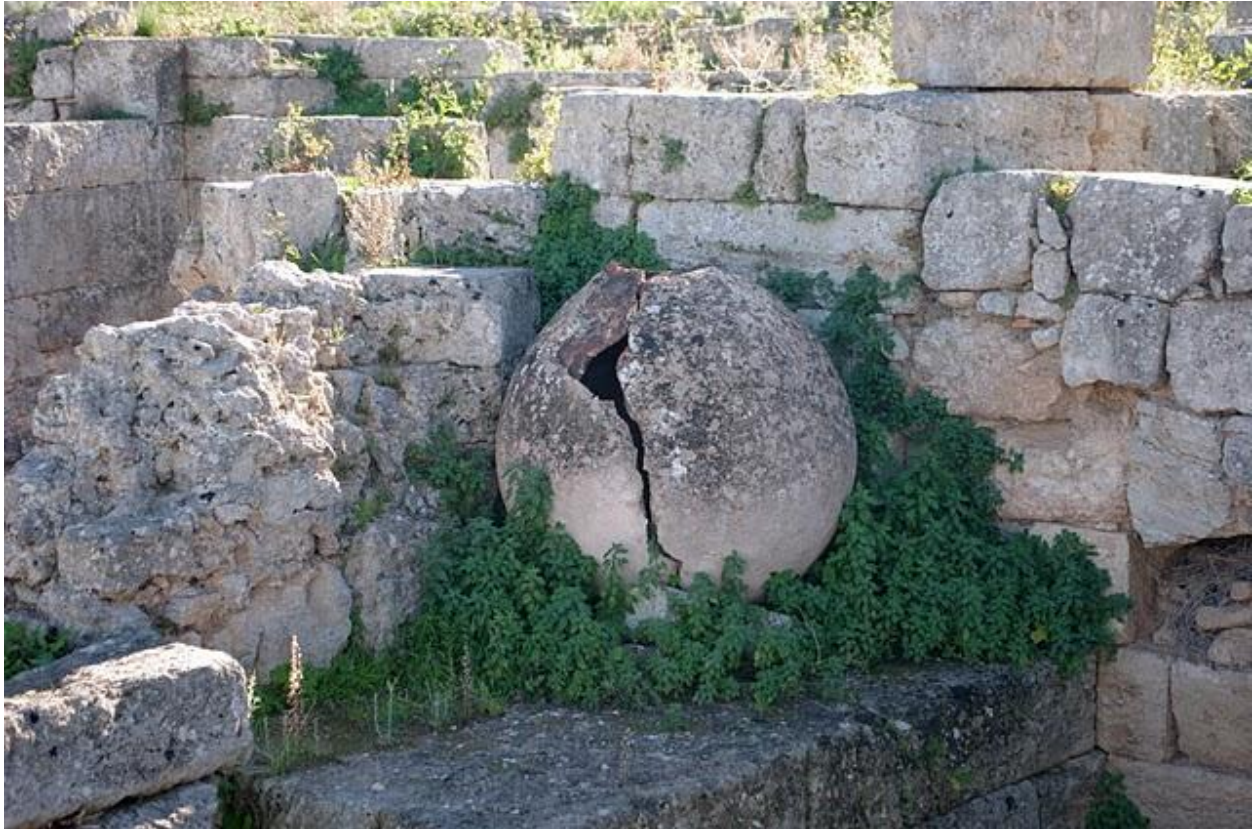
¹⁹ Mt 26:27-28.

²⁰ Romans 6:23

²¹ Romans 10:9

²² 1 Timothy 2:3-4

The Gospel of John: Part 7, The Wedding



<https://picasaweb.google.com/markgvh/CorinthAndMycenae?authkey=Gv1sRgCNTM29j74fyYQg&fgl=true&pli=1#5577341380881879794>