

# *The Journey... Walk as Jesus Walked*

Part 10 – The First Miracle... A Wedding Crisis Averted!

*John 2:1-11 – February 28, 2010*

Intro: Feeding 400 people at Katie's wedding.

Transition: We know the stress of feeding a large crowd. Will there be enough food? Will it taste good? Will everything run smoothly? This is the situation Jesus and his mother find themselves in as they find themselves at a wedding.

It is the end of a busy week of activities, but Jesus is invited to a wedding! What Jesus does in His first miracle sets the tone for His future ministry. This is the first of 8 miracles that John records to prove and authenticate the deity of Christ.

1. Water into wine (2:1-11)
2. Healing of boy (4:46-54)
3. Healing of lame man/Bethesda (5:1-18)
4. Feeding of the 5000 (6:1-15)
5. Walking on water (6:16-21)
6. Healing of blind man (9:10-41)
7. Raising of Lazarus (11:1-57)
8. Reattaching the ear of Malchus (18:10-11)

What was significant about Jesus first miracle?

## I. The context (v. 1-2)

*On the third day there was a wedding in Cana of Galilee, and the mother of Jesus was there; <sup>2</sup>and both Jesus and His disciples were invited to the wedding*

A. **The place:** Jesus and His disciples are invited to a wedding in Cana. Cana is 9 miles north of Nazareth. Both His birth and His first miracle are in an obscure place! Jesus and the disciples could easily make it there from the Jordan River area within 3 days. Note: Nathaniel was from Cana.

- B. **The occasion:** A *wedding* was a major social event in first-century Palestine, and the celebration could last as long as a week. These village weddings, unlike modern weddings, which are traditionally paid for by the bride's family, the groom was responsible for the expenses of the celebration. The wedding marked the culmination of the betrothal period. During that period, which often lasted for several months, the couple were considered legally man and wife (Matt. 1:18-19 refers to Joseph as Mary's husband during their betrothal period), and only a divorce could terminate the betrothal (cf. Matt. 1:19). They did not, however, live together or consummate the marriage during that period (cf. Matt. 1:18). On the night of the ceremony (usually a Wednesday), the groom and his friends would go to the bride's house. They would then escort her and her attendants to the groom's house, where the ceremony and banquet would be held (cf. Matt. 25:1-10). The whole celebration ended with the actual wedding. (MacArthur, J. (2006). *The MacArthur New Testament commentary: John 1-11* (77-78). Chicago: Moody Press.)
- C. Jesus' attendance at the wedding, both signifies His affirmation of the institution and the ceremony itself! The ceremony is an essential element of that union, because in it the couple publicly vows to remain faithful to each other. Both the Old Testament (e.g., Gen. 29:20-23; Judg. 14:10; Ruth 4:10-13; Song of Sol. 3:11) and the New Testament (e.g., Matt. 22:2; 25:10; Luke 12:36; 14:8) view the public ceremony as a necessary part of marriage.

## II. The crisis (v. 3)

<sup>3</sup>*When the wine ran out, the mother of Jesus \*said to Him, "They have no wine."*

### A. *Mother of Jesus*

1. Only 2 times (the 2nd being at the cross!) is she mentioned in the gospel of John and never by name. Note: Joseph is not mentioned and may have already died. Mary has learned to lean on her firstborn for help, thinking He would go and purchase some more wine... but wasn't counting on Him do a miracle to solve the problem!

2. The wine supply runs out, and Jesus' mother comes to him with the problem. It is likely a relative that is getting married. Mary is involved in the wedding preparations, perhaps the "coordinator" and they are already out of wine, which would be a serious breach of etiquette. It was an expected custom that the groom's family would provide plenty of food and wine for their guests for its entirety. They could also be "sued" by the bride's family for breach of contract.
3. Story: Some years ago when Johnny Carson was the host of the *Tonight Show* he interviewed an eight year old boy. The boy was asked to appear because he had rescued two friends in a coal mine outside his hometown in West Virginia. As Carson questioned the boy, it became apparent to him and the audience that the young man was a Christian. So Carson asked him if he attended Sunday school. When the boy said he did, Johnny inquired, "What are you learning in Sunday school?" "Last week," the boy replied, "our lesson was about when Jesus went to a wedding and turned water into wine." The audience roared with laughter, but Carson tried to keep a straight face. Then he said, "And what did you learn from that story?" The boy squirmed in his chair. It was apparent he hadn't thought about this. But then he broke into a smile and said, "If you're going to have a wedding, make sure you invite Jesus!"

### III. The confrontation (v. 4)

*<sup>4</sup>And Jesus \*said to her, "Woman, what does that have to do with us? My hour has not yet come."*

- A. Jesus appears to be rather "rude and possibly harsh" to His mother. He is definitely abrupt, though the idiom used was not a term of derision. It is polite but certainly not intimate. Like saying "Ma'am". NIV tries to soften it: "Dear woman, why do you involve me?"
- B. "*Why do you involve me?*" should be recognized by readers as a Semitism used to express various nuances of denial. It

literally means “what between me and to you”. It can mean a rather hostile rebuke or simply a desire to be left alone. Borchert, G. L. (2001). *Vol. 25A: John 1-11 The New American Commentary* (155). Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers.

- C. Jesus politely but firmly indicates that His relationship as a child and even as a young man is changing. He is no longer her errand boy! The dictates of His mother will not keep Him from doing what God has called Him to do. He distances himself in a way that will affect their future public relationship. Actually He is setting up the precedent that He will be directed by His heavenly Father not His earthly mother. (John 5:19-20, 30, 36). The will of the Father is what is important!
- D. Jesus reminds her *His time has not yet come*. This is in reference to the cross.

#### IV. The conversations (v. 5-11)

##### A. The orders (v. 5-7)

###### 1. From the **mother** (v. 5):

*<sup>5</sup>His mother said to the servants, “Whatever He says to you, do it.”*

- Mary instructs the servants to do whatever Jesus tells them to do. She obviously wasn't insulted and quickly realized that Jesus was in charge and had a plan.
- *The servants*: This word is *diakonois* which is the word for “deacons” (1 Tim. 3:8, 12), not *doulos* “slaves”. It suggests that they were not slaves or household servants. Most likely they, like Mary, were family and friends helping with the celebration. Her charge to them was necessary, since they might otherwise have hesitated to follow the strange instructions they would receive from a guest. They would not have known that Jesus was anybody special.

###### 2. From the **Messiah** (v. 6-7):

*<sup>6</sup>Now there were six stone water pots set there for the Jewish custom of purification, containing twenty or thirty gallons each. <sup>7</sup>Jesus \*said to*

*them, “Fill the water pots with water.” So they filled them up to the brim.*

- He tells them to fill six huge jars with water. 6 was the number of incompleteness (v. 7), but soon they would be more than complete... filled to the brim.
- The *stone waterpots* were, as John explained for the benefit of his Gentile readers, used *for the Jewish custom of purification*. The Jews used stone waterpots to hold the water used for ritual purification because they believed that, unlike earthenware pots (Lev. 11:33), they did not become unclean. They were forbidden around food or drink..
- Unlike the smaller one used by the Samaritan woman to draw water from a well (4:28), these were large pots, *containing twenty or thirty gallons each*. MacArthur, J. (2006). *The MacArthur New Testament commentary: John 1-11* (81). Chicago: Moody Press.
- *Filling them to the brim*: Showed that nothing else (like wine) was added. It was a true miracle... no chicanery! It not only would be enough for the rest of the celebration, (960 bottles of wine) but leftovers make a nice wedding gift!

#### B. The **obedience** (v. 8):

*<sup>8</sup>And He said to them, “Draw some out now and take it to the headwaiter.” So they took it to him.*

They follow His instructions, and the water turns into wine!  
**Headwaiter**: The role of the banquet master probably was something like the combination of a master of a ceremony and a head waiter whose task was to keep the guests satisfied. Today it would be the DJ or wedding coordinator running the reception!

#### C. The **opinion** (v. 9-10)

*<sup>9</sup>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,<sup>10</sup> 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. Those at the wedding testify that the wine is the best they have ever had!
2. The common custom was to serve the “good stuff” when people were sober, and then serve the poor stuff when they were drunk. The head waiter is impressed by the groom’s generosity in doing so. The idea is that they wouldn’t know the difference if they were drunk! This is not suggesting that Jesus was at a wedding reception where everyone was drunk!
3. This miracle is not lost on those who filled the water pots. They know what they did and now they see what Jesus can do!
4. App: The bride and groom have no idea what Jesus has done for them! Jesus often blesses us when we don’t serve it or have nothing to do with it!

#### D. The outcome (v. 11)

*<sup>11</sup>This beginning of His signs Jesus did in Cana of Galilee, and manifested His glory, and His disciples believed in Him.*

1. Signs: attesting miracles; one which points to the supernatural power of God. These miracles will attest to His deity. He is God
2. This miracle demonstrates Jesus’ glory, causing the disciples to put their faith in him! Each succeeding miracle will show His “power and deity” over various realms of life. [John1:14](#)

#### V. The conclusion for us today!

##### A. The symbolism of the miracle:

###### 1. A thirsty crowd.

Isn’t this a picture of a **lost world** today? They are thirsting for the world’s pleasures but can’t find personal satisfaction, and what fulfillment they have eventually runs

out. The Bible invites thirsty sinners to come to Christ for salvation and satisfaction (John 4:13–14; 7:37; Isa. 55:1; Rev. 22:17).

## 2. **Empty water pots**

Representing the **human heart**, which is hard and empty. The Word of God compares the human being to a vessel (2 Cor. 4:7; 2 Tim. 2:20–21). We may look great on the outside, but God sees us as empty and useless unless we let Him fill our lives.

## 3. **Filled with water**

Water for washing is, in the Bible, an image of the **Word of God**. (See Eph. 5:26; John 15:3) All that the servants had to do was fill the empty water pots with water which is like the servant of God filling the heart of an unbeliever with the Word. It is not our job to save them, but it is our job to give people the Word of God and let Him perform the miracle of salvation.

## 4. **Water turned to wine**

Jesus turned water into wine, which speaks of grace and joy. Wine symbolizes the **Holy Spirit** (Eph. 5:18).

## 5. **The third day**

This foreshadows the Resurrection, since Christ arose from the dead on the third day. Wiersbe, W. W. (1997). *Wiersbe's expository outlines on the New Testament*. (215–216). Wheaton, Ill.: Victor Books

B. **God's "waterpot" requests:** God asks us to do seemingly foolish and insignificant things that produce big results! What is God's "waterpot" request of you today? Foolish things God asks us to do?

1. Walk around Jericho
2. David: Attack a giant with slingshot!
3. Gideon: Cut back to 300 men
4. Jesus: Put your net on the other side
5. Go collect 5 loaves and 2 fish to feed 5000

6. Lose your life to gain it.
  7. Seek God first and then everything else falls into place.
- C. **God's glory and changed lives:** God's glory is demonstrated by your changed life! Your changed life is a miracle in and of itself. After you come to faith in Christ, God wants continue to do miracles in your life for His glory! How is God's glory manifested in your life? Is God still doing miracles in your life today?
- D. **Do you really believe in Jesus?** Even though the servants saw and tasted the miracle, there is no indication that any of them became Christ-followers. Jesus essentially leaves town with His same entourage. Just like today, Satan blinded the eyes of the skeptics even though there was proof before their very eyes!

### **Table Talk:**

1. What was the significance of the first miracle that Jesus performed?
2. How was Jesus' relationship with His mother different as an adult than when He was at home?
3. What "water pot" request is Jesus asking of you?

### **Sneak Peek:**

1. Please read John 2:13-22. It is the story of the first cleansing of the temple. (Did you know there was more than one?) Write down your observations and questions.
2. Why did it upset Him so much?
3. In what ways do we "offend" God in the church in today's culture?