



Metro Calvary – Roseville CA
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The Gospel of John

Water To Wine

John 2:1-11

Related Topics: First “Sign” in the ministry of Jesus; The Place of the First Sign; Jesus endorses Marriage; Jesus Approves of Feasts and Wine; Jesus Transforms the Ordinary; Participating in His Miracles; Obedience; Jesus Has Authority Over Nature and Time; Transformed By The Will Of God.

John 2:1-12 ¹On the third day there was a wedding at Cana in Galilee, and the mother of Jesus was there. ²Jesus also was invited to the wedding with his disciples. ³When the wine ran out, the mother of Jesus said to him, “They have no wine.” ⁴And Jesus said to her, “Woman, what does this have to do with me? My hour has not yet come.” ⁵His mother said to the servants, “Do whatever he tells you.” ⁶Now there were six stone water jars there for the Jewish rites of purification, each holding twenty or thirty gallons. ⁷Jesus said to the servants, “Fill the jars with water.” And they filled them up to the brim. ⁸And he said to them, “Now draw some out and take it to the master of the feast.” So they took it. ⁹When 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 ¹⁰and 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.” ¹¹This, the first of his signs, Jesus did at Cana in Galilee, and manifested his glory. And his disciples believed in him.

In our past few Sundays together we have seen the account of the very first men to become followers of Jesus.

Andrew, and an unnamed disciple whom we believe to be John, were the first to respond to John the Baptist proclaiming Jesus and pointing out Jesus. Andrew then went and got his brother, Simon, soon to be known as Peter. As Jesus was travelling to Nazareth he found a man named Phillip and said to him, “Follow Me.” So the fourth follower of Jesus was added. Phillip then went and found Nathaniel and brought him to Jesus. Thus we have the first five followers of Jesus.

They had met Jesus and decided to follow Him, but there was much for them to learn about Jesus.

Matthew 11:29 Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls.

The same is true for you and me.

Each and every Christian has had that moment of being introduced to Jesus for the first time, that moment when *God shined into your heart the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ* and you made to a decision to follow Jesus. That moment **began** a living and growing relationship with Jesus Christ. Each and every day we get to learn of Him (That is the reason for this study in the Gospel of John.)

Remember, when Andrew told Jesus that they wanted to go where He was going and live where He was living, Jesus said to them, “Come and see.” Jesus was going to **show them, reveal to them** things about them that only He could. As a result of what they would **see**, they would worship Him as God and Savior.

We need to bear in mind that though we are familiar with the Gospel records of the divine power of Jesus (and might take them for Granted), these guys hadn’t read **John 2** yet! For the disciples, each and every day was a new discovery. Each day brought to them a new event or a new teaching which caused them to constantly be amazed.

The same should be true for us. Each day with Jesus should bring a fresh experience of His power and His Word to our lives from which we too worship Jesus as God and Savior. Are you still amazed at Him? Remember, the key to being an effective witness for Christ is maintaining a fresh relationship with Him.

Here in John 2 Jesus is going to introduce them to His glory, introduce them to Who He is by turning water to wine.

Let’s start with this observation, we are told in the eleventh verse

“This, the first of his signs, Jesus did at Cana in Galilee, and manifested his glory.

This answers those who teach that when Jesus was a little boy living in Egypt he would make little birds out of clay and then would miraculously make the clay figure come to life. This record makes it very clear that He did not perform miracles in His childhood in Egypt; or in His adolescent and adult years in Nazareth — but that His first miracle was at Cana of Galilee.

‘On the third day there was a wedding at Cana in Galilee, and the mother of Jesus was there. ‘Jesus also was invited to the wedding with his disciples.

This is an amazing moment! Here is *the Word*, the One who is *in the beginning with God, and is God*. He came out of eternity. He was made flesh and for His first thirty years lived in Nazareth of Galilee taking care of His widowed mother, scratching out a living as a carpenter in land filled with rocks and stones. Then He walks over a hill to attend a

wedding in Cana. In this moment He is going to for the FIRST TIME *manifest His Glory*.

Remember how we have noted that first occurrences in the Scriptures are of tremendous importance. First things are important. They make big impressions. They inform what follows. Let's walk through it.

IT IS SIGNIFICANT that Jesus chose to begin His ministry on this earth at a wedding. Because He will conclude it, as far as the Church is concerned, with a wedding. At the marriage supper of the Lamb the Church will be presented to Him as a bride.

IT IS SIGNIFICANT that Jesus chose to begin His ministry on this earth at a wedding. Because the very context of His first sign / miracle tells us how Jesus viewed the covenant of marriage

Here is the Creator of man and woman ([Gen 1](#) / [John 1](#)). Here is the One who authored the lifelong, monogamous, heterosexual marriage covenant. He has become man and stepped into human history.

Jesus deliberately chose to begin His public ministry at a feast celebrating the covenant of marriage. Jesus deliberately chose to perform the first sign that would identify Him as God Incarnate at a feast celebrating the covenant of marriage in order to bless, validate and endorse the life long, monogamous, heterosexual covenant of marriage

By the way, when invited, Jesus still comes to weddings. He wants to live in the center of marriages.

IT IS ALSO SIGNIFICANT that Jesus chose to begin His ministry on this earth at a wedding. Because in it we discover that Jesus, God Incarnate, was not a recluse or a killjoy! He accepted invitations to social events. We find later his Enemies tried to use this against Him.

Luke 7:34³⁴The Son of Man has come eating and drinking, and you say, 'Look at him! A glutton and a drunkard, a friend of tax collectors and sinners!'

God wanted to come and be with man! (Emmanuel which means God With Us). When He became a man he did not hide from man, or retreat from man. He wanted to be with them when they laughed and were glad (wedding), when they were sorrowful and broken (funeral), when they were sick and needy (lepers). Jesus entered the very Real and Normal Experiences of Life, but Sanctified them by His Presence!

While Jesus wanted to be with lost man, I see today that many Christians want to isolate themselves from the real world.

We are NEVER to imitate this lost world, but we are to permeate it and integrate with it.

DEFINITION: Webster's Dictionary

Integrate = To make Whole or Complete by adding or bringing together parts, to unify.

We can be a part of the work of Jesus bringing wholeness to the world by adding our sanctified lives to the scruffy culture.

QUOTE: J.C. Ryle (1816-1900) — He is no liberal theologian. He was a profound student of Scripture and a man known for his personal holiness.

He did not refuse to be a guest at "a marriage in Cana of Galilee." "A feast," it is written, "is made for laughter, and wine makes merry." (Eccles. 10:19.) Our Lord, in the passage before us, approves both the feast and the use of wine.

The subject no doubt is a difficult and delicate one. Here, if anywhere, God's children have need to be on their guard. Each must know his own strength and natural temperament, and act accordingly. One believer can go without risk where another cannot. Happy is he who can use his Christian liberty without abusing it! It is possible to be sorely wounded in soul at marriage feasts and the tables of friends.

One golden rule on the subject may be laid down, the use of which will save us much trouble. Let us take care that we always go to feasts in the spirit of our divine Master, and that we never go where He would not have gone. Like Him, let us endeavor to be always "about our Father's business." (Luke 2:49.) Like Him, let us willingly promote joy and gladness, but let us strive that it may be sinless joy, if not joy in the Lord.

³When the wine ran out, the mother of Jesus said to him, "They have no wine."

A Wedding feast in the day of Jesus would go on for days. For a Jewish feast wine was essential. We find in the Old Testament that wine (not drunkenness) is associated with joy and the blessing of God!

Because hospitality was so huge in Middle Eastern culture, to run out of food or wine at such an occasion was embarrassing. In fact, a family guilty of such a "Crime" could actually be fined (according to Jewish Law).

QUOTE: William Barclay, The Gospel of John Vol.1

"Without wine," said the Rabbis, "there is no joy." It was not that people were drunken, but in the East wine was an essential. Drunkenness was in fact a great disgrace, and they actually drank their wine in a mixture composed of two parts of wine to three parts of water. At any time the failure of provisions would have been a problem, for hospitality in the East is a sacred duty; but for the provisions to fail at a wedding would be a terrible humiliation for the bride and the bridegroom.

This is a "Jesus moment," a moment in which we get a tremendous insight into the heart of Jesus. The first sign / miracle in the public ministry of Jesus was not done on a huge public platform. The first time that Jesus exercised His divine power it was out of sympathy, kindness, and understanding for a Galilean family. Jesus — the Lord of all life, and the King of glory — would point to His divine nature by saving a simple Galilean groom and bride from humiliation.

“And Jesus said to her, “Woman, what does this have to do with me? My hour has not yet come.”

KEY QUESTION: Why did Mary Approach Jesus? She would have had to be very close to the bride or groom to have known this shortcoming before the other guests found out.

The answer of Jesus tells us something about Mary’s request. Remember, Jesus has been living with his widowed mother for nearly 30 years. And for those 30 years she has born the stigma of becoming pregnant with Jesus before she was married. Mary’s request appears to be aimed at Jesus miraculously saving the day for this couple. And in so doing so prove that He really is the Son of God, which would prove that she really was a virgin when she conceived Jesus.

Interesting, after 30 years, Jesus never vindicated His mom. Yet even at this moment Jesus says, *“This is not the occasion. I’ll clear your name, but not here.”*

“My hour has not yet come

In John’s Gospel, Jesus’ “hour” is the time of his crucifixion, at which time his saving work is accomplished in his atoning death (see [7:30](#); [8:20](#); [12:23, 27](#); [13:1](#); [17:1](#)). It would not be until after the cross and resurrection that Mary could say to each of those disciples, *“I told you that He was the Son of God!”*

Rom 1:4 “. . . declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead”

“His mother said to the servants, “Do whatever he tells you.”

Mary doesn’t have a lot of words recorded in Scripture ([Luke 1:34; 38; 46-55; Luke 2:48](#)) Here in [John 2:5](#) are the last words recorded by Mary, and they are great words. The mom of J.Sidlow Baxter (great Bible Scholar) wrote on the inside of the Bible she gave to him as a gift on his 16th birthday, “Do whatever He tells you,” moms, what a great *life-motto* for your children. What a great *life-motto* for ALL of us!

Mary's words to the servants show that she was willing to allow her Son to do as He pleased. They show that she trusted Him to do the right thing. In fact, the words of Mary to these men give to us a concise handbook on the nature of our obedience to Jesus.

Our obedience is to be **Entire** —

“Whatever” speaks of **scope** and **range**.

Our obedience is to be **Exclusive** —

“Whatever **He says**,” to the exclusion of all others, if they differ from Him.

Our obedience is to be **Specific** —

“Whatever” that thing is do **it**. Not just something **like it**. Not **equivalent**, but **IT!**

6Now there were six stone water jars there for the Jewish rites of purification, each holding twenty or thirty gallons.

Again, John explains what was common knowledge to the Jew because he was writing to a Greek audience.

QUOTE: William Barclay

Water was required for two purposes. First, it was required for cleansing the feet on entry to the house. The roads were not surfaced. Sandals were merely a sole attached to the foot by straps. On a dry day the feet were covered by dust and on a wet day they were soiled with mud; and the water was used for cleansing them. Second, it was required for the handwashing. Strict Jews washed the hands before a meal and between each course. First the hand was held upright and the water was poured over it in such a way that it ran right to the wrist; then the hand was held pointing down and the water was poured in such a way that it ran from the wrist to the fingertips. This was done with each hand in turn; and then each palm was cleansed by rubbing it with the fist of the other hand. The Jewish ceremonial law insisted that this should be done not only at the beginning of a meal but also between courses. If it was not done the hands were technically unclean. It was for this footwashing and handwashing that these great stone jars of water stood there.

The connection of these pots to Jewish Law has tremendous importance in regards to the significance of this first sign.

As always, Jesus begins with whatever is at hand. In the beginning, there was nothing besides God, so Jesus spoke the physical universe into existence. He then arranged and prepared the earth for man and then fashioned man out of existing elements. Jesus is the same, yesterday and forever. Jesus began this miracle by using what was at hand. He could have supplied more wine any number of ways, but He started with what was there.

Some clay pots filled with water (Interesting, the N.T. says that we are earthen vessels filled with the Water of the Word / The Holy Spirit)

Some servants (He still chooses to let us serve with Him in work that only He can do)

7Jesus said to the servants, “Fill the jars with water.”

John makes it a point to record that Jesus commanded the servants to fill the jars to the brim to make it clear that nothing else but water was put into them.

Isn't it amazing that when Jesus is poised to perform the first sign / miracle of His ministry, He wanted the man to participate in it. He could have filled the pots Himself,

created something from nothing as He did in **Genesis 1**. But He knew that if the servants shared in the work, then they also shared in the blessing.

Jesus still wants to use men and women to turn water to wine, transform lives! Jesus still wants to use men and women to reveal His glory to the world!

7...And they filled them up to the brim.

The servants did not do the miracle. The servants could not do the miracle. But because of their obedience to Jesus, they shared in the joy of the miracle.

Three aspects of their obedience

They obeyed **Immediately** and they filled them up.

They obeyed **Completely** and they filled them, *to the brim*.

It was not an easy job. 20-30 gallons per jar! That is a lot of water to draw and carry and pour! They obeyed without question, they labored to the fullest, they filled them up to the brim. They no doubt sweated and got tired. But their labor and obedience was part of the fullness of the miracle. If they were lazy and only filled the water pots half full, there would have only been half as much wine.

They obeyed **Successively** each new instruction as it came: *fill, draw, take it*.

Why would we ever want to partially obey Jesus? Why would we ever want to half-heartedly serve Jesus? Let's not do anything less than obey Jesus fully and labor to the fullest.

**And he said to them, "Now draw some out and take it to the master of the feast."*

Interesting, we are not told of any outward or visible action by Jesus. He didn't touch the water pots containing the water that was made wine. He didn't command the water to change its qualities nor did He pray to His Father in Heaven. He simply said, *"Now draw some out and take it to the master of the feast."*

Radical, Jesus willed the change, and it took place. That makes me feel real confident in, and secure in, the will of God for my life.

**...So they took it.*

This took *faith* on behalf of the servants. Imagine how angry the master of the feast would be if they brought him *water* to taste! Yet in faith, they obeyed the word of Jesus.

Crucial, all service for the Lord requires Faith and Obedience!

**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 "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."

Some claim that Jesus did not change water into real wine, that all he did was change it into very good grape juice! That claim is absolutely ridiculous, hardly worthy of an answer. Good wine is good wine not good grape juice!

In the New Testament we have warnings against the overuse of wine -- of "*not being given to much wine*" {1 Tim 3:8, Tit 2:3 KJV}. Paul wrote that because the wine of that day was indeed intoxicating. People had to exercise moderation then just as they must exercise moderation today. Wine was a commonplace drink, one that believers partook of along with everyone else in that culture and climate. Jesus changed ordinary water into real, true, genuine wine.

THE SIGN

At one time the rarest bottle of wine ever was purchased by *Christopher Forbes* for \$160,000. It was an unmarked green glass bottle with the inscription of *1787 Lafitte Th. J.* (thought to be owned by Thomas Jefferson, found behind a wall in Paris.)

Listen, the world's finest wine was not made in the vineyards of France or Napa nor was it served in the finest international restaurants. It was made and served at an *unpretentious* wedding in Cana of Galilee, 2000 years ago. And that wine is valued to this day, not for its rarity, but for what it reveals about its maker...Jesus Christ!

"This, the first of his signs, Jesus did at Cana in Galilee, and manifested his glory. And his disciples believed in him.

Each of the miracles performed by Jesus were an exercise of His divine power and an expression of His love and mercy, touching lives in a very real and tangible way. But the miracle was not an end in itself. Every single miracle that Jesus ever performed was packed with meaning and significance. Every detail of each miracle was intended to teach us something about Jesus and His glory.

1.) **Water to wine** pointed to **Jesus as the Creator!**

By an act of will — Jesus transformed the very NATURE of the content of the jars. **Water to wine** was a live demonstration that all things were made through Him (John 1:3a).

2.) **Water to wine** pointed to **Jesus as the Lord over time and nature!**

Water is being changed into wine in every vineyard in Northern California right now! It involves a long process of growth, of gathering and crushing; it involves the activity of men and the process of fermentation. But here in this home in Cana of Galilee, the wine that would normally need time to age, was fermented to perfection

in only a fraction of a second. So by this sign His Glory was revealed, His earthly veil raised ever so briefly, ever so slightly, to let shine the *Shekinah* that resided within.

3.) **Water to wine** pointed to **Jesus as Messiah**

Against an OT background that viewed wine (but never drunkenness) as a sign of joy and God's blessing, the wedding party's running out of wine is a picture of the spiritual barrenness of first-century Judaism.

The **6 water pots** represent **the relationship of Israel to the Law**. The Law could never answer the longing of their hearts. Apart from Jesus, Israel was without **Joy** and without **Hope**. But now their Messiah was in their midst to help them.

4.) **Water to wine** pointed to **Jesus as savior, Grace greater than Law**.

John 1:17: For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ.

The Law came through Moses — The Law, given by Moses could only judge and condemn — point out our guilt before God. We remember how in the O.T. God through Moses turned water into blood as a judgment against Egypt.

grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. — Here is God Incarnate, turning water to wine. In the Scriptures, "wine" represents joy. By the grace that is found in Jesus our lives are transformed. We go from Condemnation to the joy of salvation!

5.) **Water to wine** pointed to **Jesus as full of grace**.

John 1:14-16¹⁴ And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth...¹⁶ And from his fullness we have all received, grace upon grace.

Jesus turned between 120-180 gallons of water to wine. That is a picture of the fullness that we receive from Jesus, grace upon grace!

Even as that gathering in Cana of Galilee could never drink one hundred and eighty gallons of wine, no need on earth can exhaust the grace of Christ; there is a glorious superabundance in it.

Superabundance!

Jesus provides "life" in abundance —

John 10:10...I came that they may have life and have it abundantly.

Jesus provides "joy" in abundance —

John 15:11 (NLT) I have told you these things so that you will be filled with my joy. Yes, your joy will overflow!

6.) Water to wine pointed to Jesus as Risen Savior bringing life out of death.

This first manifestation of His glory was on the third day. John is writing his account of the life of Jesus years after the resurrection of Jesus. As a first hand witness to the life, death and resurrection of Jesus, John connects some dots. He remembers that he went to the tomb of Jesus on the third day after His crucifixion and found it empty, the ultimate expression of the glory and nature of Jesus.

Romans 1:4 and was declared to be the Son of God in power according to the Spirit of holiness by his resurrection from the dead,

Then John remembers, “Hey, Jesus began to reveal His glory on the third day after I met Him in Judea!” (It was a two-day walk to Galilee, and they would have arrived on the morning of the third day.)

7.) **WATER TO WINE** was a miracle of transformation, as the resurrection of Jesus would be a miracle of transformation, the bringing life out of death.

CLOSING

The first word Jesus uttered in turning water to wine, ***"FILL."*** Jesus, who is ***"Full of Grace,"*** truly loves to fill empty lives. Fill them with water and wine.

Water in the Bible is a picture of two things: The Word of God and the Holy Spirit. Jesus wants to fill you with His Word, His truth. He wants to fill you with the very life and love of God by the Holy Spirit.

Wine in the Bible signifies joy. The World's Joy always runs out and cannot be regained.

The World offers the best first, and then, once you buy in, things start to get worse. Jesus Offers Salvation and Forgiveness now, but has Saved the Best for last!

Jesus brings **FULNESS** where there is emptiness

Jesus brings **JOY** where there is disappointment and tears

Jesus brings **GLORY** where there was shame.

To the Non-Christian, the “**thirsty crowd**” in this wedding feast is a **pretty accurate picture** of life without Jesus. Men and women tasting the world’s pleasures but finding no real personal satisfaction, and what they do have eventually runs out, ***“They have no wine.”*** **Is that YOU this morning?** The Bible invites thirsty sinners to come to Christ for salvation and satisfaction.

Isaiah 55:1 ‘*Is anyone thirsty? Come and drink—even if you have no money! Come, take your choice of wine or milk—it’s all free!*

Water to wine is a perfect picture of when the water of the Word of God is poured into the heart of a man or woman and they believe it, commit their lives to Jesus. Jesus transforms “sinners to saints,” you are not what you used to be, you are something all together new.