

Jesus Transforms Water Into Wine At A Wedding In Cana Of Galilee

(John 2:1-11)

Intro: Having concluded our study in the Book of Romans, I thought it might be refreshing to study a few of Jesus' miracles. I would like to begin with an observation. Did you know that miracles are all around us. Creation is filled with miracles, and as we learned from the Truth Project, the complex design of the universe and the human beings that inhabit planet earth, attests to God's miraculous power.

Right now it feels like you are sitting still, but that's an illusion. The reality is that planet Earth is spinning on its axis at an equatorial speed of 1,040 miles per hour. What is more, we are speeding through space at an average velocity of 67,108 miles per hour. That is not just faster than a speeding bullet, that my friends is eighty-seven times faster than the speed of sound. On a day when you don't feel like you have accomplished much, remind yourself that you traveled 1,610,592 miles through space! And to top things off, the Milky Way galaxy is spinning like a top at the mind-boggling rate of 483,000 miles per hour. Okay, if that isn't miraculous, I don't know what is!

When was the last time you thanked God for keeping us in orbit? I'm guessing never. You've probably never said to God at the end of the day, "Lord, I wasn't sure we were going to make the full rotation today, but You did it again!" I believe there's a reason we don't thank God; it's because God is so good at what God does we take it for granted, even the miracles.

As you can see, miracles are all around us all the time. You don't have to look through a telescope; you can look through a microscope. Trillions of chemical reactions are taking place in your body every second of every minute of every hour of every day. You are inhaling oxygen. You are metabolizing energy. You are managing equilibrium-which is pretty incredible considering how we are spinning and speeding through space. You are manufacturing hormones and fighting antigens and filtering stimuli and mending tissue and purifying toxins and digesting food and circulating blood. On that count, your heart will beat a hundred thousand times today, pumping six quarts of blood through about sixty thousand

miles of arteries, veins, and capillaries. If you laid them end to end, they would circle the earth two and a half times.

You know people just like I do who say they've never experienced a miracle. Let's be clear about this: you have never not experienced a miracle. **In fact, you're a miracle!** As Del Tacket pointed out in *The Truth Project*: "If your personal genome sequence was written out longhand, it would be a three-billion-word book. The King James Version of the Bible has 783,137 words, so your genetic code is equivalent to about four thousand King James Bibles. In other words, each of us is unique. There never has been and never will be anyone like you.

Jesus' turning water into wine at the wedding at Cana in Galilee is the first of 35 recorded miracle of Jesus Christ in the Gospels. John, who records only 7 of Jesus' miracles, informs us that this was the beginning of Jesus' signs. John uses the word "signs" (*semeion*) rather than miracles, because he wanted to reveal the Person of Jesus Christ to his audience, rather than the miraculous event that He had performed. This miracle of Jesus transforming water into wine is recorded only by John, and is therefore not found in the Synoptics, Matthew, Mark, and Luke. Lastly, we note that this was a private miracle, witnessed by Jesus' Mother, Mary, His first disciples, and the servants at the wedding feast.

In keeping with his purpose for writing (John 20:30-31), "that you might come to believe that Jesus is the Christ (Messiah), the Son of God; and that believing in Him you may have eternal life"; John informs his readers that Jesus' transforming water into wine served the purpose of revealing His glory to His disciples, who believed in Him (2:11). Coming to faith (95x), believing in Jesus Christ as Savior, is the central theme of John's gospel.

I. The Context (2:1-2) READ THE SCRIPTURE

A. **Time: the "third day"** This chronological notation refers to this being now the 3rd day after Jesus first came into Galilee and called Philip and Nathaniel to follow Him as His disciples (1:43-51). It would have taken two days to travel from Bethany, East of Jericho, where John the Baptist was baptizing, to Cana in Galilee (1:28). Of far greater importance is John's repeated use of "the 3rd day" as a reference to Christ's resurrection resulting in His transformation from death to life. ***He transforms all who believes in Him.***

B. **Location of Cana in Galilee** Cana was a small village in the hills of Northern Galilee. Though its exact location is unknown, most scholars locate

Cana about 4 miles northeast of Nazareth.

MAP

- C. Setting: *A wedding*** — We are not told who the bride and groom were, but in all probability they were relatives of Jesus' family. Mary's presence, and the invitation of Jesus and His disciples supports this view. It is interesting to note that Mary, the mother of Jesus, is never mentioned by name in the Fourth Gospel, nor is John for that matter.

Oriental wedding feasts in the days of the New Testament were considerably different from what we know today. A typical wedding feast lasted for a week or longer. Following an official engagement period of at least twelve months, the groom and his wedding party would escort his bride, amidst much ceremony, from her parents home back to his home, often his father's home (Edersheim, *The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah* [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1965], vol. I, 352-355).

A wedding is always a festive occasion, and in a small village like Cana it would have been a community celebration. Refreshments were provided for all the guests, so it's not hard to understand why the wine ran out. Wine was especially important at wedding feasts, since **it symbolized joy & blessings**. **Psalm 104:15 wine makes man's heart glad.**

II. The Conversations (2:3-10)

A. Between Mary and Jesus (vv. 3-5)

1. The need; "the wine gave out" (v. 3)
2. Mary's request (v. 3) "*They have no [more] wine.*"

Many commentators are of the opinion that Mary was in charge of this wedding. If so, then Mary would have been held accountable for running out of wine. This was a very serious matter. Knowing the seriousness of the situation, Mary asked her son, Jesus, to save this young couple and herself, as the hostess, from the embarrassment of not providing enough wine for the wedding guests.

Mary's response to the crisis would seem to imply that she was indeed the hostess. On the other hand, it may simply have been a matter of Mary's knowing that Jesus could perform a miracle by producing more wine. Jesus' reply in verse 4 suggests that she expected Him to meet the need of the moment. It seems reasonable to infer that Mary, who may

have witnessed Jesus' baptism, or at least was aware of it, knew that her son's public ministry was beginning. She may have been familiar with Amos' prophecy in 9:13-14 that Messiah's coming Kingdom would be characterized by the abundant provision of wine.

3. Jesus' response to Mary (v. 4)

Jesus' reply to His mother "*Woman, what do I have to do with you?*", was not as abrupt or harsh as it seems to us today. The term "woman" is actually "a term of respect or affection." Jesus used "woman" as His normal, polite way of addressing women. He used it when He spoke to His mother from the cross (19:26) and also when He addressed Mary Magdalene after His Resurrection (20:15).

The phrase "*what do I have to do with you,*" was a common Jewish expression that meant, "Why do you involve Me in your problem?" It was used to highlight a difference in relationships. In this context Jesus is saying in effect, "It is not yet time for Me to act." **Look at the last part of this verse 4, "My hour has not yet come."** Jesus was telling His mother that a change in relationship was taking place at this point. A new relationship would exist between Jesus and His mother once He commenced His public ministry. He would be committed to fulfill His Father's will, and no longer obliged to accommodate Mary's needs. He is no longer or primarily only her son, but her Lord.

Jesus' reference to "His hour having not yet come," refers to His manifesting Himself to Israel as Messiah. It refers specifically to that hour or time when He would be glorified through His death, burial, resurrection, and ascension back to His Father. Jesus came not to fulfill His own will but His Father's will. His changing the water into wine did in fact fulfill His Father's will. This sign/miracle actually signaled the beginning of Jesus' public ministry, as it manifested His glory to His disciples (v. 11).

4. Mary's response to the servants (v. 5)

Even though Mary probably didn't fully understand, she acknowledges Jesus' claim, and lovingly submits herself to His lordship over her. Her address to the servants, "*Whatever He says to you do it,*" is clearly a declaration of faith on Mary's part. Her words infer that she expected Jesus to supply the wine that was needed.

Application: Have you submitted yourself to Jesus' Lordship over you. After receiving Him as Savior we must surrender to Him as Lord. Paul exhorts us in Romans 12:1 "to present ourselves to God as living sacrifices, which is our spiritual service of worship." We too, like Mary, must submit ourselves fully to the Lordship of Jesus Christ. May God help us to do that this morning.

B. Between Jesus and the servants (vv. 6-8)

These six *stone jars* were quite large, containing between 20–30 gallons of water apiece. The total volume of liquid amounted to between 120–180 gals. These jars were carved out of stone and held the water used for Jewish purification rituals. Jews were expected to wash their hands before meals.

The contrast between the water used for Old Testament Jewish ritual purification, and the wine of the new Messianic Age is evident.

v. 7—Jesus instructed the servants to "Fill the water-pots with water. And they filled them up to the brim."

v. 8—He next instructed the servants to, "Draw some out, and take it to the headwaiter. And they took it to him."

Those who serve Jesus get to partake in His glory. Only the servants, Jesus disciples, and His mother witnessed this miracle. Become a servant so you too can begin to enjoy Jesus!

C. Between the headwaiter and the bridegroom (vv. 9-10)

The headwaiter was astounded by the high quality of the wine Jesus had made. According to verse 10 it was customary for men to serve the best wine first, and after men had drunk freely, to serve wine of a generally poorer quality. He praised the bridegroom for keeping the best wine for last.

The headwaiter's statement, "You have kept the good wine until now," can be understood as **the proclamation of the coming of the messianic days**. Mary's statement, "They have no wine," becomes a pointed reflection on the barrenness of Jewish purifications. The Son of God had come to replace the empty traditions of Judaism. Those who believed on Him would drink freely of God's redeeming grace!

A word on wine: It is clear in this passage that Jesus made real wine out of the water. Wine was used throughout the Old Testament as a common drink, for refreshment, for rejoicing and making merry, and as an offering. It is equally clear that excessive wine drinking was intoxicating, and as such forbidden. In **Leviticus 10:1** Nadab and Abihu, two of Aaron's sons were killed for offering strange fire before the Lord. In light of the following prohibition against drinking wine when serving at the tabernacle in verse 9, many feel that Nadab and Abihu were probably drunk. Wine was forbidden to priests entering the sanctuary to serve, and not fit for the king as the leader of God's people.

While the Bible condemns an excess of wine drinking, wine serves as a consistent OT figure for **the joy** to be associated with Messiah's Kingdom (Amos 9:13-14; Joel 3:18; Jer. 31:12). **Wine symbolizes "joy"**

Amos 9:13—"Behold, days are coming," declares the LORD,

When the plowman will overtake the reaper
And the treader of grapes him who sows seed;
When the mountains will drip sweet wine,
And all the hills will be dissolved.

14—"Also I will restore the captivity of My people Israel,
And they will rebuild the ruined cities and live in them,
They will also plant vineyards and drink their wine,
And make gardens and eat their fruit.

Joel 3:18—And it will come about in that day [Christ's Millennial Kingdom]

That the mountains will drip with sweet wine,
And the hills will flow with milk,
And all the brooks of Judah will flow with water;
And a spring will go out from the house of the LORD,
To water the valley of Shittim.

Let us be clear, that while Jesus made extraordinary wine for this young couple's wedding, God condemns the drinking practices of modern society with its bars, strong drinks, and resulting evils. **Proverbs 20:1** warns that anyone intoxicated by wine or strong drink is not wise. Paul commands in **Ephesians 5:8** "Do not get drunk with wine, but be filled or controlled by the Holy Spirit. And in Romans 14:21 Paul admonishes believers to forego drinking wine if it might cause my brother to stumble. If you have a problem in this area, it would be best to follow Jesus in not drinking wine until we join Him in His coming Millennial Kingdom.

III. The Interpretation 2:11

A. Significance of “signs”: *they validate Jesus’ claims to be God incarnate in flesh*

D. Purpose of the sign:

1. *to Manifest Jesus’ glory*: He proved that He was the eternal God and Creator
2. *Jesus had come to give life in place of the dead Jewish customs and rituals*
3. *to invoke faith in His followers*: “His disciples believed in Him”

Applications

1. Jesus provided superior wine for the wedding guests to enjoy.
2. Jesus creates with the appearance of age—*The best wine is aged wine.*
3. Jesus provides joy, peace, and blessings to all who receive Him as Savior.
4. Jesus can and will meet all of my needs, if it is according to His will (1 John 5:14)

Closing Prayer:

Closing Song: *You Deserve The Glory*