

John 2:1-11 (NIV) On the third day a wedding took place at Cana in Galilee. Jesus' mother was there, {2} and Jesus and his disciples had also been invited to the wedding. {3} When the wine was gone, Jesus' mother said to him, "They have no more wine." {4} "Dear woman, why do you involve me?" Jesus replied. "My time has not yet come." {5} His mother said to the servants, "Do whatever he tells you." {6} Nearby stood six stone water jars, the kind used by the Jews for ceremonial washing, each holding from twenty to thirty gallons. {7} Jesus said to the servants, "Fill the jars with water"; so they filled them to the brim. {8} Then he told them, "Now draw some out and take it to the master of the banquet." They did so, {9} and the master of the banquet tasted the water that had been turned into wine. He did not realize where it had come from, though the servants who had drawn the water knew. Then he called the bridegroom aside {10} and said, "Everyone brings out the choice wine first and then the cheaper wine after the guests have had too much to drink; but you have saved the best till now." {11} This, the first of his miraculous signs, Jesus performed at Cana in Galilee. He thus revealed his glory, and his disciples put their faith in him.

43-02-01-Christ's First Miracle

Epiphany, transformation, Holy Spirit, marriage

John 2:1-11

An invitation to Jesus is an invitation to transformation.

INTRODUCTION: (Text as Scripture reading)

–Today's **text** is a major epiphany passage for 2 reasons– **v.11**, *This, the first of his **miraculous signs**, Jesus performed at Cana in Galilee. He thus **revealed** his glory, and his disciples put their faith in him.* Not only was this **Christ's 1st miracle (title)**, but this passage uses the Greek word from which we get our word *epiphany* [*revelation* or *manifestation*]. At this wedding in Cana, Jesus began to manifest His glory.

–*Why at a wedding?* After baptism, wasn't He to be about *His Father's business*? He was! This miracle was at God's 1st social institution,

AND it identified Christ's ultimate purpose: **marriage**. His Father had sent Him to get a Bride (*Christ's is the longest engagement in history!*)

–The central issue in this story is **transformation**. Water was changed into wine. We're going to see that **HOM.idea**.

I. Jesus Transforms Marriages

A. **v.2**, "*Jesus and his disciples had also been invited to the wedding*" Why?

1. **v.1a**, "*the third day*" shows they sought a blessing [**3rd day of creation**: God had made fertile land & fruitful vegetation; "*God saw it was good*" **x2**]
2. **v.1b**, "*Jesus' mother was there*" they sought help (Mary probably was serving—get a true believer to help, and you get Jesus, too!)

B. Jesus makes Himself available to marriages that get into trouble:

1. [A **marriage myth**: "*You will fulfill me.*" But only God fulfills us.] Married couples can run into this problem in **v.3a**, "*the wine was gone.*" (*joy*)
2. But with Jesus invited into troubled relationships, people can ask for His help when, **v.3b**, "*They have no more wine.*"
 - a. Praying for His help brings both *perspective* and *provision*.
 - b. *What if He says*– **v.4a**, "*why do you involve me?*" (If we undertake any task without Him, this question exposes our initial mistake.)
 - c. *What if He puts us on hold* (**v.4b**, "*My time has not yet come*")? [**M. Henry**: *The delays of mercy are not to be construed the denials of prayer.*]
 - d. Mary's solution– **v.5**, "*Do whatever he tells you.*" [**David du Plessis** had ecumenical diplomacy, telling Catholics & Protestants: "*Obey her!*"] (Set feelings aside, and do what He says, trusting "*Thy will be done.*")

TRANS: *Jesus can transform marriages, and every other relationship. God can turn the mundane into something rich and special (like water changed to wine). **An invitation to Jesus is an invitation to transformation.** Nothing stays ordinary when Jesus is present. But this miracle is also about another kind of transformation....*

II. Jesus Transforms the Law

- A. These “*six stone water jars*” (v.6) were reminiscent of OT Law:
1. “*six*”– 6 days of work, before the Sabbath rest
 2. “*stone*”– 10 Commandments, written on stone
 3. “*used by the Jews for ceremonial washing*” (What was *ritually cleansed* became *renewed*, so these “*water jars*” symbolized *renewal*.)
- B. Christ brought fulfillment to the OT– v.7, “*fill the jars with water*”
1. He rescues the OT from empty formalism by filling it to the brim with His own life– Mat 5:17, “Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them.”
 2. He also rescues the legalist from false confidence in externalism and empty formalism [Rich Young Ruler– Mat 19:21, Jesus answered, “If you want to be perfect, go, sell your possessions and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come, follow me.”] (Jesus took the OT to a higher level: His own life.)

TRANS: *Jesus transformed the Law. OT Israel had been called the wife of God, married by Law to the Lawgiver. The Gospel would espouse a new Israel, the Bride of Christ. This first miracle predicted the passing from the Old Covenant into the New Covenant. Christ’s presence is transformational.*

III. Jesus Transforms Ministry

- A. Who are these servants? Servers at an earthly wedding turned into servants of the Heavenly Bridegroom with “good news” to share– v.8, “*Now draw some out and take it to the master of the banquet*.” They did so.
1. The water they took from OT “water jars” became NT “wine” under the commanding presence of the Messiah.
 2. Law alone has no transforming power. It’s not “good news” until fulfilled by Christ– John 1:17, For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ.
- B. Who is the banquet-master? Those living under the Law.

1. Religious people, who haven’t yet met Jesus, can “Taste and see that the LORD is good” (Psa 34:8a), when a servant of the Bridegroom Christ brings them (v.9a) “*the water that had been turned into wine*.”
2. This fellow (v.9b) “*called the bridegroom aside*” to see what was up. (*That was the right move!* This whole event was an epiphany that the true Bridegroom had come and had brought new wine:
 - a. Its large quantity symbolized His blood of the New Covenant [180 gallons, to show its sufficiency for everybody invited to His wedding]
 - b. Its outpouring symbolized the outpouring of the Holy Spirit– (John the Baptist, the last OT prophet) said in Mat 3:11, “I baptize you with **water** for repentance. But after me will come one who is more powerful than I, whose sandals I am not fit to carry. He will baptize you with the **Holy Spirit and with fire**.” (Enough wine for *refills!*)
- C. In church history and in individual Christian lives the Bridegroom makes sure that when refills are needed, the testimony of v.10 remains up-to-date: “*you have saved the best till now*.”
 1. There have been ups-and-downs in church and personal life when the wine ran out (when His love was replaced with legalisms or His presence traded for propositions.)
 2. In those ups-and-downs, , revivals and refills are needed– Eph 5:18, Do not get drunk on wine, which leads to debauchery. Instead, be filled with the Spirit. [Greek tense of filled means filled continuously]
 3. After all our ups-and-downs, there’s a final “UP”– Rev.19:9, Then the angel said to me, “Write: `Blessed are those who are invited to the wedding supper of the Lamb!’” And he added, “These are the true words of God.”

CONCLUSION:

–**An invitation to Jesus is an invitation to transformation.** Jesus was invited to a marriage in Cana where He manifested His glory. What He did there also manifested an invitation to us. He was inviting us to another marriage, ours to Him at “the wedding supper of the Lamb,” AND an invitation for us right now to taste the new wine of His saving blood and sanctifying Spirit.

–I hope all of you have drunk deeply of that new wine. If not, then **do so today**, and let Christ transform your life. He has “*saved the best till now*.” And if you need them, which we all do, there’s quite new wine available for refills.