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JESUS PERFORMED HIS FIRST SIGN AT A WEDDING AT CANA IN GALILEE

MANIFESTING HIS GLORY



WATER INTO WINE

SETTING OUR CONTEXT ...

- I. In the beginning was the Word and in him was life which was the light of men, 1:1-5.
 - (John 1:1–5 ESV) **In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.** 2 He was in the beginning with God. 3 All things were made through him, and without him was not any thing made that was made. 4 **In him was life, and the life was the light of men.** 5 The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.
- II. A man named John was sent by God to bear witness about the light, 1:6-8.
- III. The true light was coming into the world, 1:9-13.
- IV. The Word who is the true light became a human and lived among us—he was called Jesus, 1:14-18.
- V. John the Baptist gave testimony that he was not the Christ but the one who was prophesied to prepare the way of the Christ, 1:19-28.
- VI. John calls people to behold the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world, 1:29-34.
- VII. John calls his two disciples to behold the Lamb of God and they did and followed Jesus, 1:35-37.
- VIII. We “hear” the Word who is Jesus speak his first words as he interacts with his disciples, 1:38-39.
- IX. The first two disciples begin finding others to follow Jesus, 1:40-42.
- X. Jesus joins his disciples in recruiting others as his core group begins forming, 1:43-51.

The disciples beheld Jesus and were awestruck. They had encountered God himself and were filled with awe; overwhelmed with a feeling of reverence, admiration, fear, and wonder. They were amazed, astonished, astounded, stunned and shocked. Coming into the presence of Majesty does that to a person.

So no wonder they followed him.

WE COULD MAYBE ASK OURSELVES THESE QUESTIONS ...

- a. Have we beheld Jesus the Christ, the Son of God, and been awestruck?
- b. If not, could that explain why we are not following him as we should? Has it been too long since we have encountered God in his glory?
- c. Does that type of thing even still happen today?

1. Jesus’s public ministry began with his disciples at a wedding at Cana in Galilee, 2:1-2.

- (John 2:1–2 ESV) 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.**

A. Cana was an insignificant, rural town.

B. The mother of Jesus was at the wedding.

C. Jesus and his disciples were also there.

2. Jesus is given the news of the very embarrassing development that the wine had run out, 2:3-5.

- (John 2:3–5 ESV) **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.”**

A. The mother of Jesus tells him—“They have no wine.”

B. This was a serious embarrassment to the groom and a social disaster.

C. Jesus speaks to his mother as a woman and not as his mother.

D. His hour had not yet come.

Jesus answers his mother with a degree of separation to ease the transition for her as he is entering the period of his public ministry. This means it is necessary that she learns to relate to him as her Lord and not as her son.

Her prompting could not interfere with his divine schedule and his earthly mission which would climax at the cross.

E. However ... interestingly what seems to have happened is that Mary’s prompting fit into the Lord’s divine plan after all.

But doesn’t this fit with the overall context for his first sign—a wedding disaster in a nowhere town in the country and a mom hoping her son can make things better for all concerned.

F. It seems that Mary understood Jesus’s intent and accepted her new role while at the same time demonstrating her trust in her son as she instructed the servants to do whatever Jesus tells them.

Background: Since there is no mention of Joseph

several commentators believe that he had been dead for a while and that Jesus, being the oldest son, had been the man of the house. Consequently, him being God, Mary had come to observe and rely on his wisdom.

What this may mean is that Mary did not necessarily expect Jesus to perform a miracle as we might first think but that Jesus would possibly have some wise solution to the dilemma. Supporting evidence for this would be that turning water to wine was "the first of his signs" which means that Mary had not before observed Jesus performing miracles so she would not have had that as a basis for her request.

3. The occasion in which Jesus turned water into wine is described in very mundane, everyday, simple terms, 2:6-10.

- (John 2:6–10 ESV) **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.**"

A. Six stone water jars were at the wedding venue for the guests for ritual cleansing.

- (Mark 7:1–5 ESV) Now when the Pharisees gathered to him, with some of the scribes who had come from

Jerusalem, 2 **they saw that some of his disciples ate with hands that were defiled, that is, unwashed.** 3 (For the Pharisees and all the Jews do not eat unless they wash their hands properly, holding to the tradition of the elders, 4 and when they come from the marketplace, they do not eat unless they wash. And there are many other traditions that they observe, such as the washing of cups and pots and copper vessels and dining couches.) 5 And the Pharisees and the scribes asked him, "**Why do your disciples not walk according to the tradition of the elders, but eat with defiled hands?**"

- (Luke 11:37–38 ESV) While Jesus was speaking, a Pharisee asked him to dine with him, so he went in and reclined at table. 38 **The Pharisee was astonished to see that he did not first wash before dinner.**

B. The six stone water jars had a capacity of twenty or thirty gallons for a total of 120-180 gallons of water.

C. Jesus told the servants to fill the jars with water.

D. They filled them to the brim.

E. Jesus told them to draw some out and take it to the master of the feast.

F. The master of the feast commented as to the excellent quality of the wine.

G. The sign/miracle seems to have just happened and possibly not observed by anyone.

4. The facts and the purpose of the occasion perfectly fit the divine progression of John's stated purpose in the Gospel, 2:11-12.

- (John 2:11–12 ESV) 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.

A. This was the first sign that Jesus performed.

B. This sign manifested his glory.

C. His disciples believed in him but there is no mention of anyone else having been affected.

D. They went "home" and stayed there a few days.

E. The symbolism of the event—that drastic change was inevitable, old to new, human works to miracle of God—fits perfectly with John's stated purpose.

F. We must acknowledge that this first sign that Jesus performed would have been selected according to the infinite wisdom of God and his sovereign plan and in conformity to the stated purpose.

- (John 20:30–31 ESV) Now Jesus did **many other signs** in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book; 31 but these **[signs] are written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God**, and that by believing you may have life in his name.
- (Daniel 2:20 ESV) Daniel answered and

said: “Blessed be the name of God forever and ever, to whom belong wisdom and might.”

- (Romans 16:27 ESV) To the only wise God be glory forevermore through Jesus Christ! Amen.
- (Romans 11:33 ESV) Oh, the depth of the riches and wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments and how inscrutable his ways!

G. This is the first of the signs that were written down by John so that we might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God.

H. John used the word sign—σημεῖον [semeion], not miracle, because it better fit his stated purpose.

I. But to be clear this sign was a miracle.

5. The symbolism of the sign had much greater significance than the miracle of the sign itself.

A. Jesus manifested his glory when he turned the water into wine.

- (John 1:14 ESV) 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.
- (John 2:11 ESV) This, the first of his signs, Jesus did at Cana in Galilee, and manifested his glory. And his disciples believed in him.

Manifest ... φανερόω [phaneroō] ... to make visible or known, actual and visible, realized; expose to view so to be plainly recognized, thoroughly understood; to cause to become clearly revealed to the mind, the senses, or judgment; to show plainly; to make evident.

B. So when Jesus manifested his glory he made it visible and known; clear and obvious; evident; on display and exposed to view.

C. The significance of the event is that Jesus in turning water into wine signaled a massive change of direction from the law to grace and truth in him.

- (Hebrews 8:13 ESV) In speaking of a new covenant, he makes the first one obsolete. And what is becoming obsolete and growing old is ready to vanish away.

D. The shadow (the law) will never make perfect.

- (Hebrews 10:1 ESV) For since the law has but a shadow of the good things to come instead of the true form of these realities, it can never, by the same sacrifices that are continually offered every year, make perfect those who draw near.

E. The shadow must give way to the true light that has entered the world and is now manifesting his glory.

- (John 1:9 ESV) The true light, which gives light to everyone, was coming into the world.

F. All religions of human works and religious ingenuity must be set aside to find life in the light.

Ingenuity ... skill or cleverness in devising; inventiveness; aptness of design or contrivance.

- (Ephesians 4:14 ESV) So that we may no longer be children, tossed to and fro by the waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by human cunning, by craftiness in deceitful schemes.
- (2 Corinthians 4:2 ESV) But we have renounced disgraceful, underhanded ways. We refuse to practice cunning or to tamper with God's word, but by the open statement of the truth we would commend ourselves to everyone's conscience in the sight of God.
- (2 Corinthians 11:3 ESV) But I am afraid that as the serpent deceived Eve by his cunning, your thoughts will be led astray from a sincere and pure devotion to Christ.

G. We must flip the script and reject the traditions of humans to establish the commandment of God.

- (Mark 7:6–9 ESV) And he said to them, “Well did Isaiah prophesy of you hypocrites, as it is written, “ ‘This people honors me with their lips, but their heart is far from me; 7 in vain do they worship me, teaching as doctrines the commandments of men.’ 8 You leave the commandment of God and hold to the tradition of men.” 9 And he said to them, “You have a fine way of rejecting the commandment of God in order to establish your tradition!”