

## John 2:1-11 NLT

Jesus had been baptized in water. He had been anointed and empowered by the Holy Spirit. Then He had spent forty days in the wilderness dealing with Satan's temptations to use this power for selfish purposes. When He came down from that mountain, Jesus had the victory that would carry Him through the rest of His life on earth.

Now it was time for the disciples to see Jesus in a way that they hadn't seen yet.

It was performed, of all places, at a wedding.

Jesus did not live as a hermit. He interacted with people. He attended social gatherings. People actively sought out His company. Brace yourself for this one: Jesus had fun! We have this traditional image of a dour, gloomy Jesus that we lose sight of the fact that He was a real person living a real life.

Jesus had been invited to a wedding in a village known as Cana, which means "reedy" or "place of reeds." It was less than ten miles from Jesus' hometown of Nazareth.

Jesus' mother was with Him and at least some of His disciples, who He had met just prior to this event, were also with Him I'm planning to talk about how they met in a future episode.

If you've ever seen a Jewish wedding you know that they can be pretty lively events! But it wasn't all about the party. Much of the ceremony was very deep and somber as the ancient Jews saw the marriage ceremony as having a sacramental quality to it. People would often spend time in deep prayer and fasting leading up to the event.

But things hit a serious snag when the wine supply runs out during the festivities. Again, a Jewish wedding celebration would often last for several days. To run short on refreshments for your guests was considered to be one of the highest forms of insult. In some cases, it could even result in a lawsuit!

So Mary comes and tells Jesus about the problem and at first, He seems a little hesitant. "Dear woman, that's not our problem," But how many of you know that sometimes Mom has a special knack for getting results! They needed wine and they needed it now!

If you have ever witnessed to a person with an alcohol problem you've probably noticed that they know this passage pretty well, along with "...take a little wine for your stomach's sake." ", alcohol is obviously a very sensitive subject both in the world and even within the church.

First of all, the lands of the Bible were lands filled with lush vineyards. Grape products were a very important part of their economy.

Also, clean drinking water was sometimes very difficult to come by. So the people had a very practical way around the problem. They would dilute the wine with water. This served two

purposes: The alcohol in the wine would serve as a purifying agent for the water and in turn, the dilution would prevent the wine from making you drunk. At a ratio of about six parts water to one part wine, your bladder would intervene before you got a buzz!

But getting back to the passage, we see Mary tell the servants, "Do whatever he tells you." The greatest advice anyone could ever give. Do what the Master says! True faith is obedient faith!

Standing nearby were six large jars, which could hold could hold twenty to thirty gallons each. Jesus told the attendants to fill them with water. "Fill the jars with water."

A couple of important observations here. First, notice that before God blesses, He usually requires a corresponding action on our part. Again, it goes back to true faith is obedient faith. Also, notice how he said to FILL the pots with water. Don't do it half way. When you do something for Jesus, do it all the way!

So, they follow Jesus' instructions and after they had tasted the wine, they observed that it was customary for them to start off with the good wine, then bring out cheaper, lower quality wine later on. But in this case, the wine Jesus had made was the best of all of it<sup>6</sup>

Jesus' first miracle was one of pure luxury, supplying a want, not just a need. He didn't just provide wine, He provided wine of the highest quality!

This miraculous sign at Cana in Galilee is described as the first time Jesus revealed his glory. And notice this: his disciples believed in him.

Miracles are designed to glorify Jesus, to help people in need and to build faith and we see all three of these things accomplished right here.