

Series: John

Title: The First Miracle

Text: John 2: 1-11

Date: Dec 13, 2020

Place: SGBC, NJ

John 2: 1: And the third day there was a marriage in Cana of Galilee; and the mother of Jesus was there: 2: And both Jesus was called, and his disciples, to the marriage. 3: And when they wanted wine, the mother of Jesus saith unto him, They have no wine. 4: Jesus saith unto her, Woman, what have I to do with thee? mine hour is not yet come. 5: His mother saith unto the servants, Whatsoever he saith unto you, do *it*. 6: And there were set there six waterpots of stone, after the manner of the purifying of the Jews, containing two or three firkins apiece. 7: Jesus saith unto them, Fill the waterpots with water. And they filled them up to the brim. 8: And he saith unto them, Draw out now, and bear unto the governor of the feast. And they bare *it*. 9: When the ruler of the feast had tasted the water that was made wine, and knew not whence it was: (but the servants which drew the water knew;) the governor of the feast called the bridegroom, 10: And saith unto him, Every man at the beginning doth set forth good wine; and when men have well drunk, then that which is worse: *but* thou hast kept the good wine until now. 11: This beginning of miracles did Jesus in Cana of Galilee, and manifested forth his glory; and his disciples believed on him.

Subject: The First Miracle

This was the first miracle the Lord Jesus performed on this earth: he turned water into wine at a marriage feast in Cana of Galilee. Verse 11 says that by this miracle (wonder) *Christ manifested his glory and his disciples believed on him*—that is the spiritual message here.

Only Christ can work the miraculous wonder of grace in a dead sinner. He does so by manifesting his glory—God’s glory in his face. The result is life, purity and the gift of faith—so his disciples believe on him. All our Lord’s miracles are physical examples of the spiritual miracles of grace which he works for and in his people—and continues to work—to save us from our sins.

Proposition: In this first miracle we see a picture of our Lord manifesting his glory by which he regenerates, separates and purifies his child, bringing us to believe on him.

THE EVENT

John 2: 1: And the third day there was a marriage in Cana of Galilee; and the mother of Jesus was there: 2: And both Jesus was called, and his disciples, to the marriage.

The third day is the day of life. In creation, on the third day, God brought forth grass, the herb yielding seed after its kind, THE tree yielding fruit, whose seed was in itself (Gen 1:12). Of course our Lord arose from the grave on the third day. This miracle pictures Christ making his child spiritually alive. Also, the third day was the day of purification. When a man was unclean from touching the dead, God commanded the water of separation and purification was to be applied to wash him clean on the third day.

Our Lord’s miracle on the third day pictures the separation and purification Christ accomplishes in his child by the washing of regeneration and sanctifying of the Holy Spirit. These earthen vessels were the vessels the Jews, vainly used to wash and purify themselves.

But only Christ can wash and purify a sinner. Moses first miracle turned water into blood; Christ's first miracle made water into wine. The law came by Moses (judgment and death) but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ.

At a marriage is where this took place. How appropriate that our Lord worked his first miracle (wonder) at a marriage. Christ is the Bridegroom and his bride is God's elect. God our Father chose his elect freely by his grace in eternity and gave this bride to his Son. Christ entered covenant to save her and present her to himself without fault and blame. This Christ shall do in that great marriage feast in glory and not one will be lost. When we assemble to hear the gospel preached, we are hearing God's word. We are witnessing the marriage between Christ and his bride who Christ everlastingly loves and saves.

Cana of Galilee was the place. Cana means a place of reeds. Christ came into this world of bruised reeds fallen in sin. Thankfully, we read of him concerning his elect,

Matthew 12: 20: A bruised reed shall he not break, and smoking flax shall he not quench, till he send forth judgment unto victory.

Cana in Galilee was not a place of renown like Jerusalem. He did not work this miracle among the pious-acting holy men of the day but in a despised little town. Christ associated with sinners with whom not one of the religious folks would dare be seen. The place where Christ works this spiritual miracle of grace is not a place of renown to the ungodly world nor among renown people. It is his unnoticed, despised church—made up of sinners. The kingdom of God comes without observation. The world took no notice then of what went on that day and the world takes no notice of what is going on here today. Only his saints behold our Savior's glory and we alone believe on him. He uses nothings and nobodies. There is not one servant's name mentioned in this miracle. It is because only Christ gets the glory.

The mother and his disciples give us a picture of the church. We know Mary was a sinner saved by grace the same as we are. She is no intercessor. Mary was only a sinner saved by Christ as we. But according to the flesh, through her, Christ came into the world. So she typifies the church.

Galatians 4: 2: Jerusalem which is above is free, which is the mother of us all.

Christ is the Son of God given but as the Son of Man Christ came through the church. The genealogies show it. And Christ was there with his disciples who were called. This miracle is what Christ works in his church, amongst his own. It is Christ who calls us.

2 Thessalonians 2: 14: Whereunto he called you by our gospel, to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ.

They wanted wine. As Mary went to Christ when they wanted wine so the church appeals to Christ to provide because we cannot do it. The word "*wanted*" means they came short of wine. This was probably a poor family who simply could not provide what was needed. But spiritually is it not a picture of those God saves? God has made his church, his disciples, behold that we

Rom 3: 23...all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God; 24: Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus: 25: Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins

You and I are entirely helpless, unrighteous, unable to provide anything needed in our salvation from beginning to the end. We have no ability to provide life, to purify or to separate ourselves nor any other. We are in total complete *want* due to our sin. We need Christ. So our prayer is for Christ to come and provide all our need.

Christ's authority over the church is seen. Our Lord's answer to Mary shows his authority over the church and her answer shows our submission to him—*Jesus saith unto her, Woman, what have I to do with thee? mine hour is not yet come. His mother saith unto the servants, Whatsoever he saith unto you, do it.* Woman was a term of respect. But the Lord let her know that her authority as a parent no longer existed. He is our Head. The Power is our Lord's, not ours.

Mine hour is not yet come refers to the hour when he would give himself to be crucified. It was the hour set by God from before the foundation of the world—"the fulness of time." We often read that no man could lay hands on him for his hour was not yet come. No man took his life. Our Redeemer had power to lay it down and power to take it up again. He gave men permission to take him. But Christ did so only when the hour was come. They only did what he foreordained before to be done. But some suggest he meant the hour that he should work this miracle had not yet come. Without question, Christ works grace in the heart in the hour that pleases him. Our times are in his hands.

Whatsoever he saith unto you, do it. Since all is in Christ's hands we submit and say this to all who hear our gospel. Men want to know what rule the church is under. That is our rule. "*Whatsoever he saith unto you do it.*" What does he say unto you? "Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden and I will give you rest"; "Look unto me and be ye saved"; "Abide in me and you shall bring forth much fruit for without me ye can do nothing"; "Love one another as I have loved you"; "Fear not! Follow me! Preach me! Wait on me!" *Whatsoever he saith unto you do it!*

THE ELECT

John 2: 6: And there were set there six waterpots of stone, after the manner of the purifying of the Jews, containing two or three firkins apiece. 7: Jesus saith unto them, Fill the waterpots with water. And they filled them up to the brim.

In these six waterpots of stone we see a picture of God's elect in whom Christ works this miracle. All God's elect are depraved sinners. We are empty waterpots of stone. Six is the number of man in scripture. Seven is the number of completion. Fleshly man is represented by six. We are empty by nature like these waterpots: empty of spiritual life, empty of holiness, empty of knowledge, empty of righteousness—just empty! We are earthen vessels of stone: our hearts are adamant stone by nature. Christ must create in us a new man, a new heart, a soft heart, a teachable heart.

As we said before these pots were used in vain by the Jews to wash and purify themselves. We vainly used these earthen, empty, vessels of stone (our flesh), along with the letter of the word, to try to wash and purify ourselves by our works. But we are spiritually dead as those stones. We are, by nature, as empty as they, as incapable of washing and cleansing and separating ourselves from our corruption as they.

But Christ gives the command, “*Fill the waterpots with water. And they filled them up to the brim.*” The water is a type of the word—the gospel of Christ and him crucified—when blessed by the Spirit of our Lord.

Ephesians 5: 25...Christ...loved the church, and gave himself for it; 26: That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, 27: That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish.

As those servants filled the waterpots to the brim. So we preach Christ and him crucified. It is the water of the word that cleanses. It is hearing that Christ who fulfilled the law and satisfied justice for his people is the righteousness of God for everyone who believes. He—honored and magnified his holy law for God and for his people. The water of the Word purifies and separates us from lies to the truth. We believe the truth that Christ gave himself and put away the sin of his people making us the righteousness of God in him. The water of the Word is that salvation is All of Jesus Christ our Lord.

Christ could have produced wine without the servants and he could do it without us. But it pleased God to use his servants to preach his word. Why?

2 Corinthians 4: 7: We have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God and not of us.

1 Corinthians 1: 28...God chosen, *yea*, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are: 29: That no flesh should glory in his presence....31: That according as it is written, He that glorieth let him glory in the Lord.

We pray, we study, we preach. But in the hour appointed, *Christ turns the water into wine.* Christ willed it. He did not have to say a word. He willed it and made the water wine. Likewise, Christ makes us hear with spiritual ears and taste with spiritual taste by his sovereign will. We are saved by Christ’s will, not our will. Christ’s blood becomes that promised soul-cheering wine on the lees well-refined. By the word of the gospel he cleanses and purifies our conscious within by his Spirit. We become alive and hear the gospel in spirit and in truth. He finds us like the baby polluted and says

Ezekiel 16:9: Then washed I thee with water; yea, I throughly washed away thy blood from thee, and I anointed thee with oil.

Ezekiel 36:25: Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean: from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you.

Doing so Christ manifests his glory as God our Savior. It is then that

1 Corinthians 1: 30: Of God are ye in Christ, who of God is made unto us Wisdom, and Righteousness, and Sanctification and Redemption

He reveals that he put all our sins away. The revelation is that he perfected us forever by his one offering. We are complete in him. As he is so are we in this world.

THE BEST FOR LAST

John 2: 8: And he saith unto them, Draw out now, and bear unto the governor of the feast. And they bare it. 9: When the ruler of the feast had tasted the water that was made wine, and knew not whence it was: (but the servants which drew the water knew;) the governor of the feast called the bridegroom, 10: And saith unto him, Every man at the beginning doth set forth good wine; and when men have well drunk, then that which is worse: *but* thou hast kept the good wine until now. 11: This beginning of miracles did Jesus in Cana of Galilee, and manifested forth his glory; and his disciples believed on him.

Our Sovereign, gracious Savior makes us taste and see that the wine of his gospel and grace is the absolute best there is. One taste of this wine of Christ's free forgiveness of all our sins and we come to the Bridegroom and glorify Christ for setting forth the good wine of his grace unto us.

Hebrews 10:22: [We] draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water.

It is indeed *the beginning of miracles*. The first miracle Christ's works in us, in our experience of his grace, is to give us life and faith in him. He turns the water of the word into the wine of his gospel and grace. But it is only the beginning of wonders. As Christ told Nathaniel, we shall things in greater light hereafter.

But from the beginning of this wonder and throughout we behold *manifested forth his glory*: the glory of Christ's person, the glory of our Lord's accomplished redemption, the glory of God's all-sufficient grace, the glory of his saving power and the glory of our Savior's daily works among us.

From the first hour—*his disciples believe on him*. They had already been born of his Spirit and believed on him but here again he manifest his glory and they believed on him. Christ showed them his readiness and his ability to meet all their unexpected difficulties.

Robert Hawker said concerning all our lesser needs in this life, "*He that turned water into wine to answer the momentary feast, can soon convert everything even of evil into good; and rather than that his redeemed shall want anything needful, will bring resources from their enemies' table.*"

Romans 8: 28: We know that all things work together for good to them that love God: to them that are called according to his purpose.

If Christ has given you spiritual life do you doubt his ability to do anything we need? If Christ has redeemed a wretch like you do you doubt his ability to work any work we need? He destroys our wisdom to show us he is all our Wisdom and all our Power.

1 Corinthians 1: 19: For it is written, I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and will bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent. 20: Where *is* the wise? where *is* the scribe? where *is* the disputer of this world? hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world? 21: For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe...23: But we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumblingblock, and unto the Greeks foolishness; 24: But unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God.

Amen!