

## **Find Life in the Son: Glory Shining Clear John 2:1-12**

### **Introduction**

We're getting close to wedding season, and there's several coming up here at Hampton Park. One of the best ways you can show love to a brother and sister in Christ is to rejoice with them at their marriage.

In the first century, a Jewish wedding could be a week-long celebration or more. It would mean more than spending a couple hours of your weekend to be there. Jesus and His disciples were invited to a wedding in Cana of Galilee. And Jesus showed up, along with His disciples. Good thing He did.

<sup>1</sup> On the third day there was a wedding at Cana in Galilee, and the mother of Jesus was there. <sup>2</sup> Jesus also was invited to the wedding with his disciples. <sup>3</sup> When the wine ran out, the mother of Jesus said to him, "They have no wine." <sup>4</sup> And Jesus said to her, "Woman, what does this have to do with me? My hour has not yet come." <sup>5</sup> His mother said to the servants, "Do whatever he tells you."

<sup>6</sup> Now there were six stone water jars there for the Jewish rites of purification, each holding twenty or thirty gallons. <sup>7</sup> Jesus said to the servants, "Fill the jars with water." And

they filled them up to the brim. <sup>8</sup> And he said to them, "Now draw some out and take it to the master of the feast." So they took it. <sup>9</sup> 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 <sup>10</sup> 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." <sup>11</sup> This, the first of his signs, Jesus did at Cana in Galilee, and manifested his glory. And his disciples believed in him. <sup>12</sup> After this he went down to Capernaum, with his mother and his brothers and his disciples, and they stayed there for a few days.

1. Participation in Joy (1-2)
2. Opportunity of Crisis (3-5)
3. Power of God (6-10)
4. Reason for Reliance (11)

### **1. Participation in Joy (1-2)**

<sup>1</sup> On the third day there was a wedding at Cana in Galilee, and the mother of Jesus was there. <sup>2</sup> Jesus also was invited to the wedding with his disciples.

The third day after this encounter with Philip and Nathanael Jesus and His disciples head to this wedding.

A wedding takes us back to the Garden of Eden, when God brought the first man and woman together to form the first home. It was part of a very good creation unspoiled by sin and its curse.

God's design for human marriage, male and female made in His image, came with His blessing to fill, subdue, and exercise dominion over the earth. *Marriage is His gift of joy to the human race, and our disdain or distortions of it set us at odds with the intrinsic, bedrock laws of the universe God put in place for our good.*

It is fitting that Jesus the Creator and Sustainer came to be part of this wedding celebration and that here He would perform His first miracle. In the Jewish culture, a wedding feast could last a week or more. Feasting, family, friends, joy, gratitude for God's good gifts and steadfast love for us.

You might think that with such a brief window of time to fulfill His earthly ministry, Jesus would have no time for social events. You might think that with the looming shadow of the cross, He would view joyous feasting with friends to be a frivolous waste of time. But to think so is to misunderstand who He is. It is to misunderstand who God is.

## Psalm 104:10-15

**10** You make springs gush forth in the valleys; they flow between the hills; **11** they give drink to every beast of the field; the wild donkeys quench their thirst. **12** Beside them the birds of the heavens dwell; they sing among the branches. **13** From your lofty abode you water the mountains; the earth is satisfied with the fruit of your work. **14** You cause the grass to grow for the livestock and plants for man to cultivate, that he may bring forth food from the earth **15** and wine to gladden the heart of man, oil to make his face shine and bread to strengthen man's heart.

*God delights in His creation. God delights in us. It is God who has given us good things to eat and drink. God created marriage, family, and music, and community. And when God took on human flesh, He gladly participated in this joyful occasion. He was invited to participate because the family of this couple knew He would want to be there. We learn from John 21 that Nathanael was from Cana, so its possible he knew the couple. But Mary, the mother of Jesus is also there, so the family of Jesus has some connection with these friends, too.*

Jesus did not stand aloof from people in their feasting and joy. He would eat with tax collectors and sinners. His holiness didn't come from pulling away from people. It came

from who He is. Spending time with people, especially those bound in sin, was part of His mission and His loving character as God.

Luke 5:29-32

**29** And Levi made him a great feast in his house, and there was a large company of tax collectors and others reclining at table with them. **30** And the Pharisees and their scribes grumbled at his disciples, saying, "Why do you eat and drink with tax collectors and sinners?" **31** And Jesus answered them, "Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick. **32** I have not come to call the righteous but sinners to repentance."

The religious enemies of Jesus found the associations in which Jesus engaged cause for criticizing and rejecting Him. Theirs was a hollow holiness that believed increasing one's own stature with God came from avoiding contact with sinners. Never mind the sinful state of their own hearts.

Luke 7:33-35

**33** For John the Baptist has come eating no bread and drinking no wine, and you say, 'He has a demon.' **34** The Son of Man has come eating and drinking, and you say, 'Look at him! A glutton and a drunkard, a friend of tax collectors and sinners!' **35** Yet wisdom is justified by all her children."

True wisdom from above—skillful living according to the will of God—gives birth to love toward others and works that benefit them.

Illus: some years ago we went to eat at a nearby restaurant after Sunday morning worship. On this particular Sunday there were two distinct groups eating lunch. One group was dressed up and had clearly just come from church services. The other group was relaxed, obviously enjoying a day off. What was so arresting was that the group that had just come from church that day seemed unhappy, grumpy, and on edge. The other people were laid back and cheerful, engaging one another. The visual contrast was sobering and sad. If worshiping God takes away your joy and your ability to enjoy the company of others, there's something terribly wrong.

Thankfully, that experience was unusual. Most of the time I see Christians eating and fellowshiping, they seem joyful. Of course, there are times and seasons of grief and deep concern. *We weep with those who weep. Jesus was a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. But if our demeanor in the community is usually grim, aloof, and joyless, we grossly misrepresent what God is like. The gospel is news that brings joy, and it should show in the way we interact with others.*

Jesus participated in the joy of this wedding feast.

### **Applications**

- In what ways do you display joyful gratitude over God's provision for you?
- In what ways do you make it a point to spend time with people in their joys and in their sorrows?
- When do you spend social time with those who don't know Jesus yet, and if you don't do so, how do you expect to display and share the gospel with them?
- Are you known for contributing to the joy of community events or for putting a damper on them?

### **2. Opportunity of Crisis (3-5)**

<sup>3</sup> When the wine ran out, the mother of Jesus said to him, "They have no wine." <sup>4</sup> And Jesus said to her, "Woman, what does this have to do with me? My hour has not yet come." <sup>5</sup> His mother said to the servants, "Do whatever he tells you."

This brief interchange puzzles us. In our English translation Jesus seems rude. His mother's mentioning there's no wine appears to be asking Him to do something about it. His response sounds like He's not willing to do so, but then He goes ahead and turns water to wine. So what's going on?

First, Mary does want Jesus to do something about the wine problem, but behind her words is evidently an expectation or desire that since Jesus has started His public ministry, that He will respond to the crisis in a way that reveals to the wedding party that He is the long-promised Messiah.

Second, when Jesus calls his mother "woman," He is not disrespecting her. He uses the same form of address when He speaks from the cross and assigns John to care for His mother.

John 19:26-27

<sup>26</sup> When Jesus saw his mother and the disciple whom he loved standing nearby, he said to his mother, "Woman, behold, your son!"

<sup>27</sup> Then he said to the disciple, "Behold, your mother!" And from that hour the disciple took her to his own home.

"What does this have to do with me" literally reads, "What to me and to you?" He goes on, "My hour has not yet come." It's not the right time to make His making His identity and mission known in a fully public way. When that moment comes it will be connected to His death on the cross. His mission is to save the lost, and that will require the sacrifice of Himself. He may also be calming any impatience she may have with the timing and way He resolves the wine shortage.



John uses this statement throughout his Gospel.

John 7:2-10

<sup>2</sup> Now the Jews' Feast of Booths was at hand. <sup>3</sup> So his brothers said to him, "Leave here and go to Judea, that your disciples also may see the works you are doing. <sup>4</sup> For no one works in secret if he seeks to be known openly. If you do these things, show yourself to the world." <sup>5</sup> For not even his brothers believed in him. <sup>6</sup> Jesus said to them, "My time has not yet come, but your time is always here. <sup>7</sup> The world cannot hate you, but it hates me because I testify about it that its works are evil. <sup>8</sup> You go up to the feast. I am not going up to this feast, for my time has not yet fully come." <sup>9</sup> After saying this, he remained in Galilee. <sup>10</sup> But after his brothers had gone up to the feast, then he also went up, not publicly but in private.

John 7:30

So they were seeking to arrest him, but no one laid a hand on him, because his hour had not yet come.

John 8:20

These words he spoke in the treasury, as he taught in the temple; but no one arrested him, because his hour had not yet come.

## John 13:1

Now before the Feast of the Passover, when Jesus knew that his hour had come to depart out of this world to the Father, having loved his own who were in the world, he loved them to the end.

## John 17:1-5

<sup>1</sup> When Jesus had spoken these words, he lifted up his eyes to heaven, and said, "Father, the hour has come; glorify your Son that the Son may glorify you, <sup>2</sup> since you have given him authority over all flesh, to give eternal life to all whom you have given him. <sup>3</sup> And this is eternal life, that they know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent. <sup>4</sup> I glorified you on earth, having accomplished the work that you gave me to do. <sup>5</sup> And now, Father, glorify me in your own presence with the glory that I had with you before the world existed.

Clearly, Jesus is not refusing to fix the wine problem at all. He will do so, but in a way that manifests His divine glory to a select few who know what happened behind the scenes.

*Everything Jesus said and did was in perfect alignment with God's timing and purpose. God's will involves not just what we do but also when we do it and how we do it. Jesus was fully tuned in to His Father's will in every particular.*

John 5:19-20

**19** So Jesus said to them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, the Son can do nothing of his own accord, but only what he sees the Father doing. For whatever the Father does, that the Son does likewise. **20** For the Father loves the Son and shows him all that he himself is doing. And greater works than these will he show him, so that you may marvel.

Mary's direction to the servants reveals her familiarity with the heart of Jesus, as well as His ability and authority.

"Do whatever he tells you."

I almost wonder whether Jesus gave her a wink, and that she looked at Him with loving confidence in His goodness.

Mary does not dictate how Jesus solves the problem. She has merely made it known. She has confidence that He can do anything and that He will do whatever He deems best.

We would all do well to give God that latitude in our faith in Him. He often does not meet the need in the manner and timing we have imagined, but He has full power and authority to do whatever is best. And it will be infinitely good. *We don't have to know everything. We don't have to control anything. But we are well served to trust Jesus with everything.*

## Application

- What crises or problems are causing you to be impatient with God's timetable?
- In what ways can you submit to His way and His time as Mary did when she said, "Do whatever He tells you"?
- What do you know for sure about the character and power of God that would lead you to full trust in Him to do what's best when it's best?

### 3. Power of God (6-10)

<sup>6</sup> Now there were six stone water jars there for the Jewish rites of purification, each holding twenty or thirty gallons. <sup>7</sup> Jesus said to the servants, "Fill the jars with water." And they filled them up to the brim. <sup>8</sup> And he said to them, "Now draw some out and take it to the master of the feast." So they took it. <sup>9</sup> 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 <sup>10</sup> 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."

The water in the stone jars was for washing, not drinking, as part of Jewish purification rituals. Jesus is going to turn the liquid into

something far more valuable and joyful than rinsing off dirt.

A family would usually serve their best wine first. Later on, when people had already drunk plenty and their sense of taste was dulled, they could serve the less expensive wine. You can imagine how expensive a week-long feast could be and how embarrassing it would be to run out of provisions. It's possible the family was comparatively poor and had cut the budget too tightly.

It is significant that the very first sign Jesus performed displayed His identity as the Creator who spoke the universe into existence and set its natural processes into place in a matter of days.

John 1:3

All things were made through him, and without him was not any thing made that was made.

Jesus did instantaneously what normally takes months and years. Water naturally turns to wine but only through a grapevine and the processes of growing grapes, squeezing them, then storing and aging their juice. He did it with complete unpretentious ease. No one but the servants, Mary, and His disciples knew what He had done.

Later, Jesus would perform a similar miracle, feeding 5,000 men plus women and children with only a boy's lunch. He cares about people and their physical needs and feeds them. As Creator He feeds every human animal on the planet.

He is not stingy in His provision. With the feeding of the 5,000+ there would be 12 basketfuls left over. And when this wedding celebration ended, there would have been plenty of wine left as a wedding gift to the happy couple. The six water pots held 20-30 gallons each, and Jesus had the servants fill them to the brim. That means that He created 120-180 gallons of the best wine, more than enough for the wedding feast. It was a gift of lavish provision in keeping with the generosity of God Himself.

Proverbs 3:9-10

<sup>9</sup> Honor the LORD with your wealth and with the firstfruits of all your produce; <sup>10</sup> then your barns will be filled with plenty, and your vats will be bursting with wine.

Isaiah 25:6

On this mountain the LORD of hosts will make for all peoples a feast of rich food, a feast of well-aged wine, of rich food full of marrow, of aged wine well refined.

*To indulge in God's good gifts in a way that harms others or crosses boundaries He has established is wrong. That's why drunkenness is sin. That's why hoarding is sin. That's why stealing is sin. We don't worship the gift. We worship the Giver. But that said, to enjoy God's gifts with gratitude is right and good. It is as God intended. Jesus Himself makes that clear with His first miracle. He is the Creator and Provider of every good and perfect gift. Jesus Christ is powerful, but He turns His power to our good. He is King, but He is the Savior-King.*

### **Applications**

- How often do you give God the Creator and Provider praise for all His good gifts to you?
- In what ways does your own hospitality and generosity reflect God's generosity?
- To whom can you bring relief and joy by giving good gifts?

### **4. Reason for Reliance (11)**

<sup>11</sup> This, the first of his signs, Jesus did at Cana in Galilee, and manifested his glory. And his disciples believed in him.

Jesus shone out clearly His divine character and power. His disciples had already believed in Him as the Messiah, the Son of God. But this was the first of the many miracles that would confirm their faith in Him.

John 5:36

But the testimony that I have is greater than that of John. For the works that the Father has given me to accomplish, the very works that I am doing, bear witness about me that the Father has sent me.

John 15:24

If I had not done among them the works that no one else did, they would not be guilty of sin, but now they have seen and hated both me and my Father.

Early on in John's Gospel, he testified

John 1:14

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.

The shining splendor of Jesus, the God-man, was manifest not merely on the Mount of Transfiguration. John's statement is broader than that because he characterizes the glory of God the Son as "full of grace and truth."

Grace is lavish, undeserved giving; and that's exactly what Jesus displayed at the wedding in Cana of Galilee. His very words "what is this to you and to me" reveal that His generous miracle was not from duty but from



love, and as such manifested the very heart of God toward those in need.

How unlike the ritual rule-keeping of the Jewish religion at the time. The water jars for ritual cleansing are no match for jars full of the best wine providing fullness of joy for a wedding feast.

### **Applications**

- If those who knew Jesus best and watched Him do marvelous miracles like this one put their full trust in Him, what stands in the way of your trusting Him fully too?
- What of the shining splendor of Jesus, full of grace and truth, have you experienced firsthand?

### **Conclusion**

Christ began His public ministry at a wedding. As redemption history reaches its culmination, His people will enjoy with Him the marriage supper of the Lamb. He is the perfect model of steadfast love toward His church.

You may be struggling with what you'd have to give up to follow Jesus. He Himself declared that to be His disciple you must deny yourself, take up your cross, and follow Him. But whatever you might lose is nothing compared to what you gain—rest for your

soul, freedom from sin guilt, power to live, the joy of His goodness and steadfast love, which will pursue you all the days of your life. And finally, you will reach home—to dwell in the house of the Lord forever (Psalm 23).

In His first miracle at Cana of Galilee, Jesus' divine glory shone clear:

1. Participation in Joy (1-2)
2. Opportunity of Crisis (3-5)
3. Power of God (6-10)
4. Reason for Reliance (11)

Closing Song: Jesus, There's No One Like You

### **Applications Summary**

- In what ways do you display joyful gratitude over God's provision for you?
- In what ways do you make it a point to spend time with people in their joys and in their sorrows?
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- Are you known for contributing to the joy of community events or for putting a damper on them?
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- In what ways can you submit to His way and His time as Mary did when she said, “Do whatever He tells you”?
- What do you know for sure about the character and power of God that would lead you to full trust in Him to do what’s best when it’s best?
- How often do you give God the Creator and Provider praise for all His good gifts to you?
- In what ways does your own hospitality and generosity reflect God’s generosity?
- To whom can you bring relief and joy by giving good gifts?
- If those who knew Jesus best and watched Him do marvelous miracles like this one put their full trust in Him, what stands in the way of your trusting Him fully too?
- What of the shining splendor of Jesus, full of grace and truth, have you experienced firsthand?