

But The Servants Knew
John 2:1-11

How we view this miracle will be determined by how we view the one performing the miracle.

They didn't go on honey moon... they had open house for an extended time... a week...

Jesus came to a wedding... this is different from many of the pictures we have had of Jesus... realize something, Jesus was happy to attend and be part of the festivities.

This situation could have brought embarrassment. The wine was gone, and it should not have been gone.

Now... lets get the elephant out of the room. We spend so much time majoring on the minors that we often forget the real teaching at hand! I have heard preaching on everything from whether it was a sin for men to not wear socks, to not going to the movie theater, and everything in between. There are some pastors out there that spend more time telling their congregation who to vote for than how to get saved! HOWEVER... I know that human nature makes everyone wonder, as the new pastor comes to a text where wine is introduced, and Jesus is in the midst, most in this room are wondering "what is the pastor going to say about drinking?" Is he going to go in to how the wine was actually just grape juice, or is he going to say that it was diluted, or is he going to say it was wine, and Jesus was drinking alcoholic wine... what is he going to say?

It is not important to this passage! They could have just as easily run out of bread, or run out of meat... The issue at hand is not that of the wine's fermentation. What is important is that there was a social and familiar embarrassment on the scene.

But, to get it out in the open... The practice of that day was to serve NEW wine. It hadn't quite fermented. However, they did not have the refrigeration and storage practices of today. As time went on, the wine would begin to ferment. So, they would begin cutting it with water. The longer the wine would age, the more water would be added. sometimes up to 4 or 5 parts water to 1 part wine. So, do I believe that Jesus was a "Social Drinker" no. Do I believe that this is an encouragement to drink, no. But, again... this is not the point of this passage. Let's not make the text say what it isn't saying.

I. An urgent request (VS. 1-5)

A. There is a crisis at hand.

1. To put it in today's understanding... what if you had invited the church over to your house, for a christmas party and as you were serving your guests your famous meatballs, halfway through the line you ran out. Everyone was excited about the party, and all of a sudden a wet blanket came across your home because you hadn't planned accordingly.

B. Knowing where to turn.

1. As Jesus comes in, He has sympathy and rectifies the situation. As his mother approaches him, she realizes that he and he alone can bring remedy.
2. FAITH AND TRUST — Mary turns to the servants and says do whatever he tells you to do.

How is your faith? Would you be willing to do whatever Jesus asks of you?

3. The culture of that day, and the verbiage at hand suggest that Mary must have been playing some kind of role in the festivities. She calls to her son in order to fix the problem.

She tells the servants to listen to him. The servants listened to her. This is an indication that perhaps the embarrassment would have fallen to her.

Jesus's response "Woman, what have I to do with thee?" in contrast to the previous mentioned details, and in light of that day language, suggest that this was not a disrespectful response. I can tell you right now, if I ever said to my mother "Woman!..." I would be about 32 teeth short of a full mouth. My father would have come down on me so hard, my unborn grandchildren would have begun to cry.

Jesus' response can be heard in today's vernacular as "Mom! What am I going to do with you?" You see, he was beginning his earthly ministry. As matriarch of the family, she would ask Jesus something and he would do it. However, now that he was beginning his ministry, he would begin to break away from his mother's lead. However, here He shows up at a wedding, and she comes right up to him with a problem. The problem suggested a request.

C. Admitting our deficiency

1. Fix it please?
2. Have you ever had one of those "implied requests"? The implied request I usually get are things like:
 - a) "There are socks on the couch..."
 - b) "Your office is a mess..."
 - c) "The trash is full..."

You know the kind... This is what Mary is bringing to Jesus. And, he lets her know "Now is not the time to show people who I am!" Remember... Mary was still human, and as such she suffered from fleshly desires. Mothers are nurturers, and Mary had a hard time stopping the mothering. So even though Jesus reminded her that His hour had not yet come, she still says to the servants... "Do whatever he says to do."

3. Mary and Jesus' relationship was about to turn. It was to turn from that of being a mother/son relationship to that of a more spiritual relationship. Surely the knife must have pierced when he made the statement as recorded in Luke 8:21 "My mother and my brethren are these which hear the word of God, and do it."

D. More than just wine.

As Jesus looked to the need his mother presented, his mind must have gone to the understanding that what these people needed most was not simply wine to continue the party, but was his very blood that would be spilled for their salvation.

II. An overflowing response (VS. 6-8)

A. God uses what is available.

1. What about these water pots? Surely there was some significance to this..

I am afraid that many times, we are guilty of adding to scripture because we want to know the significance... However, there are also many times we glance over things and completely miss the implications given by their inclusion.

2. Jesus was looking forward to the hour in which he would lay down his life and offer himself a sacrifice. Here, he sees the water pots that are used for ceremonial cleansing and decides to use what the pharisees would use to "cleanse" themselves. They would wash their hands, their bodies, etc. They did this often, and used a lot of water when they did it. This is why there were 6 water pots?

- a) I wanted to know what size these pots would have been and looked around. I checked into a firkin, and it is approximately 9 gallons. So, 2 or 3 firkins could be said 2.5 firkins each. $2.5 \times 9 = 22.5$ gallons each. 6 Jars would be equal to around 135 gallons of wine!!!
- b) Let's put this into perspective.
 - (1) A water pitcher of that day would have held approximately 3-5 gallons.
 - (2) 5 gallons of water weighs approximately 42lbs.
 - (3) It would take over 27 trips to fill the jars with water.
 - (4) That means the servants carried around 1134 lbs of water!
- c) Somewhere along the line, you think one of the servants would have said.. "whats the point!?!?!?"

Illustration:

I poured a flight of stairs. carrying concrete 2 buckets at a time. Each step too Approx 10 buckets. We poured 6 flights of stairs! I'm telling you right now... the cramps in my shoulder the next day reminded me of how I earned that paycheck.

I'd say, from that day on, every time those men went to the well to draw water they were reminded of this miracle.

B. Jesus always gives more than the need.

- 1. What is the significance of the size of the pots? Just as in the miracle of the feeding of the 4000, just like in the feeding of the 5000, Christ always supplies more than enough! It is never just the right amount, nor is it ever lacking, but it is always in abundance. Just as in the miracle of his offering salvation and forgiveness, and mercy, and grace... He does not just give a little... he does not give enough to save you and then you have to work to keep it. He does not give enough to save you and not sustain you... **JESUS ALWAYS GIVES ABUNDANTLY ABOVE ALL THAT WE COULD ASK OR THINK!!!**
- 2. Many of us are clinging to water pots of our own. We think that things will cleanse us. We feel that by going to church, or listening to christian music, or perhaps even giving our money to the church will ease our guilt. We think that somehow our conscience will be settled if we simply DO something to get clean. "I just feel so clean after church." Jesus wants us to know that what the water pots could only do externally, and temporarily, He can do spiritually and eternally. Hebrews 9:9-14 (focus on 13-14)

III. An amazing revelation. (VS 9-11)

A. The Creator at work.

- 1. The very being that created the grape. The very being that created the water. The very being that created the sciences where men were able to make wine... This man, this God commanded these elements to be brought together at that moment, and transformed that water into wine!
- 2. As the governor tasted the wine, he is blown away... he has no clue where it came from... but the servants knew. Imagine for a moment, that you are in the know... You know the feeling don't you? You are in a group talking and someone says something that really isn't funny but everyone else is laughing because they know the inside joke. You missed the first part of the story and therefore don't understand the significance of the comment.

B. But the servants knew...

- 1. Here the only people privy to the miracle were the people in the kitchen. The people actually present when the miracle took place... The people who were SERVING.

While there were many people at the feast that were blessed with the abundance of wine,

the only ones who were changed were the ones involved. I am sure the servants talked about this together as they were carrying the water. I am sure they wondered in their hearts, "Whats the use". I am sure that as the wine was gone, and Jesus has them getting water, they were thinking "No one will want this water... especially if they know it came out of wash pots." Maybe they were not serving with the right attitude... or, maybe they were. Maybe they were saying "Water to drink is better than nothing." Or, perhaps they were showing faith in Jesus... perhaps the disciples were in the kitchen helping retrieve the water.

2. It is amazing how many people experience the miraculous in their lives, and "knew not whence it was". The table magically set itself. The food magically cooked itself. The people magically came on their own. They are recipients of the miraculous, but have NO CLUE where it came from.

But, God's word is specific... The servants WHICH DREW THE WATER knew.

C. The blessing of serving

1. There is a blessing that only comes from serving. Getting your hands dirty, and strapping on your work boots. Actually doing for the cause of Christ.

I hear people tell me often... I did my time, or there is nothing for me to do, or even I can't do anything...

2. These servants were not making wine, these servants were not required to even be grape experts. They were carrying water. It doesn't get much simpler than that!

You may not be able to teach, or you may not have a CDL, but can you sit beside an antsy boy during class? Can you say good morning to a child as they board a bus? Can you invite someone to church? Can you visit a shut in and let them know we are praying for them? Can you help set tables for the fellowships? Can you put a cookie on a napkin for VBS? Can you change a lightbulb? Can you weed a flowerbed? Can you pray for a missionary?

Rosa Pettus would hug me every time I saw her and tell me... I'm praying for you. Linda Proffitt would send me cards occasionally... no note, just scriptures listed that would send encouragement. Barb and Jerry Harville would go out of their way to love on my family.

CONCLUSION:

- Have you acknowledged your need before God?
 - Have you brought your request to the only one able to help?
 - Or are you scurrying around trying to figure out what to do?
- Christ is not merely enough, but He is more than we could ever imagine!
 - Are you clinging to some water pots?
 - Are you trying to do things in order to deal with your guilt?
 - Christ says I more than cover your sins... I carry them away and offer enough grace to not only save you, but to keep you!
- Are you in on the miraculous?
 - Do you want to simply be a beneficiary of the miracles, or do you want to know the provider?
 - Are you happy just sitting at the festivities, or would you too be involved?
 - What water are you carrying?