

John 2:1-11

*1 On the third day there was a wedding in Cana of Galilee, and the mother of Jesus was there; 2 and both Jesus and His disciples were invited to the wedding. 3 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 that have to do with us? My hour has not yet come."*

*5 His mother *said to the servants, "Whatever He says to you, do it." 6 Now there were six stone waterpots set there for the Jewish custom of purification, containing twenty or thirty gallons each.*

*7 Jesus *said to them, "Fill the waterpots with water." So they filled them up to the brim.*

*8 And He *said to them, "Draw some out now and take it to the headwaiter." So they took it to him.*

*9 When the headwaiter tasted the water which had become wine, and did not know where it came from (but the servants who had drawn the water knew), the headwaiter *called the bridegroom, 10 and *said to him, "Every man serves the good wine first, and when the people have drunk freely, then he serves the poorer wine; but you have kept the good wine until now."*

11 This beginning of His signs Jesus did in Cana of Galilee, and manifested His glory, and His disciples believed in Him.

We are going to work this passage by beginning with the end. Verse 11 serves as the summary statement for the story just shared. This was the first of the sign miracles Jesus did in Cana of Galilee.

John is clear that what he reports in sign miracles were selective of the many that Jesus did. In 20:30, he writes, "Therefore many other signs Jesus also performed in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book."

So the Holy Spirit comes to John and inspires John to give 8 or 9 sign miracles in his gospel according to what source you use, and what you decide is a sign miracle. That is not to say that we have some kind of authority as to determine what is a miracle and what is not a miracle. I will explain what I mean in a minute. I think there are 9 sign miracles recorded in the Gospel.

- This is the **first** one, John 2:1-11.
- **Second** is in chapter 4 where Jesus heals the nobleman's son.
- **Third** is in chapter 5 where the paralytic is healed.
- **Fourth** is in chapter 6 where Jesus feeds the 5,000.
- **Fifth** is also in chapter 6 where Jesus walks on the water.
- The **sixth** sign miracle is in chapter 9. Jesus heals the blind man.
- The **seventh** is in chapter 11. Jesus raises Lazarus from the dead.
- Now this is where differences of opinion form.
- I think the **eighth** miracle is the greatest of all. It is found in chapter 20. Jesus is resurrected. I suppose many do not see that as a sign miracle of Jesus since it is not Jesus who raises Himself.
- The **ninth** miracle is not recognized in all circles as a sign miracle. It is in chapter 21 where the disciples catch the large number of fish.

Now let's do one other thing as far as introducing the sign miracles. We need to identify the purpose of the sign miracles. That is what they are they are sign miracles. They are miracles for the purpose of being a sign to those observing. Here are four things that happen in all the sign miracles.

1. The sign miracle arises from a physical, human need.
2. The sign miracle performed meets the immediate human, physical need, but also meets or points to the satisfying of a deeper spiritual need.

3. The sign miracle results in either faith or a growth in faith for those who truly see the sign.
4. Jesus reveals His glory, and also reveals that He really is God.

Now, let's go back to the first verse and look at this sign miracle.

This sign miracle happened at the occasion of an embarrassing situation for the bridegroom of this wedding feast. The wine was running low. I suppose that the greatest fear that families of the bride and groom have in a wedding reception is that the food will run out. It is the same kind of thing. I think most can identify with what is happening. Jesus' mom looks to Jesus and kind of says, "What are we going to do about this?" It is an interesting situation, because up to this point, Jesus had performed no miracle. We may think that Jesus' response is sort of rude. But it's not. His statement, in my opinion was to make clear that Jesus' primary authority to whom He answers is God the Father, and no human agency. However, Jesus does something about the situation so as to show honor toward His mother.

The physical need is obvious. However, what is the spiritual need that this miracle points to? How is that spiritual need met? How does Jesus reveal His glory through this?

To answer these questions, we need to focus on three things: the waterpots, the quantity of the water turned to wine, and the quality of the wine.

The Waterpots

John makes it a point to give details of what the waterpots are made of. They are made of stone and not clay. The reason for that is that these waterpots were used for cleansing or purification. The Jewish participants in the wedding feast would wash their hands. They would wash utensils. They were a clean bunch of people. However, everything was ritual. It was for the sake of ritual that they went through the cleansing or the purification.

I suppose they were made of stone so that any "sin" that would get in the water, could not fix itself to the stone as it would clay. Then again, it seems that a clay pot would attract more dirt to the sides of the pot than a stone pot.

Well, these are the vessels Jesus chose to use to perform this sign miracle. Now let's look at the particulars of the events that happened. Jesus said to the servants, "Fill the pots up." The servants filled it to the brim. That is significant. That will be my next point. Then Jesus said, "Draw some out and present it to the headwaiter." The headwaiter has no idea what had just happened. He declares the quality of the wine. But wait! Where did the water turn to wine! I mean, come on, wouldn't Jesus say, "Let there be wine." Wouldn't he say some kind of declaration? Well, if you really need to know, let me show you where the miracle took place. Look in your Bible very carefully. Do you see that thin white space between verse 7 and 8? That's where the miracle happened.

Now that we have the water turned into wine, let's get to the second thing we need to focus on to answer the questions we posed.

The Quantity

Jesus told the servants to fill the waterpots up with water. The servants did just that. John tells us that the waterpots were filled up to the brim. The estimate of how much water we are talking ranges from 150 to 180 gallons of water. That is a lot of water.

There are two things that are of significance of this fact. One is that there is no room for questioning of how the water turned into wine. There was no way people can say that Jesus happened to have wine slipped into the waterpots from another source. If the pots are full, adding wine will be impossible.

If there is symbolism to the quantity, it is representative of the grace of God. To me, the quantity emphasizes that the amount of His grace is unlimited, but the grace He gives to each of us is sufficient for our need.

The context of this sign miracle seems to point the measure of God's grace that is available for cleansing, for purification from sin.

The Bible teaches of our redemption that is according to the riches of His grace. Ephesians 1:17 – *"In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the **riches** of His grace."* According to the riches of His grace can also be accurately translated as determined by the riches of His grace.

The Bible teaches of Christ living in us is in the sufficiency of His grace. Remember the thorn given to Paul.

2 Corinthians 12:9-10 *And He has said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for power is perfected in weakness." Most gladly, therefore, I will rather boast ^[a]about my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may dwell in me. ¹⁰ Therefore I am well content with weaknesses, with ^[d]insults, with distresses, with persecutions, with difficulties, for Christ's sake; for when I am weak, then I am strong.*

The Quality

The quality of the wine is testified of by the headwaiter. It is interesting that he is the one who makes the determination, for it seems he has no idea what has just happened.

You have kept the best wine until now. The quality of the wine was better than the best wine served up by the bridegroom at the beginning.

The quality of the wine is indicative of the quality of cleansing of sin from Christ as opposed to the Jewish system of cleansing and purification. In the last supper, Jesus took the third cup of the Jewish Passover, the cup of redemption. He said this is the blood of the New Testament shed on behalf of many for the forgiveness of sin. He is enough. No other is needed.

The physical need was the need for wine. The spiritual need was the need for purification and for cleansing. The faith that increased was that of the disciples. They saw the significance of the sign miracle. It seems that no other one saw it. It was enough, though. For they saw the glory of Jesus and saw that He was indeed the Son of God.

Three groups were represented that day and on the other days when the sign miracles were performed.

There was the group who believed and acted on the belief.

There was the group who did not believe. Satan blinded the eyes so they could not see. John 12:37 identifies this group.

There was another group there. Listen to the description.

⁴² Nevertheless many even of the rulers believed in Him, but because of the Pharisees they were not confessing Him, for fear that they would be ^[a]put out of the synagogue; ⁴³ for they loved the ^[b]approval of men rather than the ^[c]approval of God.

Does that identify you?

Our church in Round O participated in one of the nationwide revivals. One aspect of the revival was to canvas the area of Round O. At that time, Hurricane Hugo had been a year or two previous. The destruction of many homes moved people out to the Round O area. We came to one house. Two men lived there. We talked with one of them using the canvas material we were given. He told us that he and the guy were in a relationship together. The gospel was presented to him. When it came time to respond, he knew that coming to Christ would mean giving up that lifestyle. He couldn't let go of it, and refused Christ. He believed (head knowledge, he understood who Jesus is and what He did), but because of fear of losing what he thought he had, he did not confess Jesus. He did not come to trust in Jesus.

Fear of what others will say. Fear of rejection from family members. Fear of what will have to be given up. This keeps many who see Jesus who He really is from becoming followers. I hope that is not you. If it is, I want to ask one question. When it comes to the time of your death, will those fears matter then? When you die, then what?