

John 2: 1-11 (ESV) – The Wedding at Cana

Main point: Trust in Jesus.

Open with a short prayer, inviting God to teach us.

Background: This story happens right after Jesus has called his first disciples to follow him: Peter, John, Philip, Andrew, Nathanael. They are now in Cana of Galilee, close to Nazareth, which was Jesus' home town. We learn some things about Jesus and his ministry and even his personality in this passage.

Focus of the study:

On the third day there was a wedding at Cana in Galilee, and the mother of Jesus was there. ² Jesus also was invited to the wedding with his disciples. 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 this have to do with me? My hour has not yet come."⁵ His mother said to the servants, "Do whatever he tells you."

⁶ Now there were six stone water jars there for the Jewish rites of purification, each holding twenty or thirty gallons. ⁷ Jesus said to the servants, "Fill the jars with water." And they filled them up to the brim. ⁸ And he said to them, "Now draw some out and take it to the master of the feast." So they took it. ⁹ 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 ¹⁰ 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."¹¹ This, the first of his signs, Jesus did at Cana in Galilee, and manifested his glory. And his disciples believed in him.

Questions:

1. *Where are Jesus and his disciples?*
 - a. At a wedding
2. *What is a wedding like? What goes on at a wedding?*
 - a. A happy occasion; festive; lots of food and drink.
 - b. Jewish tradition: sometimes lasted for days!
3. *What happens at this wedding? Why would that be a problem?*
 - a. They run out of wine
 - b. Bummer for the guests, embarrassing for the host
 - c. (Story of Dave and the wine at Bethany's wedding: as father of the bride and therefore host, he bought TWICE as much wine as we needed, just to be sure we didn't run out!)
4. *What does Mary do? Why do you think she does this?*
 - a. She tells Jesus
 - b. Seems to have some responsibility for this wedding – possibly a relative (close to their hometown)
 - c. Tells the servants to do whatever Jesus says to do

5. *What does Jesus do?*
 - a. Six stone jars for the Jewish rites of purification – sacred jars (like communion plates!)
 - b. Tells the servants to fill them with water
 - c. Tells the servants to take some to the master of the feast (like the emcee)
6. *What happens?*
 - a. It becomes wine – we don't know when or how (Jesus does not do this publicly or with fanfare)
 - b. The master drinks it and tells the bridegroom how good it is!
7. *Why is the master surprised?*
 - a. Most people put out the good wine first; then, when people's taste buds are gone, they bring out the cheaper stuff
8. *What does John, the writer, say this action is?*
 - a. v. 11: "The first of his signs"
9. *What does a sign do?*
 - a. Points to something else, gives direction
 - b. Does not point to itself – this sign is not about the miracle itself
 - c. Points to whom? Jesus
10. *What does this miracle tell us about Jesus, God's son and representative?*
 - a. He meets real needs
 - b. He loves to bring joy (it's a wedding, and wine!)
 - c. He gives abundantly
 - i. How much wine did he make? Let's do the math:
 1. 6 jars, 20-30 gallons each = 120-180 gallons
 2. That's **600-800 bottles** of wine!
11. *What is the result of this miracle?*
 - a. v. 11: His glory is revealed
 - b. His disciples believed ... in HIM, as the Son of God.
12. *When does this happen?*
 - a. Right at the beginning of Jesus' works on earth; it's the first sign that he performs
13. *So what does it mean to believe in Jesus?*
 - a. Have faith in him, trust him – to do what?
 - i. Listen, meet needs, act, reveal himself and his glory
14. *How would you define faith?*
15. Ask for prayer requests for today.
16. Close in prayer, naming people and needs listed.
17. End with a song, e.g., first verse of Amazing Grace