

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 his mother, "Woman, what does this have to do with me? My hour has not yet come." ⁵ Jesus' 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 the servants filled the jars up to the brim. ⁸ And Jesus said to the servants, "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 Jesus' signs, Jesus did at Cana in Galilee, and manifested his glory. And Jesus' disciples believed in him.

Questions:

1. *When this story starts, 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. v. 3: 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. *When the wine runs out, what does Jesus' mother, Mary, do? Why do you think Mary does this?*
 - a. Mary tells Jesus that the wine has run out. Not a question; just stating the case.
 - b. Perhaps Mary feels some level of responsibility for this wedding – possibly a relative? (Cana, where the wedding is, is close to Mary and Jesus' hometown.)
5. *What does Jesus answer Mary?*
 - a. "Why are you telling me? It's not my time to do something here."
 - i. Mary doesn't argue ... but tells the servants to do whatever Jesus says to do.
6. *What does Jesus do next?*

- a. v. 6: Six stone jars for the Jewish rites of purification – sacred jars (like communion plates!), 20-30 gallons each
 - b. v. 7: Jesus tells the servants to fill these huge jars with water
 - c. v. 8: Then Jesus tells the servants to take some to the master of the feast (like the emcee)
7. *What happens?*
- a. The water becomes wine – we don't know when or how (Jesus does not do this publicly or with fanfare)
 - b. v. 9-10: The master drinks the wine and tells the bridegroom how good it is!
8. *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
9. *What does John, the writer, say this action is?*
- a. v. 11: "The first of Jesus' signs"
10. *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
11. *What does this miracle tell us about Jesus, God's son and representative?*
- a. Jesus meets real needs
 - b. Jesus loves to bring joy (it's a wedding, and wine!)
 - c. Jesus 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!
12. *What is the result of this miracle?*
- a. v. 11: Jesus' glory is revealed
 - b. Jesus' disciples believed ... in HIM, as the Son of God.
13. *When does this miracle happen?*
- a. Right at the beginning of Jesus' works on Earth; it's the first sign that he performs
14. *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
15. *How would you define faith?*
- Ask for prayer requests for today.
 - Close in prayer, naming people and needs listed.
 - End with a song, e.g., first verse of Amazing Grace

John 2: 1-11

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