

One of the joys of being a pastor is officiating weddings. At my first wedding, I officiated over, My now sister-in-law was walking down the aisle, and when she was standing before Kelsey's brother I planned to say, "who gives this woman to be with this man," I said, "Who gives this man to be with this woman."... Everyone's favorite part of the wedding, for sure. In three weeks, my family and I are heading back to California to officiate my sister's wedding. It's pretty exciting to be presiding over the ceremony for my baby sister. The most exciting thing to me so far has been thinking through how I can embarrass her because she wouldn't have it any other way. I'll figure out how to involve my brother and another sister too. My dad will be a blubbering mess, doing his best to keep it together. It is going to be a remarkable family affair.

Weddings are fun, joyous, memorable, and a great reminder of the promised life to come. My favorite part of every wedding is the ceremony, not the reception. Receptions are fun, but a ceremony accurately establishing a new family on the love Christ warms and fills my heart more than any party ever could. That's because what Christ's offers to us is better than anything that has come before or will ever come after. He offers something new. A new life, a new hope, a new joy, a new peace, new honor, new value, new worth. If you see his glory this morning, you will be led to make a decision about who he says he is and what he is offering.

Last week Pastor Daniel preached a powerful sermon. He showed us how the witnesses of Jesus saw his glory and became heralds of his glory to the world around them. They proclaimed that our Exile from God is at an end because God has returned in the flesh to take away the sins of the world. **In the place of that Exile, Jesus brings those who believe in him something better. Jesus reveals the goodness of his glory, and do you know where he does it, at a wedding.**

This morning I am going to set a feast before us. Instead of eating for consumption, we'll be eating for quality. I'm going to describe the elements of this meal in rich detail as if you are a food critic. And once we explore the luxurious ingredients, I want you to feast to your head and heart's content

Jesus's glory is revealed in everyday life.

Turn with me in your Bibles to John 2:1-12. Starting with verse 1 John writes, **"2 On the third day a wedding took place at Cana in Galilee. Jesus' mother was there, ² and Jesus and his disciples had also been invited to the**

wedding. ³ When the wine was gone, Jesus' mother said to him, "They have no more wine." ⁴ "Woman,^[a] why do you involve me?" Jesus replied. "My hour has not yet come." ⁵ His mother said to the servants, "Do whatever he tells you."

From the penning of John's intro of "in the beginning," the wedding at Cana takes place on the seventh day in this short series of events. It is an interesting point to note, but we can only speculate as to why John's non-chronological memoir includes a set of seven days. What it does say was that Jesus traveled from town to town, and we know where they are and distances he moved. Jesus' divinity is on display, but so is his humanity. He walked like everyone else, conversed like everyone else, and he participated in culture just like everyone else. **As the glory and divinity of Christ proclaimed throughout this Gospel, don't miss that his perfect humanity is also on display.**

Christ Jesus is the God-Man, he is Truly God and Truly Man. Everything that God is Christ is, and in every way man was intended to be, Christ is. Examining this passage alone, we recognize Jesus, as a true human being, understood family dynamics. As the eldest son, Jesus was primarily responsible for caring for his mother. Mary is probably a widow by inferring the absence of any mention of Joseph. As Jesus was being crucified, he compassionately cares for her. Jesus entrusts her care to John when he says, "**Woman, behold your son... Son, behold your mother.**" **Later in Chapter 19 of this book.**

That is not all; we see Jesus is not **antisocial** or **ascetic**, but the opposite. He attends this wedding celebration, the major feasts of Israel, he eats in people's homes, and he even asks for help in the case of the woman at the well. This is in stark contrast to the Qumranian community that JTB was associated with, who purposely separated themselves by living in isolation often cut off from society and culture. There was a time when JTB's disciples came to question Jesus as to why his disciples were not fasting like good pious Jews, his response is fantastic, he says,

"How can the guests of the bridegroom mourn while he is with them? The time will come when the bridegroom will be taken from them; then they will fast." (Matthew 9:14)

Jesus distinguishes there is a time to celebrate and makes it a point to say, when you are with, me it is always a time to celebrate.

Our lives, by extension, can also reveal the Glory of Christ. **Nothing is too mundane or insignificant that the Glory of Christ cannot shine through. From faithfully stewarding your finances to spending time together as a family, even**

The Glory of the One and Only: A Series on the Gospel of John

Glory is Better John 2:1-12

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helping your children with their homework. The glory of Christ can be revealed through it.

Jesus' glory is better than everyday life.

Read again with me verses 3-5,

“³ When the wine was gone, Jesus’ mother said to him, “They have no more wine.”

⁴ “Woman,^[a] why do you involve me?” Jesus replied. “My hour has not yet come.”

⁵ His mother said to the servants, “Do whatever he tells you.”

Jesus and his mom have a fascinating interaction that requires further exploration. Mary is in some sort of serving a role at this wedding, and Jesus received an invite because, more than likely, they are somehow related to the bridegroom.

Weddings were a celebration for the families involved and a lot of the community too. Weddings might last a whole week with the groom responsible for providing for all the needs of his guests. In turn, the guests would bring gifts to honor the couple, possibly help offset the costs of the wedding. However, if the groom failed to provide, it would result in a negative stigma or social shame coming upon him and his family.

Mary approaches Jesus with a declaration, “They have no wine.” She goes to her eldest son, assuming he will shoulder some of the burden. Does Mary expect a miracle? Later in the chapter in verse 11, John tells us this is the first or primary sign he preformed, so nothing miraculous came before. Mary knows he’s different based on the promise the angel of the Lord gave to her, but what does she expect from him? She expects something, and his answer to her is puzzling. She asks about wine, and he responds with a mild rebuke.

He says, **““Woman, what does this have to do with me? My hour has not yet come.”** This marks the first, and only time a son got away with calling his mom “woman”... Actually, we are not supposed to read this as derogatory at all. It is an unusual and non-affectionate way for a son to refer to his mother. Jesus is essentially saying, “Ma'am, why does this concern me.” It would be like my mom calling me to come over, and my reply was, “Laurie, I'm already booked tonight, but I can pencil you in for Thursday evening from 5:00 – 7:00 pm.” How warm and affectionate does that sound?

It's as if he is distancing himself from her, and that is precisely what he is doing. There is a transformation taking place in their relationship. **Jesus is diminishing his role as a son and assuming his divine role as her Savior.** We know this because her declaration of running out of wine is answered by Jesus’s

messianic words. **“My hour has not yet come.”** Therefore, Mary’s statement has a messianic message beyond just wine.

Look at these passages in the Old and New testament, and you'll see the symbolic significance associated with wine:

Joel 3:18

**“In that day the mountains will drip new wine,
and the hills will flow with milk;
all the ravines of Judah will run with water.
A fountain will flow out of the LORD’s house
and will water the valley of acacias.”**

Amos 9:11, 13-14a

**“In that day “I will restore David’s fallen shelter—
I will repair its broken walls
and restore its ruins—
and will rebuild it as it used to be,
13 “The days are coming,” declares the LORD,
“when the reaper will be overtaken by the plowman
and the planter by the one treading grapes.
New wine will drip from the mountains
and flow from all the hills,
14 and I will bring my people Israel back from exile.”^[f]**

In the new testament, Jesus, continues to use wine as a symbol for the system he is establishing and the covenant he is presenting.

Matthew 9:16-17 **“No one sews a patch of unshrunk cloth on an old garment, for the patch will pull away from the garment, making the tear worse. ¹⁷ Neither do people pour new wine into old wineskins. If they do, the skins will burst; the wine will run out and the wineskins will be ruined. No, they pour new wine into new wineskins, and both are preserved.”**

And

Luke 22:20 **“In the same way, after the supper he took the cup, saying, “This cup is the new covenant in my blood, which is poured out for you.”**

Wine was a symbol for the end of Exile, and the promise of God's blessing and provision. Jesus continues instituting wine as the symbol for the new system replacing the old and ensuring the promise of new life. Going back to Jesus' response to Mary, she was undoubtedly blindsided by Jesus' response. The boy she raised, nurtured, taught, and loved was now distancing himself from her, and it must have hurt, but Jesus is genuinely loving her by revealing the divine purpose of his coming. She wants him to rescue a family from social shame, and he wants to save all people, including her, from eternal death and future without him. This is why he said, "**My hour has not yet come.**" The messianic phrase points to the time of his crucifixion. Where he would bear the penalty of the sins for the world to accomplish his mission to save.

Now, notice her response, would we have a similar one given the mild rebuke he just issued? Would we be quick to demonstrate a faith similar to the level she does by saying to the servants, "**Do whatever he tells you?**" **Mary's trust in Christ must be based on the nature and character she has witnessed over the years of raising him, watching him, and being familiar with him.** She issues to the servants, and to us, a strong command to obey, "WHATEVER," he tells us. That's because obedience is embedded in the revelation of Christ's glory.

Obedience is embedded in the revelation of Christ's glory.

John continues writing in verse 6, “**6 Nearby stood six stone water jars, the kind used by the Jews for ceremonial washing, each holding from twenty to thirty gallons.^[b] 7 Jesus said to the servants, “Fill the jars with water”; so they filled them to the brim. 8 Then he told them, “Now draw some out and take it to the master of the banquet.” They did so, 9 and the master of the banquet tasted the water that had been turned into wine.**”

The servants do exactly as Jesus tells them, and they fill the ceremonial washing. **I think John is revealing to us the old way is full and it is finished and from it will come what is new and better.** Jesus commands them to "draw some" water out, and through their obedience, the water is turned to wine. Imagine for a second being one of the servants. Jesus is not well known yet; for all they know, he is just another respected Rabbi. What skepticism might have been rolling around in their thoughts; "Why is he making us fill up these jars, this won't do anything." "Come on, man, what's this going to solve." "This better be worth it."

After you finish filling 120 – 150 gallons, he tells you, “take some of this water and give it to your boss.” I have an image of the worst possible outcome in my head as if the master of the feast is Gordon Ramsey (a famous chef who’s violent temper erupts when any of his sous chefs serve him something wrong) and the servants of this wedding are instructed to give him water. If I were one of these servants, I would have some questions, even hesitating for fearing a rebuke or scornful look. But these servants didn’t, and their obedience is an integral part of Jesus’ miracle. The glory of Christ is on full display, and he used human instruments to reveal it.

Obedience is embedded with Christ’s Glory in other ways too. Remember the man born blind, Jesus makes mud and has the man go to the pool to wash his eyes. The man with the withered hand is told to stretch his arm. Some of us are looking for a miracle for Jesus to show up, and there might be simple commands Jesus has issued to us in his word that are the conduits for his glory to be revealed. Think of this weekend, we had close to 100 people here learning, searching, and worshiping God. Some of whom were desiring to see the glory in their marriage, in the relationships with their kids, or a breakthrough in their finances. They showed up obeying the commands to seek wisdom and counsel from God’s word and the body of believers.

In no way should you conclude that God needs our obedience to reveal his glory and to work his miracles. Instead, God often involves the obedience

and participation of human agents as a means to administer his glorious

works. Is that a sign of a good God? He sees you and me as worthy of sharing in his work.

Bothers and sisters, each one of us, has been sent by Christ to teach and reveal him in this world. Therefore, the revelation of Christ's glory to our world has been forever coupled to our obedience to carry out the great commandment.

The glory we are to reveal is the glory of unrivaled goodness. It is better than anything that has come before it.

The Glory of Christ better than what has come before.

John continues in verse 9, **"⁹ and the master of the banquet tasted the water that had been turned into wine. He did not realize where it had come from, though the servants who had drawn the water knew. Then he called the bridegroom aside ¹⁰ and said, "Everyone brings out the choice wine first and then the cheaper wine after the guests have had too much to drink; but you have saved the best till now."**

The master of the feast makes it a point to address Jesus' wine. It was the choice wine and the best wine, and contrary to the customs of the day, he offers it last. Back in Amos, the prophet told us the next time of blessing was associated with wine. He also mentions what type of wine, he says, **"New wine will drip from the mountains and flow from all the hills,"** The wine will be the best, sweet, new, and there will be a lot of it. Jesus presents new wine that is the best, and I believe the potential for 150 gallons of wine suffices to be a lot. Jesus is making a statement, He is the promised messiah, and he is ending the Exile for all who believe in him.

Do you see the glory, and do you know that it is better than what has come before? I see a better life with Jesus because he has displayed in this miracle:

- 1. Jesus is concerned with everyday life.** Jesus saved the day for the unnamed groom. Think of all the other miracles that we are told were done, but not written. Jesus did those miracles just for those people because he cared about him. No circumstance is so insignificant that you shouldn't involve Christ. He is human and cherishes every facet of human life, so don't hesitate to let him know if you've run out of wine.
- 2. Jesus was well known and trusted.** Many of you grew up in a small town where everyone knows your business. Jesus grew up in a small village, ministered in small communities. He couldn't hide or avoid being seen. Who

he portrayed himself to be was indeed who he was. Otherwise, Mrs. Cravits would have ratted him out.

- 3. Jesus is the bridegroom who will provide for all of our needs.** Jesus is the true bridegroom of his church. He has counted the cost and paid the price to provide for everyone he's invited completely. Don't for a moment think you are somehow unaccounted for in His perfect plan.
- 4. Jesus invites us to share in his glory.** Who did the most of the feast praise for the miracle? Not Jesus. Instead of the shame, the groom was destined for, Jesus restored his honor and gave him a taste of glory.

Jesus' glory was put on the display, and the wedding party didn't know, but the disciples saw the sign. The miracle of turning water into wine is not an end, but a means to an end. It is a sign of who Jesus is, and it directs all who see the sign to be united with him by believing in him. It is no coincidence this sign took place at a wedding because a wedding ceremony celebrates two people becoming one family. Those who see the glory of Christ and believe in his name they become children of God. They are uniting with Christ in a new and better family.