

John Chapter 2 v 1 - 11

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- [0 : 0 0] through to verse 11. On the third day, a wedding took place at Cana in Galilee.
- Jesus' mother was there, and Jesus and his disciples had also been invited to the wedding. When the wine was gone, Jesus' mother said to him, They have no more wine.
- Woman, why do you involve me? Jesus replied. My hour has not yet come. His mother said to the servants, Do whatever he tells you.
- Nearby stood six stone water jars, the kind used by the Jews for ceremonial washing, each holding from 80 to 120 liters. Jesus said to the servants, Fill the jars with water.
- So they filled them to the brim. Then he told them, Now draw some out and take it to the master of the banquet. They did so, and the master of the banquet tasted the water that had been turned into wine.
- [1 : 0 8] He did not realize where it had come from, though the servants who had drawn the water knew. Then he called the bridegroom aside 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. So, we're looking tonight at Jesus' name.
- Jesus' first miracle in the book of John. And he's at a wedding, and it's where he turns the water into wine. Just to give you a bit of background. So this is right at the beginning of the book of John, at the beginning of Jesus' ministry.
- So, the previous chapter, Jesus has been baptized. The Spirit has come upon him, and he's just chosen his 12 disciples.
- So he's about 30 years old, and he's just beginning his ministry, which would last three years. So he's chosen his 12 disciples.
- [2 : 3 8] He hasn't done any miracles yet. And this is the first one. This is the first sign. And what is it? Well, he's in Galilee.
- It's near where he grew up. Him and his mother and his disciples have been invited to a wedding. And in those days, weddings would be big occasions. They'd last about seven days.
- Probably much bigger than our weddings. But the groom, he's made this mistake. Perhaps the biggest mistake you could make. And he's ran out of wine.
- You might think it's a strange miracle for Jesus to begin his ministry with. He doesn't, it's not in a big place like Jerusalem. He doesn't raise someone from the dead.
- But it's in a relatively private setting. He's in a, you know, he's in a small town. And it is, it's an amazing miracle, but he does much more dramatic miracles.
- [3 : 4 2] So why does he do this as his first miracle? Well, my hypothesis in a sense, I want to propose that he actually calls this a sign. What does a sign do? A sign points to something other than itself.
- So Jesus has done this, I want to say, as a mission statement. But in this, in this miracle, Jesus reveals something of why he came to earth, what he came to do, what his purpose was.

And I think as we look a bit more, we'll see why that is. So first of all, I just want to say, even in itself, it's an amazing miracle. He, he doesn't even go, go to the wine.

He simply says the word, and these servants, they go, they take this water, and it becomes wine. And even that in itself, that has a profound effect on his disciples.

So in verse 11, it says this, this beginning of signs, Jesus did in Cana of Galilee, and manifested his glory, and his disciples believed in him. So this was enough to, for his disciples, in a sense, to believe, to see something of who he was.

[4 : 54] Yeah, I don't think they would piece together completely, the meaning of this miracle, until later. You see, John, there are around six, some people would argue, seven signs in the book of John, and each one of these is handpicked by John, to speak of something specifically about Jesus.

In John 20, verse 30, it says this, And truly Jesus did many other signs, in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book, but these are written, that you may believe, that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in his name.

So John's handpicked these signs, specifically, and as this is the first one, I want to say again, this is a mission statement. Jesus is showing why he came. So what's the first clue?

As to what John is showing us in this. Well, I think, the story turns on verse four. And it's this, a strange statement that Jesus makes.

So, he's at this wedding, they've ran out of wine, and Mary comes to Jesus, in verse three, and, she says, she says to him, they have no wine.

[6 : 05] So she looks to Jesus for the answer. Now, Jesus hasn't done any miracles yet, but Mary knows who he is. She knows, she's heard the angel, at his birth, he's the Son of God, she's seen him grow up.

Perhaps, maybe she's expecting a miracle, maybe, she knows he's wise, and, he'll have a solution. I don't know what she's thinking. But she trusts him, as, not only is he a son, she knows he's the saviour of the world.

So what does Jesus say, in verse four? Jesus said to her, woman, what does your concern, have to do with me? My hour has not yet come. And you might think, this is a strange response.

And the stranger thing is, that he, he says this, and then he goes on, and does the miracle. So what does this mean? My hour has not yet come. And you might think, he's saying something like this, it's not my time yet, to do this miracle.

I'm not ready for this yet. But, that's obviously not the case, because he goes on, to do this miracle. So what does Jesus mean, by my hour? Well, in the book of John, Jesus uses, this phrase, my hour, many times.

[7 : 19] And every time, it's concerning his death. I'll just illustrate that, with a few verses. So I'll just read them quickly. John chapter 7, verse 30, Jesus is in the temple, and he says this, therefore, they sought to take him, but no one laid a hand on him, because his hour, had not yet come.

Or in John 13, verse 1, it says this, now before the feast of Passover, when Jesus knew, that his hour, had come, that he should depart, from the world, from this world, to the Father.

Finally, John 17, verse 1, and Jesus is about to go to Gethsemane here, and from there, he'll be arrested, and eventually crucified. And he says this, Jesus spoke these words, lifted up his eyes to heaven, and said, Father, the hour has come.

Glorify your son, that your son may glorify you. So here we see Jesus, is connecting this, request for wine, this provision of wine, with his hour, with his death.

So Jesus is making connection here. My wine, the wine, I'll provide the wine, somehow, by my hour, by my death. And if we move on, to this next verse, verse 6, what does Jesus do?

[8 : 42] He changes water, into wine, in these water pots. He says this, now there were six, water pots of stone, according to the manner, of purification, of the Jews, containing 20, or 30 gallons, apiece.

And this is the next clue. So these water pots, for purification, now that wouldn't mean, simple cleanliness, it wouldn't simply mean, washing our hands, as we might do before a meal.

But this is, ritual purification, this is part of the Jewish law. They thought that, by doing these outward signs, somehow they'd become clean, on the inside. It was a symbol, that they would, yeah, they were making themselves, right with God.

But what does Jesus say? He says, this water for purification, this, in a sense, is symbol of the law. I'm going to turn this, into wine. Now what is wine, in the Bible? Wine throughout the Bible, signifies blood.

If we turn to Matthew 26, verse 27, this is the last supper, before Jesus' death. He's celebrating the Passover, and he takes this cup of wine, and he says this, then he took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, drink from it, all of you, for this is my blood, of the new covenant, which is shed for many, for remission of sins.

[10 : 01] But I say to you, I will not drink, of this fruit of the vine, from now on, until that day, when I drink it new with you, in my Father's kingdom. So what does this mean?

So Jesus, is replacing, the purification, of the law, in a sense, and he's saying, look, you're no longer cleansed, by works of the law, you'll be cleansed, by my blood, this is why I came.

So why was the law there? Well, we've all sinned, what does that mean? We've all fallen short, of God's standard, which is perfection, we've fallen.

And for that reason, we can't be in God's presence, because God, God is perfect. He cannot have sin, in his presence. So there must be punishment, there must be judgment, for sin.

And in the law, in the Old Testament, there'd be these sacrifices, every year, there'd be these laws, that they had to fulfil. And these, in a sense, would be symbolic, of a sacrifice, for sin.

[11 : 02] But without Jesus, the Bible makes it clear, they could never, atone for sin. You see, Jesus came to fulfil the law, he was the ultimate sacrifice.

Why was that? Because Jesus was perfect. Jesus was the only person, who lived, perfectly, throughout his life. Therefore, he was the only perfect sacrifice.

Who else was Jesus? Jesus was God, come to earth. What does this mean for us? Jesus, the perfect man, the one who was God, from the beginning, he came to earth, and he took our sin, upon himself.

He became that sacrifice. This is why Jesus came. Hebrews chapter 9, verse 13, puts it like this. And this is talking about, the law of the Old Testament. It says this, For if the blood of bulls, and goats, and the ashes of a heifer, sprinkling the unclean, sanctifies for the purifying of the flesh, how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal spirit, offered himself without spot to God, cleanse your conscience from dead works, to serve the living God?

And for this reason, he is the mediator of the new covenant, by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions, under the first covenant, that those who are called, may receive the promise, of the eternal inheritance.

[12 : 23] So Jesus came, to fulfil the law, to be the ultimate sacrifice, by which we are truly purified. This is why Jesus came.

And the Jews, in that time, at the wedding, perhaps they would think of this. You know, the first covenant of the law, came through Moses.

And God also did miracles through Moses. He did ten plagues through Moses. This is the first sign of Jesus. What was the first plague of Moses? He turned the water of the Nile, into blood.

So this life source, for the Egyptians, this drinking water, he turned it into blood. In a sense, he brought a curse. They would, you know, they would die for lack of water, for lack of drink.

But if the law brings a curse, Jesus came to bring grace, to bring a blessing. What does Jesus do? He doesn't turn the water into blood, he turns the water into wine, a symbol of his blood.

[13 : 23] But this wine, it would bring life, it would bring abundance, it would bring joy. You see, the law brought separation. What the law did, it was a list of rules, and by them, if we keep them, we are perfect, we are clean.

But the fact is, none of us could keep them, because God's standard is 100%. But Jesus kept the law perfectly. And Jesus became the ultimate sacrifice.

So where the law brought curse, it brought a need that we saw we couldn't keep it, Jesus kept it, Jesus brought grace. And so we're not cleansed by works of the law, we're not made holy, we're not made perfect, we're not made right with God, by trying to strive on our own strength, but by the free sacrifice that Jesus gave.

Not by works, but by grace. Now what does grace mean? Grace is the unmerited favor of God. This is what Jesus came to bring.

Now grace is what separates Christianity from any other religion. You see any other religion? Most religions in the world, they'll say something like this. If you do, if you try your hardest, if your good deeds outweigh your bad deeds, then God will accept you.

[14 : 43] But the true God, the God of the Bible, his standards are much higher than that. He's completely good, and therefore sin cannot be in his presence.

But the good news is he's also loving. And he came to earth, and he became the sacrifice. He took the punishment for sin that we deserved. This is grace.

If you want a definition of grace, I think the story illustrates this. If we look at verse 9. So what does Jesus do? Jesus has solved this problem of the bridegroom.

The bridegroom, he hasn't provided enough wine, but Jesus, he sorts it out. He turns the water into wine, and it's much sweeter, it's much better, it says, than the first one.

But verse 9 says this. When the master of the feast had tasted the water, that was made wine, and did not know where it came from, but the servants who had drawn the water knew, the master of the feast called the bridegroom, and he said to him, every man at the beginning sets out the good wine, and when the guests have well drunk, then the inferior, you have kept the good wine until now.

[15 : 57] So who gets the credit for Jesus' miracle? It's the bridegroom. He says, you have kept the good wine until now. And this is a picture of grace, you see. Jesus earns our salvation for us.

We do nothing. We can't do anything to earn our salvation. Jesus does it for us. But who gets the credit? We get the credit. This is grace. Now the Pharisees, the religious leaders of the day, they didn't understand this.

Not only did they follow the Mosaic law, they actually added human laws on top of this. If you look at Mark 7, they do all these extra cleansing rituals. By this, they want to make themselves better.

They want to show themselves better than other people. It says they'd go out into public and they'd pray these long prayers that men might look at them and they might see, you know, they might give them praise.

They wanted the praise of men. So what did this, what did this work, in a sense, what did this work righteousness, what did that instill in the Pharisees? It instilled pride. They'd look down on other people.

[17 : 03] It caused self-righteousness. But Jesus brings grace. And what does grace do? Well, grace says that none of us deserve salvation.

None of us could earn salvation. So we can't be prideful. We can't be self-righteous. If we truly understand grace, it won't give us pride.

It will give us humility. It will give us a thankful heart. If you understand that you've been saved by grace, you can't look on another person who you see as sinful. You can't look down upon them because you have to admit we've fallen short as well.

We are just as sinful. It's only through Jesus. It's only through Jesus' blood that we can come to the Father. So this is the first meaning of the wine.

I think there's a second meaning of the miracle also. And this is what his death achieves for us. So I actually want to begin at verse one again.

[18 : 05] It begins like this. On the third day, there was a wedding in Cana. Now, there wouldn't be chapter numbers in the original book.

So this would follow on immediately from chapter one. And if you look at the paragraphs leading up to this point, there's this series of days in Jesus' life. And you'll get this sentence, on the next day.

And then Jesus will do something that day and it'll say, on the next day. And there's this series of days on the next day, about three series of days. And then the story says this, on the third day.

And if you were reading this as a normal account, it wouldn't quite make sense. It's a confusing way to speak, in a way. So what is John getting at here? I think he's trying to show us something by the third day.

He's trying to trigger something in our minds. Now what should the third day trigger in the mind of a Christian? Well, Jesus rose from the dead on the third day. So Jesus came to die.

[19 : 08] He came to shed his blood. But he also rose from the dead, defeating death on the third day. Because he rose, we will rise with him. And because of that, there will be a wedding.

We will be with God one day. If we look at verse four again, what does he say? She says, they have no wine. And Jesus answers her. He says, woman, what does your concern have to do with me?

My hour has not yet come. So what is he saying here? In effect, he's saying, look, one day, I will provide the wine. There will be a wedding. But first of all, my hour.

So this is what his death won for us. Because of his hour, there will be a wedding. And you know, throughout the Bible, God describes his relationship with us as a marriage.

In Isaiah, God says to the people of Israel, he says, your maker is your husband. And Jesus, he's constantly referring to heaven as a wedding.

[20 : 17] I'll just refer back to Matthew 26. Remember the, this is the Last Supper. And we read this before. He says, this is my blood of the new covenant, which is shed for many.

But then he finishes with this on verse 29. But I say to you, I will not drink of this fruit of the vine from now on until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom. So there will be a day when we'll drink it new with him.

There will be a wedding feast. And that's exactly how he describes it. Matthew 22, Jesus tells this parable of heaven and he says, heaven will be like a wedding feast.

Heaven will be a wedding feast. Revelation talks about the end of time and he says, he talks about the marriage supper of the Lamb. There'll be a wedding between man and between God.

And Paul, and he speaks to the Ephesian church, he talks about marriage and he uses it as a picture of the union with Christ and the church. He says, a husband and wife, it's a picture of Christ and the church.

[21 : 26] So throughout the Bible, what is a wedding? A wedding is our picture of our unity with God. So what is a wedding? It's the two become one flesh. And it speaks of our union with God that one day will be one with Jesus, will be like him.

So first of all, it speaks of joy. There'll be joy in heaven. Even in the Old Testament, it speaks in these words. In Isaiah 25, verse 6, it says this, And in this mountain, the Lord of hosts will make for all people a feast of choice pieces, a feast of wines on the lees, of fat things full of marrow, of well-refined wines on the lees.

And he will destroy in this mountain the surface of the covering cast over all people. And the veil that is spread over all nations, he will swallow up.

Sorry, he will destroy the veil that is spread over all nations. He will swallow up death forever, and the Lord God will wipe away tears from all faces.

The rebuke of his people he will take away from all the earth, for the Lord has spoken. So constantly, even in the Old Testament, heaven, or the coming of Christ, is described with wine, is described with feasting, you know, it's this joy that there will be in heaven.

[23 : 01] I just want to say, going to what does that mean for us now? See, it says this about Jesus. For the joy set before him, he endured the cross, despising its shame.

And he's now seated at the right hand of God. So even him, even in his death, he was looking forward to the joy. But what does that mean for us now? Because we're not in heaven yet.

We're in this, you know, this sort of grey period where we've received the Spirit, we have a relationship with God, but not in its fullness. The Bible describes the Spirit in us now as a down payment.

It's a down payment. It's a seal. But one day, we will receive the fullness. And joy, it's a fruit of the Spirit. There is a joy in this life.

But there's also suffering. Just as Jesus had to pick up his cross, we're commanded, it says, if you will be my disciple, Jesus says, you will also have to pick up a cross.

[24 : 07] Paul constantly speaks to the church of striving, striving, striving with sin. There's trials, there'll be many trials. But yet, in the midst of this, we can have joy.

Yet, in the midst of struggles. So how can we increase this joy now? How can we have it? Well, first of all, I want to say we need a right perspective. You know, if we look around at the earth now, there's a lot of sorrows, there's a lot of evil going on.

We live in a fallen world. And as a Christian, in some ways, it can be harder. But Paul went through many trials. He was beaten. He was persecuted. He was put in jail.

And if anyone knew how to deal with suffering, it was Paul. But he says this to the Corinthian church, to a church familiar with persecution themselves, it says this. 2 Corinthians, verse 4, chapter 4, verse 16.

Therefore, we do not lose heart, even though our outward man is perishing, yet the inward man is being renewed day by day. For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, is working for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.

[25 : 25] While we do not look at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen. For the things which are seen are temporary, but the things which are not seen are eternal.

So what does Paul say? He says, don't look at these things around. Look at the things above. Look at what is yours for eternity. So in a sense, how do we get joy?

We need to let this idea of the wedding, of heaven, of what it is, let it sink deeper into our souls, into our hearts. We need to get a grasp of what this is, that this is actually true, this is our reality, that if we've been saved by God, we've been saved by grace, then there will be a wedding, and eternity will be full of joy.

Yet they'll be striving first. But it gives us a hope. We have to set our eyes on the things above. We have to set our eyes on this hope. So that's the first thing.

We need to change our perspective. We need a heavenly perspective. And second of all, and I think this is linked, it's to abide. Jesus says, Jesus says, you abide in me, and I will abide in you.

[26 : 33] And what's the joy of heaven? It's Jesus himself. It's this relationship with Jesus. And that will come in its fullness in heaven, but we can have a relationship with Jesus now, and we need to work on that.

We need to abide in him. And we get joy from that relationship. Jesus, in John 15, he talks about this, abiding in him. And he says this later, he says, I've said these things that your joy may be full.

So what does this mean for us to abide in Christ? Well, it means to have communion with him. It means to set aside time with him, to speak with him every day, to pray with him, to learn from his word, to let him speak to us by his word, to pray through his word.

And this requires discipline. And it sounds simple, yet we have to work at it as well. But it's abiding in Jesus.

And by abiding in him, in a sense, we are changing our perspective. We're setting our sights on the eternal things. But it's something we have to work at every day. And as I said before, Jesus himself will be our joy.

[27 : 57] So what is the true joy of heaven? Well, we talked about a marriage. And I think it's this. It's that we'll be one with Jesus. We'll have a perfect relationship with Jesus.

And that's our ultimate hope. Jesus' death means that we're no longer separated, but united. But one day we'll be united fully. It says this in 1 John.

We will meet him in the air and we will be like him, for we will see him as he is. One day we will be completely like Christ in our morality.

We'll no longer struggle with sin. We'll no longer strive with it. The struggles in this life will go. And secondly, it means this, we'll have a perfect relationship with Jesus.

Jesus. We'll walk with him as we did in the garden, as Adam and Eve did in the garden. That communion with Jesus will be restored, that communion with God.

[28 : 57] And if you don't know Jesus, if you're not yet a Christian, this might seem strange. You might think, heaven, it's exciting to me in that it will be full of joy and I'll see my family, I'll see my friends, there'll be no more pain.

But for the Christian, the greatest thing about heaven is that we'll be with Jesus. We'll see him face to face. The Psalms say this, they say, oh, taste and see that the Lord is good.

And it's an experience we need to have. It's a relationship. And perhaps if you don't understand this, you need to know Jesus. You need to experience this for yourself.

If it doesn't make sense for you that there'll be joy in heaven because we'll be with Jesus, maybe you don't yet know Jesus. And that's a challenge. But you can.

You can know him and you can know your sins forgiven. So I'll just go over sort of an overview.

[30 : 00] What are the two things that this miracle means? Well, first of all, Jesus is pointing to his death. He's doing away with the old covenant, the covenant of works, of law, you know, the purification of the Jews, the rituals.

He says, I'm doing away with this purification, cleansing, and in place, it'll be my blood. It'll be grace. It'll be my sacrifice once and for all. And second of all, because of my death, there'll be wine, there'll be a feast, there'll be a wedding.

We'll be with Jesus. So I'll finish with this. Revelation chapter 21, verse 1. And this is talking about the new heaven and the new earth.

Now I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away. Also, there was no more sea. Then I, John, saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride, adorned for her husband, and I heard a loud voice from heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men and he will dwell with them and they shall be his people.

God himself will be with them and be their God and God will wipe away every tear from their eyes. There shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying. There shall be no more pain, for the former things have passed away.

[31 : 26] I'll just close in prayer.