

THAT YOU MAY HAVE LIFE

(A Study of the Gospel of John)

Filled With the Best

TEXT: John 2:1-11

OPENING SCRIPTURE

Isaiah 11:1–4

1 There shall come forth a Rod from the stem of Jesse,
And a Branch shall grow out of his roots.

2 The Spirit of the LORD shall rest upon Him,
The Spirit of wisdom and understanding,
The Spirit of counsel and might,
The Spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the LORD.

3 His delight *is* in the fear of the LORD,
And He shall not judge by the sight of His eyes,
Nor decide by the hearing of His ears;

4 But with righteousness He shall judge the poor,
And decide with equity for the meek of the earth; ...

Introduction: John tells us that he is writing that we may know that Jesus is the Son of God, and so we can have life in His name. After introducing us to

Jesus ...

THE WORD

THE TRUE LIGHT

THE SON OF GOD

John tells us about the baptism of Jesus and His call to the first of His disciples: John himself, Andrew, Simon Peter, Phillip, and Nathanael. Then, the apostle tells us about Jesus' first public miracle at the wedding feast in Cana of Galilee.

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 Now both Jesus and His disciples were invited to the wedding. ³ And when they ran out of wine, the mother of Jesus said to Him, "They have no wine." ⁴ Jesus said to her, "Woman, what does your concern have to do with Me? My hour has not yet come." ⁵ His mother said to the servants, "Whatever He says to you, do *it*." ⁶ Now there were set there six waterpots of stone, according to the manner of purification of the Jews,

containing twenty or thirty gallons apiece. ⁷ Jesus said to them, "Fill the waterpots with water." And they filled them up to the brim. ⁸ And He said to them, "Draw *some* out now, and take *it* to the master of the feast." And they took *it*. ⁹ 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. ¹⁰ 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!" ¹¹ This beginning of signs Jesus did in Cana of Galilee, and manifested His glory; and His disciples believed in Him.

John says that this was the beginning of the signs Jesus did. The word sign indicates that this miracle had a message. It had a significance beyond just meeting the immediate need of running out of refreshments at the wedding reception.

John has said that what he wrote, he wrote so that we might have life. Jesus said the life He offers is both eternal and abundant. Therefore we should expect to find in this sign a message that will help us to have this kind of life, both eternal and abundant.

However, before we seek to understand the message, we need to be sure we understand the facts of

A. The Simple Story

1. (2:1-2) ¹ On the third day there was a wedding in Cana of Galilee, and the mother of Jesus was there. ² Now both Jesus and His disciples were invited to the wedding.

The Setting – A Wedding in Cana of Galilee, Jesus and Disciples went

2. (3a) And when they ran out of wine,
The Problem – Wine was gone

3. (3b,5) ^{3b} the mother of Jesus said to Him, "They have no wine. ⁵ His mother said to the servants, "Whatever He says to you, do *it*."

The Appeal – Mary asks for help, Jesus responds, Mary has confidence in Jesus

4. (6-9a) ⁶ Now there were set there six waterpots of stone, according to the manner of purification of the Jews, containing twenty or thirty gallons apiece. ⁷ Jesus said to them, "Fill the waterpots with water." And they filled them up to the brim. ⁸ And He said to them, "Draw *some* out now, and take *it* to the master of the feast." And they took *it*. ⁹ When the master of the feast had tasted the water that was made wine,

The Action – 6 waterpots for purification (18-30 gal.); filled with water, changed to wine

5. (9b-10) ^{9b} 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. ¹⁰ 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!"

The Result – Head waiter mystified, the wine made by Jesus was the best wine.

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

The Report – Beginning of the signs, Manifested Glory, Disciples believed

B. Some Notes of Importance – Sadly, some of the facts concerning this miraculous sign of Jesus have been misunderstood; and the consequence of such has ranged from sad to tragic.

1. **People, even Christians, (even Baptists!), have used this account to justify the use of alcoholic beverages.**

"If Jesus water into wine, there cannot be anything wrong with my drinking in moderation."

I believe that **Jesus created fresh grape juice rather than fermented or alcoholic wine.**

Now, I know some of you are saying, "You just believe that because you're a Baptist preacher!"

I can tell you honestly, "No I don't."

I believe it because of the evidence in both the text and the Jewish/Roman culture.

- **The Greek word *oinos* is used in both Biblical and secular Greek to mean either fermented (alcoholic) wine or unfermented (fresh) grape juice.**
- **The *oinos* Jesus made was called the "good" *oinos*. It was better than what had already been served.**
 - **Most connoisseurs of alcoholic beverages today would take this to mean that the *oinos* Jesus made had a higher alcoholic content than that served previously.**
 - **This was not true during the times in which Jesus lived.**
 - ✓ **The Roman naturalist and philosopher Pliny, who lived during Jesus' lifetime said, "wines are most beneficial when all of their potency has been removed..."**
 - ✓ **His contemporary, the Greek historian Plutarch said that wine is "much more pleasant to drink" when it**

“neither inflames the brain nor infests the mind or passions.”

- ✓ **Add to these two the poet Horace. All three said that the best wine was that which was “harmless or innocent.”**
- **The Greek word “good” used to describe the *oinos* Jesus made is not the ordinary and simple word for “good,” which is “agathos.” It is “kalos,” which means “morally excellent.”**
 - ✓ **Jesus made between 120 and 180 gallons of *oinos* to supplement the *oinos* already consumed by the guests.**
 - ✓ **If this *oinos* were alcoholic, this would not be consumption in moderation.**
 - ✓ **Could this be called “morally excellent?”**
 - ✓ **Would Jesus do this, especially when the Word of God says in Proverbs 20:1 “Wine *is* a mocker, Strong drink *is* a brawler, and whoever is led astray by it is not wise?”**

I don't think so.

2. **Jesus' response to His mother was not rude or discourteous as the translation makes it seem. The address “woman” was often used as a name of respect in classical Greek. It is Jesus' customary, courteous title for women. Even at the tender moment of concern for His mother while dying on the cross, Jesus still addresses her as “woman.”**
3. **Jesus was not telling Mary to “stay out of His business.” A good paraphrase of the passage which bridges the language and cultural gap is “Do not worry; you do not quite understand what is going on. Leave things to me, and I will take care of them in my own way.” That this is the meaning of Jesus' response is confirmed in two ways by the rest of the story.**
 - **Mary told the servants to obey Jesus.**
 - **Jesus did solve the problem in His unique way.**

C. The Meaning of the Sign

The fact that John labels the miracle he describes as a “sign” means that it signifies something. Although His act of turning water into wine to meet the immediate need of saving the host from humiliation is a kind and gracious one, Jesus was also motivated by other considerations.

Some things are taught better by doing than by telling. By His actions, His sign, **Jesus shows the disciples several things of importance.**

1. A Lesson for Israel

- The wedding feast was a picture of the nation.
 - Their wine had run out.
 - They were spiritually bankrupt; joy was gone.
- The six waterpots
 - Used for ceremonial cleansing.
 - Represented their rituals which could not help.
- Joy could only be restored by a miraculous change.
 - To be accomplished by Jesus Himself.

2. A Lesson on Salvation

Remember that the best way to understand a passage of Scripture is to let other Scriptures explain it. The elements in this story are found in other places in Scripture, and their meaning and significance in those other passages shines a light on their meaning here.

Story Part	Scriptures	Interpretation
Thirsty Crowd	Isaiah 55:1 “Ho! Everyone who thirsts, Come to the waters; And you who have no money, Come, buy and eat. Yes, come, buy wine and milk Without money and without price. Revelation 22:17 And the Spirit and the bride say, “Come!” And let him who hears say, “Come!” And let him who thirsts come. Whoever desires, let him take the water of life freely.	Lost sinners
Empty Water pots	In 2 Cor. 4:7, Paul refers to our hearts as earthen vessels	Human Hearts, Hard and empty
Filled with Water	Eph. 5:26 refers to the washing of water by the word; Jn. 15:3 says we are made clean by the word.	Filled with the Word
Water changed to Wine	2 Cor. 5:17 describes the change made in our lives by Jesus as we become the new creation.	Changed by Jesus

Now we put these together like the story:

- Like the thirsty crowd with no more wine, lost sinners find nothing to satisfy their desires.
- Their hearts are hard and empty.

- **Their life may be attractive on the outside, but it has nothing within that satisfies.**
- **Then some servant fills the thirsty vessel with the Word of God.**
- **He learns of Jesus. He hears the gospel and believes.**
- **Then that lost sinner is changed by Jesus: his sins are forgiven; he is cleansed of all unrighteousness, he becomes a child of God; he is given eternal life.**
- **Everything has changed.**
- **They are filled with the very best!**

3. A Lesson on Service

After their brief conversation about the problem, what did Mary tell the servants? Do whatever He tells you.

These are still good words for us to heed if we want to be filled with the best of what Jesus has to offer.

This is what we must do if we want the abundant life.

What does Jesus command us, His servants, to do?

Mt. 28:19-20 ¹⁹ **Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,** ²⁰ **teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, *even* to the end of the age."**

Mark 16:15 And He said to them, "**Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature.**

Acts 1:8 But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and **you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.**"

INVITATION: Is your life empty? Does your heart get harder day by day? Do you need changing? Do you need the gift of eternal life? Trust in Christ today.

Do you want a more abundant life in Christ? Do you want to be filled with the best Jesus has to offer? Then be more obedient. Try doing exactly what He says. The obedient life is the fulfilled life. Dear Christian brother or sister, come to the altar and surrender that area of stubbornness in your life this morning.

Do you need a church home where you can grow in obedience and be a disciple so you can have Jesus' best? Come join as a part of our church family today.