

Equipping The Saints

"...For the equipping of the saints for the work of service..." ~ Ephesians 4:12

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Turning Water Into Wine (By Andrew Dow)

John recorded certain miracles of Jesus **“so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing you may have life in His name”** (John 20:31, NASB). The signs and wonders that Jesus performed were intended to prove who He was. They show His ability to circumvent natural law, and work in the realm of the supernatural. With His first recorded miracle Jesus powerfully demonstrated what He came to this earth to accomplish.

The Water-to-Wine Miracle

“On the third day there was a wedding in Cana of Galilee...” (John 2:1-2). We are not told whose wedding this was, or what connection Jesus had to the new couple. We simply know that there was a wedding, that Jesus’ mother was there, and that Jesus and His disciples were there. No more background is needed to understand the meaning behind this miracle.

At some point during this wedding **“the wine ran out”** (John 2:3). Jesus’ mother reports this disappointing news to the Son of God. Jesus responded, **“What does this have to do with us? My hour has not yet come”** (John 2:4). Despite Jesus’ apparent lack of interest, His mother still told the servants at the wedding to do whatever He instructed (John 2:5).

Jesus directed these servants to fill the available stone pots with water, and they did (John 2:7). He then told them to draw out some of the water and take it to the headwaiter, and they did (John

2:8). After tasting Jesus' creation, the headwaiter said to the bridegroom, **“Every man serves the good wine first... but you have kept the good wine until now”** (John 2:9-10).

John concludes this short record by saying, **“This beginning of His signs Jesus did in Cana of Galilee, and manifested His glory, and His disciples believed in Him”** (John 2:11).

Foreshadowing The Cross

Whenever we explore historical accounts such as this, we must be careful not to spiritualize everything, or make dramatic points of simple details. However, it would be a mistake not to recognize that every detail was recorded just as God desired (cf. 2 Tim. 3:16-17). Remember, John recorded these miracles so that we may **“believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God”** (John 20:31). Therefore, it is only proper that we be open to the possibility that these miracles convey some deep meaning about who Jesus is, and what He came to do. Consider some observations from this miracle.

First, don't neglect the overall point of the miracle! This miracle shows us that Jesus can take something common and turn it into something extraordinary. He demonstrates this ability by transforming water into the best wine available. In performing this miracle, Jesus proves Himself to be the Creator (cf. John 1:2), and He proves His ability to recreate us (2 Cor. 5:17)!

Following this line of thought, Jesus made it possible for us to be recreated through His death, burial, and resurrection. Interestingly enough, there seem to be several ways in which these events are foreshadowed in this miracle:

After His mother informed Him of the wine-less situation, Jesus' response was, **“My hour has not yet come”** (John 2:4). Jesus uses this term **“hour”** frequently in the gospel of John to refer to His ultimate and final glorification at His death, burial, and resurrection (cf. John 7:30; 8:20; 12:23, 27-28; 13:1; 17:1). In this miracle we see Jesus informing those close to Him that the hour

is not yet come, but then He proceeds to give them a glimpse into what they can expect when that hour does come!

If we recognize that in Scripture the term **“wine”** may refer to grape juice (cf. Isa. 65:8), it seems significant that Jesus creates wine to fulfill these people’s needs. Mark records an occasion before Christ’s death in which Jesus gave his disciples **“fruit of the vine”** (Mark 14:25) and said, **“This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many”** (Mark 14:24). Is it by coincidence that grape juice is used in both situations? Is it possible that the record of the water-to-wine miracle is pointing us forward to the time when Jesus would provide His blood for the salvation of many? This would make His mother’s statement all the more significant: **“They have no wine”** (John 2:3). Jesus provided the wine for this wedding, just as He would provide His blood for all mankind!

Another seemingly small detail is found in John 2:1, **“On the third day there was a wedding in Cana of Galilee...”** The fact that this miracle took place **“on the third day”** is interesting. Why did John include those words? Was it merely for the historical accuracy, or was he trying to make a connection in our minds? Paul explained to the Corinthians that **“Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, and that He was buried, and that He was raised on the third day”** (1 Cor. 15:3-4). Christ’s resurrection is the irrefutable display of His authority over life and death. In one sense, Christ’s resurrection solidified the means by which we can be recreated into a new creature in Him. How wonderful that this miracle took place **“on the third day”** as did Christ’s glorious resurrection!

Lessons From the Water-to-Wine Miracle

First, without Jesus we are nothing. Just like the water that Jesus transformed into wine, we must be transformed by Christ into a new creature (cf. 2 Cor. 5:17). Paul describes us as God’s **“workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works”** (Eph. 2:10), and he tells us to **“put on the new self, which in the**

likeness of God has been created in righteousness” (Eph. 4:24). Elsewhere he says, **“Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind”** (Rom. 12:2). It is only when Jesus enters the picture that we can become God’s workmanship, created in righteousness, and transformed.

Second, in order to have Christ recreate us, we must obey Jesus. Back in our text, Jesus’ mother said to the servants, **“Whatever He says to you, do it”** (John 2:5). Jesus was going to fix their wine dilemma, but He needed their full cooperation. If the servants had not obeyed His instructions, would the water have turned to wine? Our Lord certainly had the power to do anything He desired, but He accomplished this miracle through the obedience of others!

Do you want to be recreated? **“Whatever He says to you, do it!”** Does Jesus tell you to have faith in Him (John 8:24)? Do it! Does Jesus tell you to turn away from your sins (Luke 13:1-5)? Do it! Does Jesus tell you to confess that He is your Lord (Matt. 10:32-33)? Do it! Does Jesus tell you to be immersed (Matt. 28:19-20)? Do it! The one who conquered death has the power to save all mankind, but He has determined to give grace to those who submit to Him through obedience. He will make us something extraordinary when we humbly obey Him!

Notes:

“Go therefore and make disciples...” (Matthew 28:19-20)