

Remnant Life Church
August 6, 2017
John
The First Sign: Water to Wine
John 2:1-11

- The Apostle John
 - One of the first disciples called
 - A former disciple of John the Baptist
 - A fisherman by trade along with his brother, James,
 - He was one of three disciples accorded a special place with Jesus; one of the inner circle trio of Peter, James, and John
 - He refers to himself as “the one whom Jesus loved”
- The Gospel of John
 - Most likely written sometime in the later first century around 85-95
 - John wrote the Gospel for several reasons
 - Primarily to present Jesus Christ as the fulfillment of the Feasts and the Law thereby filling the void left by the destruction of the temple

John wrote to assure the people that Jesus was not only the one foretold in the OT and the promised Messiah, He was God (**John 1:1**)

- John highlights 7 signs that demonstrate the Messiahship and deity of Jesus Christ
- This morning we will look at the first
- It is Jesus’ first recorded public miracle – turning water into wine for a wedding at Cana

READ – John 2:1-11

Set the Scene:

- A wedding at the time was not a 4 or 5-hour event like it is today
 - A first century wedding could easily last as long as 7 days
 - The guest list would have focused almost exclusively on family
 - Very large in that day
 - Could only afford so much
 - It was the responsibility of the groom’s family to host the event and to make sure there was enough for everybody
 - To run out of a staple like wine would have been a huge social faux-pas and a tremendous embarrassment
 - There is some compelling evidence in found in extracanonical writings that tell this same story that the wedding was of a cousin of Jesus; the son of Mary’s sister
 - If this was true it would make sense that Mary had some hosting responsibilities at the wedding which would explain why she approached Jesus to help in the first place
 - It would also provide the reason why Mary and Jesus had been invited

- The town of Cana was also only a few miles north of Nazareth where Mary and Jesus would have traveled from
 - But Jesus did not come alone
 - He had his new disciples with him – at least 5
 - I’ve read that some try to make this the reason Jesus had to do this because it was His fault they ran out - NO
 - If you declared yourself a disciple of a rabbi or teacher you went where they went
- **The conversation between Mary and Jesus**
 - Jesus responds to her in what may at first appear to be somewhat disrespectful
 - *Woman, why do you involve me? (2:4a)*
 - The address of “woman” is foreign to our ears but not uncommon for that time
 - The word woman in the original language is *guhmay*
 - An address with a wide array of meanings including Dear Woman
 - It would appear that in doing this Jesus is, at least to a small degree, downplaying His earthly familiar connection or relationships
 - **Math 12:28** – *...who is My mother and who are My brothers?*
 - By saying these words Jesus is also saying that only the Father gives direction for His life - not even His earthly mother can be in that place
 - **John 5:19** - *“Very truly I tell you, the Son can do nothing by himself; he can do only what he sees his Father doing, because whatever the Father does the Son also does.”*
 - Jesus is approximately 30 years old at this point and has come into His own as an adult legally
 - But Jesus says to His mother, *My hour has not yet come. (2:4b)*
 - This is a gentle rebuke
 - The hour He is referring to is His being made known to the public
 - In other words – for His ministry to begin
 - Jesus is about to enter into the very purpose of His coming
 - But even His mother’s wishes must be subordinated to His divine mission
 - Yet the great compassion Jesus is also revealed
- **Mary then turns to the servants** and says, very simply, *“Do whatever He tells you.” (2:5)*
 - I think it is difficult to read these words and not believe that Mary had been a witness to things with Jesus that no one else had
 - We know that John and the other Gospels did not record everything Jesus did but, remember, Mary had been with Him since His birth
 - And so Mary shakes off a gentle rebuke for approaching Jesus as a mother and returns a second time, in speaking to the servants, as a believer

- **The servants bring 6 large pots**
 - The purpose of the pots was to hold water for ceremonial cleansing
 - Between 20 and 30 gallons each
 - Total of somewhere around 120 to 180 gallons
 - They were probably being used for the ceremonial washing of utensils or the guest's hands and feet for the wedding ceremony over the course of the week-long celebration
 - Filled to brim to make sure that it was known nothing natural was added or mixed
 - The wine used here was a fermented grape drink that was diluted with water by as much as $\frac{3}{4}$ strength
 - Wine that we know today was referred to as "strong drink" in the Bible almost exclusively in the OT
 - Taken to the Banquet Master
 - He declares that, unlike everyone else, the family had saved the best wine for last
 - A Reisling, Chardonnary, or Merlot – not Ripple

- **What is the greater message of this event?**
 - First, Jesus allows just the quickest glimpse of His divine nature
 - Mt of Transfiguration – the 3 disciples got a glimpse of His divine presence ([Matt 17](#))
 - This is also a clear representation of His heart of compassion and love not even wanting a distant relative's family to endure embarrassment in the community
 - The revelation of His glory would increase as time went on culminating with His resurrection and victory over death, sin, hell, and satan.
 - Second, we are given a clue, if you will, as to the very meaning of the story
 - The water poured into the jars represents the old order of Jewish law and custom
 - ...which Jesus was to replace with something much better – the forgiveness of our sins through the gift of God's Son as the final sacrifice which fulfilled the law

- **Finally, see how the people around perceived what had happened**
 - The Master of the Banquet knew nothing of what had happened and would need to be told
 - The servants saw the sign but not the glory of God and so they did not believe
 - The disciples perceived the glory behind the sign
 - *What Jesus did here in Cana of Galilee was the first of the signs through which he revealed his glory; and his disciples believed in him. (2:11)*

- How often do we see the Hand of God at work in our lives but miss the glory of what is being done due to our unbelief or focus on the things of the world?