



Sermon Series: All Signs Point to Jesus

To be used with Session: The Sign of His Glory

Sermon Title Possibilities: THE LIFE OF THE PARTY

Scripture: John 2:1-11

Connection with Unit Theme: To complement the Bible study “All Signs Point to Jesus,” this sermon illustrates that God works toward our good and to His glory and honor. Glory literally means “weighty,” which is the idea of significance. When God works toward our good it is to demonstrate the significance or serves as a sign of who He is, which should result in a deepening of our faith. In Jewish custom, wine was symbolic of joy and celebration (Kostenberger, 2004, p.93), and a sign of the Messianic age (Jer. 31:12-14; Hos.4:7; Amos 9:13-14). When Jesus turned water into wine, it was a sign that the Messiah had arrived, and that true joy and rejoicing were only found in and through Him.

Introduction: The “life of the party,” is someone who enjoys social occasions, who livens up the atmosphere, seems to know exactly what to do to help people have an enjoyable time, and is often the center of attention. Jesus and His disciples attended a wedding in Cana, demonstrating that neither He nor the disciples were antisocial killjoys, and that they participated in the normal customs, and culture of everyday Jewish life. As His disciples, Jesus does not expect us to withdraw from life, but to participate in it and actively enjoy ourselves. Ecclesiastes 8:15 says, “So I commended enjoyment because there is nothing better for a person under the sun than to eat, drink, and enjoy himself, for this will accompany him in his labor during the days of his life that God gives him under the sun.” Of course, we are to keep in mind that as His disciples, things ought to be done in moderation, and our behavior should always honor God. This also illustrates that Jesus enjoys being amongst people, that He desires to be invited into the significant times in our lives, and to celebrate those special moments with us. Jesus further reveals that we don’t necessarily have to be the center of attention to be the “life of the party!”

WHATEVER YOUR CONCERN, GREAT OR SMALL, TAKE IT TO JESUS (2:1-4)

The wedding party running out of wine, culturally speaking, would have been a major embarrassment for the bride and groom. Mary immediately turned to Jesus, perhaps intimating her dependency upon Jesus being head of the family (Joseph apparently dead), with one of His responsibilities being, taking care of His mother, and her concerns. Jesus never used His calling as an excuse for not handling His familial responsibilities, and neither should we. Her request is a form of intercessory prayer. Jesus didn't specifically say "no." However, by answering her "woman," not "ema," the Aramaic word for "mother," and that it wasn't His time, He was informing her that the calling of the Father took precedence, not over His care for her, but over many cultural concerns. God can give us balance between our calling, those we've been called to care for, and the cultural concerns that often demand our attention. Mary didn't necessarily expect a miracle, but she expected Jesus to respond. Her reaction was, nevertheless, Your will be done, and she left the outcome and the timing to Him. There's an old hymn by Charles Tindley, that says, "Take your burden to the Lord and leave it there. If you trust and never doubt, He will surely bring you out. Take your burden to the Lord and leave it there." When we take our concerns to God, we need to trust Him to work them out in His own timing and in His own way.

WHATEVER JESUS COMMANDS, EVEN IF IT DOESN'T MAKE SENSE, DO IT (2:5-8)

God's ways are not our ways. How many people are forfeiting eternal life because the Gospel does not make sense to them? How many saints have forfeited a blessing because God's command didn't make sense to them? Our obedience is not based on what is said, but Who said it. Naaman was told to dip himself seven times in the Jordan River and he would be healed of leprosy (2 Kings. 5:1-14). After fishing all night and not catching anything, Peter was told to launch out again and let down his nets (Luke, 5:1-9). Ten men, who still had leprosy, were told to go show themselves to the priest (Luke 17:11-14). Naaman was healed, Peter's boat began to sink with an abundance of fish, and the lepers were cleansed. In each case, the commands made no sense. However, obedience brings blessings (Luke. 11:28). God often works through natural means and human instrumentality to do the impossible. Proverbs 3:5-6, declares, "Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and do not rely on your own understanding; in all your ways know him, and he will make your paths straight." While the means may not be miraculous, the outcome can be if we obey God's Word "When we walk with the Lord in the light of His Word, what a glory He sheds on our way. While we do His good will, He abides with us still, and with all who will trust and obey" (Trust and Obey - Public Domain).

WHATEVER JESUS PROVIDES, HE PROVIDES THE VERY BEST (2:9-11)

Jesus's mother, the servants, the groom, and the disciples were aware of the miracle. The headwaiter and the rest of the wedding guests were unaware that the wine had run out, let alone the miraculous had occurred. The wedding celebration continued undisturbed. The world is often unaware of the grace that God shows it, the miracles that He does every day, and the blessings they experience because it. Who we know (the Messiah) and what we know (what He's done) most people remain oblivious. What we point to as the extraordinary will often seem ordinary to the world because they have not witnessed how it happened or refuse to believe in the One who made it happen. And even when things are better, people are quick to give credit to others rather than God. It reminds us that miracles don't save. Miracles are signs that point to a Savior (John 6). The Bible says we are in the last days, and it is left to us to testify to the absolute best that God has given the world, our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, and what He's done in our lives. However, the greatest witness is not so much the changes He's done for you, but the change He's done in you, must like the change in the stone water jars, and as people "draw" from your life, perhaps they'll "taste and see that the Lord is good" (Psalm 34:8), and experience the blessings of those who trust in Him.

Conclusion: "Save the Best for Last" (January 1992), is a ballad sung by Vanessa Williams about a young woman who's in love with a man she's friends with but never tells him. Instead, she stands by and watches as he goes through years of dating before he finally unexpectedly decides to initiate a relationship with her. The redemptive lyrics resonate with Williams's life story, as following her scandal as Miss America, she had to put her life back together again. No matter your past, no matter how scandalous, it is never too late for your redemption story. Jesus loves and desires to initiate a relationship with you, to give you eternal life and help you put your life back together again. Won't you let Him in?

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