

Life and Ministry of Jesus Christ

The First Miracle of Jesus Christ

Last time...the first disciples of Jesus Christ

This time...the first miracle of Jesus Christ

John 2:1-11

v1-2 And the third day:

Timestamp:

either same day as Ch 1:43 (why Jesus went north to Galilee)
or the 3rd day after Jesus' invitation and promise to Nathanael

marriage in Cana of Galilee:

Let's set the scene in which the first miracle of Jesus takes place:

- Cana
 - about 6 miles NE of Nazareth
[map]
 - Nathanael's hometown (Ch 21:2)
- "mother of Jesus"
 - Not "Mary"
 - is never mentioned by name by Holy Spirit thru John
 - Whose name is Acts 4:12?
 - invited to this wedding and is already there when Jesus arrives
- marriage...between one man and one woman, as designed by God...
the only kind of marriage recognized by God
 - a BIG celebration in the Jewish culture
 - a very meaningful celebration in Jewish thinking...
every Jewish marriage symbolized the union of
God and Israel, Husband Jehovah and the Bride Israel
 - an inspiring shadow

- a. Betrothal arranged by Father (1 Cor 6:20, 2 Cor 11:1-2)
 - b. If maiden accepts (her choice), the Bridegroom goes to his Father's house to prepare a place for her (John 14:1-3)
 - c. When Bridegroom is asked when his wedding is, he replies, "No man knows except my Father." (Matt 24:36, 44)
 - d. When all the preparations are made to the satisfaction of the Father (no man knows...and not until then), he gives the Son permission to go get his Bride (Rapture)
 - e. Bridegroom comes for the Bride, even in the night, and the Bride and her attendants are to be ready (Matt 25:1-13)
 - f. Bridegroom designates two close friends to assist and to be witnesses; one is assigned to assist the Bride to lead her to the ceremony and the other is stationed with the Bridegroom (Matt 17:1-9, Rev 11:1-12)
 - g. Bridegroom and Bride retire to his father's house for one week celebration after the wedding (Rom 11:25, Rev 4-19)
 - h. Bridegroom and Bride go to Bride's house for the marriage supper/feast (Rev 19:7-9)
 - i. The Wedding Feast
 - i. prepared by the Father for the Son (Matt 22:2)
 - ii. costly preparations are carefully made (Matt 22:4)
 - iii. invitations are a great honor (Rev 19:9)
 - iv. invitations include all (Matt 22:10)
 - v. invitations are scorned by many (Matt 22:5)
 - vi. neglect of the wedding garment leads to exclusion (Matt 22:11-13)
- Whose marriage?
 - o friends of Nathanael?
 - o relatives of Mary?
 - o Mormon prophets taught this is Jesus' wedding and that all the women disciples (Mary, Martha, Mary Magdalene) were His wives

To the "outside world", they deny this yet teach it internally...2 messages for 2 audiences
 - Jesus and His 5 Galilean disciples are invited
 - o A radical change for Jesus' new disciples, formerly disciples of John the Baptist
 - o John the Baptist was severe and ascetic (abstain from the normal pleasures of life out in the desert)
 - o Jesus...immediately...goes to a marriage feast to join the celebration of joy
 - mingling with the guests
 - celebrating with them

Thoughts:

Can the Son of Man

Ch 1:51, Jesus' first testimony of Himself and a fundamental basis
of the work He was sent to do that He will pour into His
disciples

Can the Man of sorrows acquainted with grief,

Can our faithful High Priest of good things to come Who suffered while
being tempted and therefore is able to help us when we are
tempted,

Can the Mediator of a better covenant Who learned obedience by the
things He suffered

also know the joys of life as we do?

Luke 2:10 good tidings of great joy to all people

John 15:11 My joy remain in you, your joy might be full

John 16:24 ask, receive, that your joy be full

Heb 12:1 for the joy set before Him endured the cross

Yes...and He adds a great dimension and depth to make our joy full

v3-4 wanted wine:

Given the cultural and social significance of a marriage, the celebration was
very carefully planned by the father of the bridegroom

But...there developed an embarrassing calamity: they ran out of wine

Linked in Scripture: Wine and joy

This is a "Houston, we have a problem." moment

So "the mother of Jesus", who obviously cares about this couple and their
families, goes to Jesus and says, "They have no wine."

A statement that is an unspoken request for help she knows only He
can give...for she knew He was the Son of God

- She cannot forget the circumstances of His birth
- She "kept all things in her heart" regarding her Son
- She does not understand HOW Jesus can help but she knows
 - He can
 - He is more than sufficient for the need
 - He honors her
- She has absolute, unshakeable confidence in Jesus

Jesus' response must be understood in context

- Cultural: "Woman" was a term of respect and honor, was NOT derogatory or rude/unseemly or harsh (Ch 19:26)
- Spiritual: Jesus seems to be "teaching" a change of relationship – from mother with son...to (honored) disciple with the Messiah (Matt 12:46-50)

"This is none of My business; My business is My Father's business (not the bridegroom's father's business or My mother's business)."

v5 Whatsoever He says to you, do it:

The "mother of Jesus" does not respond to Jesus...she

- puts her faith in Him and leaves what to do about the embarrassing calamity up to Him...His will be done
- gives the servants of the bridegroom the Best Advice Ever

Best Advice Ever: "Whatever He says to you, do."

- To believer...in loving relationship (John 15:10, 14)
- To unbeliever...in religious, legal relationship
 - Roman Catholic
 - JW
 - Mormon
 - Muslim
 - Hindu
 - Buddhist
 - Etc

What did Jesus say?

John 6:28-29	Believe
John 14:6	exclusive
Matt 5-7	spirit of Law (adultery, murder, love)
John 7:37	if thirst, come to Me
Matt 6:7	prayer, vain repetitions of Our Father, Hail Mary
Matt 23:9	One Father, in heaven (<i>ff</i> to false priesthood)
John 10:11	Good Shepherd gave His life for the sheep
Luke 23:46	into Your hands I commend My Spirit
John 19:30	

Jesus pointed us to His Father, He never pointed us to His mother

How do I know this is the Best Advice Ever?

- Been there – religious unbeliever (Roman flavor)
- Am there – believer in loving relationship, His friend

v6-7 Fill the water pots with water:

Following his mother's Best Advice Ever, what does Jesus do?

- He honors His mother and her compassionate heart
- He helps...works to relieve the embarrassing calamity at this very important celebration of life
- He said 5 words

Nearby were 6 stone water pots, used for religious purposes...

ceremonial cleansing (Mark 7:3-4)...holding 16-24 gal each

Jesus simply directs the servants to fill all 6 water pots with water, which they did

Observations:

- This is a big wedding!
- Jesus is "there"...in an outer courtyard with the servants when approached by His mother, not at the table of honor
- The water pots were "filled to the brim", leaving no room to add anything (no sleight of hand, a trick is not possible)

Mormons believe Jesus was married and that this was His wedding; if so,

- Why was He invited to it?
- Why did Mary say "they" vs "we" have no wine?
- Why did Jesus say this did not concern Him?
- Why is Jesus in the courtyard with the servants instead at the table of honor?
- Why did the governor of the feast call the bridegroom, not Jesus?

v8-10 Draw out now and bear:

Then Jesus simply says, "Take some to the master of the celebration."

The servants did as Jesus said, following the Best Advice Ever.

What did the master of the celebration taste?

Water? No

Wine-flavored water? (MiO commercial: "It changes everything.") No

Grape juice? No (per the context)

Wine...

- real wine
- water that had miraculously been made wine
- the best wine...better than the "good wine" previously served

Did the master of the celebration ask the servants where they got this excellent wine?

The Master of the celebration summons the unnamed bridegroom, who is responsible for this feast

Jesus was not summoned

Jesus is in an outer courtyard, “in the shadows”, “flying below the radar”

The master of the celebration does not investigate this excellent wine, he “tells” the bridegroom what “he did”

Normally, the best wine is served first

After the taste buds of the guests are undiscerning, dulled, maybe even numbed (*methuo* = “intoxicated”), the cheap stuff is served

- Boone’s Farm
(Fats Domino: “I found my thrill on Strawberry Hill”)
- Ripple
- Mad Dog 20/20
- box

The guests were serve from the top shelf to the bottom shelf

But instead you served from the bottom shelf to the top shelf

v11 beginning of miracles:

Contrary to what the human writers of the apocryphal “gospels” say
(Jesus performed miracles while He was infant, toddler, boy),
the Holy Spirit says this was the 1st miracle Jesus performed

And this miracle was to

- relieve a social/cultural embarrassment at a most important celebration
- bring greater joy to this celebration of life

Who can change the molecular structures of things?

H₂O became C₂H₆O...in the twinkling of the eye

Who can make the very best wine without any grapes?

Who transcends the Laws of Nature and the Periodic Table of Elements?

The creation was radically changed by the Creator...as effortlessly as blinking,
as easy as saying 5 words

This 1st miracle clearly identifies Jesus Christ as the Creator...

His works proclaim His identity (may as well start at “In the beginning”)

Few witnessed this miracle (it cannot be explained and understood)

- the mother of Jesus
- the servants of the bridegroom
- disciples of Jesus

And they believed on/trusted Him...He has their attention

Jesus, with 5 spoken words, displayed His power and glory

The first miracle: water made into wine

In the context and in the Greek words, the wine was real fermented wine, not grape juice

Remember, linked in Scripture are wine and joy

So let's consider the

1. "low" view: man's – the wine
2. "High" view: God's – the joy

1. "low" view: man's – the wine

Man's reaction to this miracle:

Either: "Cool! Real wine!

Drinking real wine is OK, according to the Bible."

Or: "Oh no, that is not what it means because drinking real wine is a sin!"

Does the Word of God say drinking real wine, other fermented drinks, is a sin?

No

The Word of God says don't get drunk.

Rom 13:13

1 Cor 5:11

1 Cor 6:9-11

Gal 5:19-21

The Word of God says be warned – Prov 20:1

Wine *is* a mocker, strong drink *is* raging: and whosoever is deceived thereby is not wise

Don't be foolish/stupid – altered mind from too much wine

Don't be self-righteous – self-exalting, others-condemning, legalistic mind

Neither foolish nor self-righteous are the mind of Christ (servant of all)

The Word of God says it (this this case, drinking wine) is a matter of faith

Rom 14:22-23 Hast thou faith? have *it* to thyself before God. Happy *is* he that condemns not himself in that thing which he allows. And he that doubts is damned if he eat, because *he eateth* not of faith: for whatsoever *is* not of faith is sin.

The Word of God also says if you do something you are at liberty to do but doing it stumbles a brother weaker in the faith, it is a sin to do it
(Rom 14:21...Liberty vs License, Higher Law of Love)

2. “High” view: God’s – the joy

Jesus manifested His glory by miraculously making the best Bottom Shelf joy and in so doing giving us a peek at the Top Shelf joy!

Jesus Christ, the Son of Man (Ch 1:51)

- comes to us and meets us right where we are
- participates in/blesses/uses the joys of this earth-bound life...to
- draw us higher and bring us greater joy...He is the greatest “high”!
 - His joy is not found in a bottle...a deceptive counterfeit joy is
 - How do I know?
 - Been there (I have not always been an angel!)
 - Am there (there is no more exciting and satisfying life than doing whatsoever Jesus says)

Jesus Christ is the very best joy, He is the Top Shelf joy

Eph 5:15-21

Eph 3:16-21

When does Jesus bring us greater Top Shelf joy?

- we believe (v11)
- we obey...do whatever He says (v5)

Acts 5:32, 41-42

Man’s “low” view of joy, the Bottom Shelf, is really just a mask to dull the pain of what ails us

God’s “high” view of joy, the Top Shelf, is being healed of all that ails us... being made whole and freed from the bondage of sin

Acts 8:5-8

“he did” = He God the Holy Spirit did

In the first miracle of Jesus Christ, the water saw its Creator and blushed...
may we all the more so, right here and right now...on the Bottom Shelf of Life

Stone water pots: our hearts
Water: Holy Spirit
Filled to the brim!

The contents of our hearts and the joy of life radically transformed by the spoken
Word of the Creator God Almighty and His indwelling Spirit

And in a peek at the Top Shelf of Life, this first miracle at a marriage celebration was a profound
shadow of another

- Bridegroom
- Bride
- Marriage feast

Do you know this great joy that Jesus has...both now and then even more so forever?
It is available to whosoever believes and obeys

Come...believe...

- follow Jesus Christ
- receive the promise of the Father...the Holy Spirit

John 15:11 These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and *that*
your joy might be full.

Additional notes

Consider

- What happened...what is the deal with the wine?
- Why did Jesus say what He did in v4?
- What does it mean?

What happened?

Jesus turned water into wine at a wedding

The Greek word means “fermented wine”

What is fermentation?

A decaying process caused by the introduction of a corrupting leavening agent, the result of which changes the nature of the grape juice into a much different beverage

Result: clouded mind and impaired judgment, altered-mind, counterfeit joy (a deception)

What does the word of God have to say about that?

In the OT there are 10 Hebrew words translated into the English word “wine”
We will look at 2 of them...make up 92% of the appearances and have different meanings

In the NT, there are 4 Greek words translated into the English word “wine”...
3 of which mean the same thing
We will look at the 2 words with different meanings

OT

“fermented, intoxicating wine”

1 st appearance = Gen 9:21	Noah post-Flood, led to his shame and cursing of Canaan
Gen 14:18	communion of Mel and Abraham in Kidron Valley by Mount Moriah
Lev 10:9	prohibition to Aaron and 2 sons, after 2 sons offered strange fire and were devoured by fire from the Lord (drunk? Impaired judgment)
Deut 32:32-33	beverage of Israel’s enemies and rebellious Israel’s
Prov 20:1	makes men stupid
Prov 23:29-33	beverage of fools
Song 1:2	Jesus’ love is better!
Song 4:9-10	how Jesus views our love for Him
Is 5:11-12	woe for the other choice
Is 28:7	leads to error
Jer 51:7	the world’s beverage (Rev 17-18)
Dan 5	orgy with drinking from Lord’s holy vessels... Babylon fell that very night
Ps 75:7-8	wrath of God...Rev 14, 16

“fresh grape juice” (“new wine”)

1st appearance = Gen 27:26-28

new wine...blessing of Isaac to
Jacob

Num 18:11-12

best given to priests, servants of the Lord

Deut 12-14

tithes of congregation and priests

Prov 3:9-10

blessing

Is 65:8

blessing

Hosea 4:6-11

look to the Blessor...not to counterfeiter's

corruption or even to God's blessings

NT

“fermented, intoxicating wine”

37 of the 38 appearances...including all 4 times John 2

“sweet wine” or “fresh grape juice”

Acts 2:11b-17 context: intoxicating

So...what did Jesus turn water into in John 2?

The Greek word...and every use of it in NT...

means “fermented intoxicating wine”

- Does the context of this passage say something else?
- Does the context of all Scripture say something else?

Is Jesus

- tempting the guests, contrary to James 1:13
- simply answering His mother's prayer of compassion...and in so doing showing His identity and His ability to do even the Ultimate Miracle – His resurrection, transforming corrupt men into new creatures, and our resurrection with Him
- giving the guests' their choice of wine...and Rom 8:28
- lowering Himself to our level...John 21:15-17

Granted, His was the best wine...but was that wine Jesus' Best?

Why did He say what He said in v4?

He will say this repeatedly

Ch 7:8, 30

Ch 8:20

Ch 12:23

Ch 13:1

Ch 17:1

It is not his time/hour to accomplish why He became flesh

Eternal need vs temporal desire

Dan 9:24-26a with Zech 9:9

As His words relate to the wedding in Cana...

- “This is not My wedding”
- “It is not time for the New Wine”

Matt 9:17

Luke 5:37-39

What does it all mean?

Warnings against drunkenness in NT

- sign of the end times (Olivet Discourse)
 - wicked servant (Matt 24)
 - reason for being caught unaware (Luke 21, 1 Thes 5)
- indecent living (Rom 13)
- not keep company with such (1 Cor 5:11)
- not inherit kingdom of God because not justified by the Holy Spirit (1 Cor 6:9-11)
- fruit of the flesh (Gal 5:19-21)

John 15:1-8 with

- Acts 2 (New Covenant...Jer 31:31-33)
- Gal 5:22-23 (fruit of the Holy Spirit)

Be filled with the Holy Spirit instead (Eph 5:18)...new wine

Law of Love (Rom 14:17-21)...surrender of liberty for the benefit of another

Jesus' Best is yet to come

Lord's Supper...communion with the Lord (Matt 26:29)...
fruit of vine vs “wine”

Rev 19:9...overflowing amount of New Wine at His Wedding Feast...Jesus' Best