

Sermon from Gospel of John
Dr. David L. Lane,
Resident Retired Minister, Marsalis Ave. Church of Christ, Dallas, TX
CEO, JaKem Consorts and Leadership Institute



LIFE'S BEST ADVICE

TEXT: Jno 2:1-11

INTRODUCTION

Life is not easy, smooth, or even consistently comprehensible. Life is complicated. However, as frustrating as life appears to be at times, it can be marvelously wonderful. The way you choose to carry yourself into the world and handle life's obstacles while dealing with the world can have a real impact on how far you get in the professional or in the spiritual domain. Therefore, good advice from people who have been where you are trying to go is invaluable.

The July 6, 2009 issue of Forbes magazine, focused on various influential leaders and the life- and career-changing advice they received to help propel their success. Some of the other advice that various industry leaders noted include: setting realistic goals; being effective, not popular; hiring a success coach, using failure to motivate yourself, making a strong first impression; keeping it simple; and listen.

The Forbes article included a resource section called "What Price Advice?" that details the various resources available to people who are looking to enlist counsel regarding their goals. It notes that even in a recession, the advice business, which includes coaches, psychologists, lawyers, and consultants, is a booming business. Now more than ever people understand the importance of good advice. However, advice can be a tricky thing—whether we are giving,

or receiving, it. We often seek out advice from others, but, how many of us actually follow even the best advice when given, is the real question?

We have been summoned by this text to discuss life's best advice. It was the advice that Mary the mother of Jesus gave to the servants at the wedding feast of Cana of Galilee when she said, "Whatever he says, do it".

(1) THE SCENE OF A TRADITIONAL MARRAGE

(2) THE SIGNIFICANCE OF A TEACHABLE MOMENT

(3) THE SECRET OF A TRANSFORMING MIRACLE

THE SCENE OF A TRADITIONAL MARRAGE

The scene of this miracle is both interesting and intriguing for at least two reason. THE CITY WAS AN UNLIKELY PLACE.

John states in verses 1-2, "And the third day there was a marriage in Cana of Galilee; and the mother of Jesus was there:[2] And both Jesus was called, and his disciples, to the marriage."

The place of this miracle was at a wedding reception at Cana in Galilee. Jesus chose one of the most insignificant, inauspicious, tiny, humble, little cities in all of the country to began his great miracle-working ministry.

Today the exact location of ancient Cana is not known. Joshua 19:28 refers to a "Kanh" on the northern boundary of the tribal territory of Asher. There is some thought that it is located about nine miles north of Nazareth. It was the hometown of Nathanael and perhaps Philip. Where ever it was located it was a kind of a watering hole or lay over along the way to some other important places. It would have been a place where there would have been road signs pointing to other cities and other things. It was a stopping place along the highway to places like Capernaum and Bethsaida, and Tiberius and other larger cities in the lower section of the Roman Empire.

We see Jesus in this small obscure village located nine miles north of Nazareth, Cana of Galilee. The literal meaning of the word Cana is place of

reeds. Cana, was a wet moist place where reeds grew. Reeds are tall slender dry brittle breaking grass. Reeds are very fragile things that are easily broken and driven away by the wind. Jesus went to Cana a place of needs, a place of needs. On his way onward and upward Jesus came to Cana, the place of broken reeds and mounting needs to do a mighty deed.

If we had picked a city for Jesus to start His mighty work we probably would have chosen Rome, the political capital of the world. Or perhaps we would have chosen Alexandria, the education, philosophical capital of the world. We might even have chosen the great city of Jerusalem, which was the religious capital of the world. But Jesus delighted in taking small things and transforming them into big blessings to the glory of God.

THE SCENE SPOTLIGHTED AN UNUSUAL PROBLEM. The first formal step of courtship was betrothal. The bridegroom would give the bride a piece of paper which legally tied the two together. But for a considerable time after that the bride would remain in her father's house. Then, on the wedding night, the bride would be led from her father's house to that of her husband in a procession.

As the procession made its way down the street, many of those standing along the way would join in the parade. When the procession arrived at the new home, the bride would be presented to her husband.

A solemn prayer would be uttered. The ceremonial washing of hands would be done, and then there was a huge wedding supper followed by plenty of wine, fun and festivity that lasted for a week. A wedding was a very joyous, happy occasion. It was a week long, unbridled, unrestrained celebration of God joining two young lives together as one.

The newlywed couple would be clad with crowns and robes. They were treated like royalty, and in a life where much poverty existed, this week of festivity was one of the most supreme occasions of life.

Wine was an essential part of the wedding feast. A shortage of wine could have been a source of extreme embarrassment to the family of the groom. In fact, in the culture of that day, wine was the symbol of joy for the occasion. It is said that the Rabbi's of the Jewish world had a motto, "Without wine, there is no joy!"

This was not a matter of drunkenness, because drunkenness was considered to be a disgrace. However, the issue was of hospitality, which was a sacred duty. For the provisions to fail was unacceptable, as well as inexcusable.

The people at the party encounter a problem in verse 3. "And when they wanted wine, the mother of Jesus saith unto him, They have no wine." there is a deeper meaning here for us. Many times in the midst of our most joyous occasions, an obstacle will arise which casts a dark shadow of gloom over our lives.

The joy of carefully laid plans can be shattered by an unexpected turn of events. The joy of marriage is often shattered by unfaithfulness. The joy of parenthood can be shattered by a problem child. The joy of success is sometimes shattered by a failure. The joy of friendship is at times shattered by a misunderstanding. How often it rains on our parades. Life, even for the Christian, is not all fun and games that produces joy and laughter. Sometimes things happen that shatter us.

www.ja-kemconsorts.org
THE SIGNIFICANCE OF A TEACHABLE MOMENT

One could spend several sermons discussing the various aspects that made this miracle so significant. It came after a 40-day wilderness experience where Jesus faced the temptation of Satan. It was, indeed, the Lord's first public miracle. It transpired after His wonderful baptism, by John, in the Jordan River. It took place at a wedding, an institution that God has ordained; and, thus a wonderful picture of He, and His church. The water was turned into wine; whereby, as you know, in the Bible, wine is always a picture of joy.

However, the significance of this miracle is defined for us in verse 11. "This beginning of miracles did Jesus in Cana of Galilee, and manifested forth his glory; and his disciples believed on him".

The word "miracles" is the Greek word translated "sign." Signs are important. They give us directions. They tell us what is ahead. They warn us about how fast to go. They alert us to construction zones. They give information about places to eat and where to refuel. They give us all kinds of instructions and information.

Signs are even color coordinated. And come in different shapes and sizes. White rectangular signs give information. Yellow signs give warnings. Red octagon shaped signs mean stop. Green signs direct us to institutions and tourist attractions.. Every business and restaurant has a sign. That sign displays their trademark, their brand. What they are known for. Even our churches have signs to tell people who we are.

Miracles are signs that point us to God. They point to an object other than itself. The miracles performed by Jesus had one main objective; they were used to establish who He was in the eyes of the people. They were used to establish His authority, His identity, as well as His divinity. They were used to accentuate the fact that He was God in the flesh.

Every miracle of Jesus contained a deeper meaning than is found on the surface. Everything means something and everything points beyond itself. As we look beneath the surface of this miracle we discover:

THIS MIRACLE REVEALED HUMAN FRAILTY. In verse 6 we read, "And there were set there six waterpots of stone, after the manner of the purifying of the Jews, containing two or three firkins apiece." The wine has run out and Jesus looks and finds that the only thing He has to work with is 6 earthen, clay jars, or water pots that would hold 20 gallons of water a piece.

From these 6 water pots we catch a glimpse at human frailty. According to Revelation 13:18, the number 6 is the number of man. In other words, like

these water pots we are made out of clay. According to 2 Corinthians 4:7, we are "earthen vessels."

This signifies that we are nothing in and of ourselves. We are nothing more than clay jars, human water pots and "earthen vessels." Thus, left to ourselves, apart from God, we are as helpless and as hopeless as we can be. From a spiritual standpoint, there is absolutely nothing we can do to enhance, enrich, or enlarge ourselves.

Unless something is placed within these water pots, they are totally useless, not good for anyone or anything. You do know, unless God places His Holy Spirit within our human spirit we are of no use to anyone, or for anything. He fills us with His fullness and blesses us with purpose and possibility to give us maximum value.

THIS MIRACLE REQUIRED HEAVENLY ABILITY. Verse 3 indicates that as soon as word spreads that the wine has run out, the first person Mary calls for is the Lord Jesus. When this tragedy took place it was a good thing that Jesus was among the attendees at the wedding.

Mary says "I will just leave this up to Jesus. He will know what to do with this need and great problem".

Two thousand years later, I declare He does know what to do with the problem you face and the difficulty you encounter. He does know what to do in the most difficult circumstance when everybody else has thrown up their hands and they don't know what to do.

MARY TEACHES US THAT YOU DON'T HAVE TO BE INTIMIDATED BY CIRCUMSTANCES IF YOU ARE INSPIRED BY GOD. Mary says, "I know my son and I trust my Lord, HE CAN IF HE WILL. When you know that the LORD has got you, then you can trust that God has got this. HE CAN, IF HE WILL, so whatever he says do it. HE'S GOT THIS, if he chooses too".

“I Got This,” is a colloquium from Hip Hop. When someone says, “I got this or I got you”. It simply means that you ain’t got to worry about a thing because they are going to handle what you can’t, after you do what you can.

Mary is reminding us that the Lord has got-ability and nobody can say ‘I got you or I got this’ like the Lord. He’s the boss of the cosmos. He sits high and looks low. He presides providentially over all things. But above all He is the Meet-er of needs.

JESUS IS THE MEET-ER OF NEEDS

To TIME, He is the ANCIENT OF DAYS

To the SERVANT, He is the GOOD MASTER

To those at WAR, He is the PEACEMAKER

To the LONELY, He the FRIEND THAT STICKS CLOSER THAN A BROTHER

To the PITIFUL, He is the TENDER SYMPATHISER

To the HEAVY LADEN, He is the BURDEN-BEARER

JESUS IS THE MEET-ER OF NEEDS

To the BUILDER, He is the CHIEF CORNER STONE

To the ORPHAN CHILD, He is the EVERLASTING FATHER

To those with EXPECTANCY, He is the ANCHOR OF HOPE

To those NAKED IN SIN, He is the CLOAK OF RIGHTEOUSNESS

To the BRUISED AND BEATEN, He is the BALM OF GILEAD

To the WAYWARD TRAVELER, He is the GOOD SAMARITAN

To the SINNER, He is the AUTHOR OF SALVATION

JESUS IS THE MEET-ER OF NEEDS

The main point of the story is to illustrate the transforming power of Jesus in dealing with the obstacles in our lives. There was a need, and Jesus met it.

He turns water into wine, frowns into smiles, whimpers of fear into anthems of hope, deserts into gardens, and sinners into saints.

THE SECRET OF A TRANSFORMING MIRACLE

Every miracle Jesus performed was a miracle for instruction.

If we want to go from

--the ordinary, to the extraordinary

--the mundane, to the miraculous

--lack, to provision

--sickness, to health

--weakness, to power

Then we need to do whatever He tells us to do, and watch Him do what we cannot do,

God's part

--is to give us the harvest, our part is to sow

--is to raise Lazarus, our part is to roll away the stone!

--is to heal, our part is to stretch forth our hand

In order to live, we must die

In order to be sent, we must tarry

In order to love, we must suffer hatred

In God's economy, things are NOT JUST different, things are much better

WHATEVER HE SAYS DO IT, do it knowing that there is no such thing as partial obedience. Partial obedience is total disobedience. Total obedience requires two things A Submissive Spirit and A Believing Spirit.

A submissive spirit is the first requirement. What is the opposite of a submissive Spirit? Without a doubt rebellion. To disobey, to fail to do what God says do, and not know what He wants you to do is bad enough. But to know what he wants and fail to do it is called rebellion. Go back and read 1 Sam. 15:20-23, you will observe God calling partial obedience rebellion and he says that rebellion is as great a sin as witchcraft.

Total obedience also requires a believing spirit.

1. You must believe that whatever he says, is motivated out of love for you.
2. You must believe that whatever He says do, is said because He is looking out for your best interest.
3. You must believe that whatever He says do, is said because He is aware of the future consequence of your obeying His word.
4. You must believe that whatever He says do is said, because He assumes the consequences for your doing what He says.
5. You must believe that whatever He says do is said, because with the command comes the power of enablement.

WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO DO WHAT HE SAYS DO? (Doctrinal Application)

1. It means Do what he says WHEN he says (Worship on Saturday instead of Sunday) or (Lord's Supper once a month)
2. It means Do what he says HOW he says (Sing without mechanical instruments) (Baptism as sprinkling or immersion)
3. It means Do what he says AND ALL HE SAYS (That means do no more or less than he says.)

www.ja-kemconsorts.org
 CONCLUSION

Jesus didn't crash the party, He didn't come on His own accord. Jesus was invited the marriage. And unless you invite Jesus into your home, unless you invite Jesus into your marriage, unless you invite Him to be Lord of your life, then Jesus Christ will not come in. Woe be to the marriage, home or life under the stresses, the strains and all the strife of modern day living where Jesus has not been invited in.

1. Invite Jesus to your Cana for in Him there is strength for the journey.

2. Invite Jesus into your friendships for he is the tie that binds our hearts together in love and fellowship.
3. Invite Jesus into your dating and courtship, so that he can show you whether to continue or cancel it.
4. Invite Jesus to your wedding, He will fortify human love and beautify the marital relationship.
5. Invite Jesus into your parenting he can lighten up the dark and mysterious labor of parental decision making.
6. Invite Jesus to any funeral that you must attend for he can sweeten the cup of sorrow and sanctify the grief of parting.
7. Invite Jesus to any failure that you experience for he can encourage you when you falter and pick you up when you fall.
8. Invite Jesus to any success that you attain, for he will hold you steady against the headwinds of foolish pride and keep you humble at heights of glory.
9. Invite Jesus to your depths of needs for he can supply and sustain them.
10. Invite Jesus to your pinnacle of plenty for only his spirit can make you thankful and useful.

Invite Jesus to your Cana.....

He can take a sinner and transform him into a saint.

He can take the water of weakness and change it in to the wine of strength.

He can change the water of problems and turn it into the wine of praise. He can take the water of defeat and turn it in to the wine of victory.

He can take the water of fear and transform it in to the wine of faith.

He can change your TEARS INTO TRIUMPHS

He can change your GLOOM INTO GLORY

He can change your WEAKNESS INTO STRENGTH

He can change your BARRENESS INTO FRUITFULNESS

He can change your ROCKS INTO ROSES

He can change your WORRIES INTO WORSHIP

He can change your HEARTACHES INTO HALLELUJAH

He can change your FAILURES INTO SUCCESS

He can change your ENEMIES INTO FRIENDS

He can change your SORROWS INTO JOY

He can change your DUTIES INTO DELIGHT

He can change your MISERIES INTO MIRACLES

He can change your FRUSTRATIONS INTO FAITH



www.ja-kemconsorts.org