**THE MIRACLES OF JESUS CHRIST**

**Mt. Wade Missionary Baptist Church**

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***“Causing Water To Be Wine”***

**John 2:1–11**

And the third day there was a marriage in Cana of Galilee; and the mother of Jesus was there:

And both Jesus was called, and his disciples, to the marriage.

And when they wanted wine, the mother of Jesus saith unto him, They have no wine.

Jesus saith unto her, Woman, what have I to do with thee? mine hour is not yet come.

His mother saith unto the servants, Whatsoever he saith unto you, do it.

And there were set there six waterpots of stone, after the manner of the purifying of the Jews, containing two or three firkins apiece.

Jesus saith unto them, Fill the waterpots with water. And they filled them up to the brim.

And he saith unto them, Draw out now, and bear unto the governor of the feast. And they bare it.

When the ruler of the feast had tasted the water that was made wine, and knew not whence it was: (but the servants which drew the water knew;) the governor of the feast called the bridegroom,

And saith unto him, Every man at the beginning doth set forth good wine; and when men have well drunk, then that which is worse: but thou hast kept the good wine until now.

This beginning of miracles did Jesus in Cana of Galilee, and manifested forth his glory; and his disciples believed on him.

**INTRODUCTION**

The first miracle we will study about of the “Miracles of Jesus Christ” is the miracle in which Christ changed water into wine at a marriage feast. Not only is it the first miracle of our study of Christ’s miracles; but, more importantly, it is also the first miracle performed in the earthly ministry of Jesus Christ.

This miracle of Jesus Christ at the beginning of His ministry shows the contrast between law and grace. **This contrast is seen when we compare what Christ and Moses each did with water.** Moses changed water to blood, but Christ changed water to wine. In this contrast, **Moses represents the law** and **Christ represents grace**. “The law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ” (John 1:17). Turning water into blood speaks of judgment (Exodus 7:14–17). Turning water into wine speaks of joy (*that comes from a right relationship with Jesus Christ*). The law brings judgment, but grace brings joy. “For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn [what the law does] the world; but that the world through him might be saved [what grace does]” (John 3:17). It is certainly most fitting that in the early days of the ministry of Christ He would demonstrate that His coming was a ministry of grace in contrast to the ministry of the law.

To further study this first miracle by Jesus Christ which was changing water into wine at a wedding feast, we will consider the place of the miracle (vv. 1, 2), the problem for the miracle (vv. 3–5), the pots in the miracle (v. 6), the participants in the miracle (vv. 5–9), the precepts in the miracle (vv. 7, 8), the praise for the miracle (vv. 8–10), the plainness of the miracle (vv. 7–10), and the products of the miracle (vv. 11).

**Let’s begin…**

**THE PLACE OF THE MIRACLE**

In examining our text about the place of this miracle, we will look at four aspects of the place. They are the place of the miracle in regards to chronology, the place of the miracle in regards to the calendar, the place of the miracle in regards to the community, and the place of the miracle in regards to the celebration.

1. **In Regards to Chronology**
2. Scripture says this miracle of changing water into wine was the **“beginning of miracles” (v. 11)** which Jesus performed. This notation in our text about this miracle being Christ’s first miracle debunks all the stories told about Christ working miracles during His childhood and in the years previous to His public ministry.
3. It “nullifies the records in the Apocryphal gospels, universally excluded from Holy Scripture because of their mythic and misleading nature.
4. All the books and stories about the childhood miracles of Christ have no validity. All the books about Christ’s miracles prior to His public ministry are simply not true. They are a result of the unsanctified imagination of man, not the revelation of God; for the Bible makes it very clear that the miracle at Cana of turning water into wine at a wedding feast was the first of Christ’s miracles which He performed when here on earth in His incarnated form.
5. **In Regards to the Calendar**
6. Our text says this miracle occurred on “the third day” (v. 1). The “third day” here is in reference to the days given in the first chapter of the Gospel of John. In that chapter along with the first part of chapter two, John gives us a brief day-by-day diary of a week in the early days of Christ’s ministry in which He chose some of His first disciples. The dating notations in the diary begin with “the next day” (John 1:29), is followed by “again the next day” (John 1:35), then “the day following” (John 1:43), and finally “the third day” (which is our selected text).
7. The “third day” refers especially to “the third day” after Christ had called Nathanael (also known as Bartholomew) to be one of His disciples. When we remember that the Gospel of John (as well as other Scripture) was not written in chapters and verses, it will help us to see better the continuity and chronology of this record in John of some of the early days of Christ’s ministry.
8. **In Regards to the Community**
9. We are told in our text that this miracle of changing water into wine occurred in “**Cana of Galilee**” (v. 1). Cana was a small town located a few miles **north of Nazareth** *(the hometown of Jesus and Mary and Joseph)* and about 10 to 15 miles west of the Sea of Galilee.
10. Cana of Galilee is located in the province of Galilee, it is always reported in the New Testament as “Cana of Galilee” to distinguish it from another Cana (Kanah) spoken of in the Old Testament which was located near the region of Syria (Joshua 19:28). This Cana where Christ performed the miracle of turning water into wine was also the place where not long afterwards Christ decreed the healing of a nobleman’s son who was sick and “at the point of death” (John 4:47) in Capernaum.
11. These two miracles have some interesting similarities. We note six of them here.
12. First, both were associated with Cana of Galilee (2:1 and 4:46)”
13. Second, both were preceded by a rebuke by Jesus (2:4 and 4:48).
14. Third, both included Divine commands (2:7, 8 and 4:50).
15. Fourth, both had servants who were aware of the miracle (2:9 and 4:51).
16. Fifth, both increased faith in Christ (2:11 and 4:53).
17. Sixth, both had a chronology number recorded of them (2:11 and 4:54). [“first signs” “second signs”]
18. This Cana of Galilee was the home town of Nathanael (John 21:2) who was called to be one of Christ’s disciple just before Christ went to Cana (John 1:47–51) to perform the miracle of changing water into wine. Since Nathanael was also at the wedding (v. 2), it can be said that he learned about both the omniscience and omnipotence of Christ in the first few days of his following Christ as His disciple.
19. He learned of Christ’s *omniscience* in his first meeting with Christ (John 1:47–51), and he learned of Christ’s *omnipotence* in the miracle in his home town a few days later. ***Those who follow Christ will learn of Christ.***
20. In performing His first miracle in the small and obscure town of Cana instead of in some more famous place, such as Jerusalem or Rome or other major city of that time, **Christ encourages the humble and obscure folk and lets them know that He can work miracles for anyone anywhere**. You do not need to be a celebrity to have God work mightily on your behalf. **It is not fame but faith that obtains God’s favors.** **It is not our recognition from man but our reception of Christ that obtains God’s blessing.** So not only was the working of Christ’s first miracle and other miracles in lowly and obscure places an encouragement to the humble and obscure, but it was also a strong rebuke to the religious and government leaders in Jerusalem and other important (to man) places. *Matthew Henry says, “Christ began to work miracles in an obscure corner of the country, remote from Jerusalem … [because] His doctrine and miracles would not be so much opposed by the plain and honest Galileans as they would be by the proud and prejudiced rabbis, politicians, and grandees at Jerusalem.”*
21. **In Regards to the Celebration**
22. “There was a marriage in Cana of Galilee” (v. 1). This first miracle of Christ was performed at a marriage celebration. Choosing a marriage celebration at which to work His first miracle shows that Christ gives great honor to marriage. Unfortunately, much of our society today does not. Easy divorce laws, living together before marriage, homosexuals getting married, and tax laws which penalize married couples all show the scorn society has for marriage. However, Christ honors marriage and so does Scripture (Hebrews 13:4).
23. I once read, “Society is never in a healthy condition and true religion never flourishes in that country where marriage is lightly esteemed. They who lightly esteem it have not the mind of Christ.” Only godless people living in a godless society fail to recognized the sacredness of marriage.
24. In examining the marriage celebration before us where the miracle was worked by Christ, we note the practice of the celebration and the people at the celebration.
25. ***The practice of the celebration.*** Marriage practices among the Jews in Christ’s day were quite elaborate. A big part of the marriage practice was the marriage feast or celebration. This feast or celebration was a good deal more than the receptions which follow marriage ceremonies in our culture. It was not just a few-hour event as our wedding receptions are, but it was a feast that could last as long as a week. This would require much food and wine for the guests. Therefore, to run out of wine at a marriage feast was no small matter. It would stop the festivities. There were also other problems the lack of wine would bring which we will address later.
26. ***The people at the celebration*.** “The mother of Jesus was there. And both Jesus was called, and his disciples, to the marriage” (vv. 1, 2). Those invited to a wedding reflect the character of those getting married.
27. The people being married in our text are not named, but some of those at the wedding are named, and these names speak well of the character of the couple being married.
28. Mary’s presence at the wedding is described in such a way (vv. 1, 3) that it appears she was a close friend of this family which commends the family. Inviting Christ and His disciples (at this time it would be no more than six—James, John, Andrew, Peter, Philip, and Nathanael [see the first chapter of John]) also shows interest in the finest of people and principles.
29. It is especially important to have Christ present in your marriage. “Christ’s blessing and presence are essential to a happy wedding. The marriage at which there is no place for Christ is not one that can justly be expected to prosper.” But those who want Christ in their marriage have to invite Him. Christ does not go where He is not wanted or not invited. He was invited (“called”) to the marriage in our text. And, as we will see shortly, it was a mighty good thing Christ was invited to this marriage; for He solved a big problem for the marriage at the marriage feast. Those married couples who have Christ on board in their marriage have a great advantage in solving problems that come to them in their marriage.

**THE PROBLEM FOR THE MIRACLE**

“And when they wanted wine, the mother of Jesus saith unto him, They have no wine” (v. 3).

That which provided the occasion for Christ’s miracle of changing water into wine was the problem of the wine running out at the marriage feast. We note several important truths about this problem. They are the extent of the problem, the experiencing of the problem, and the expressing of the problem.

1. **The Extent of the Problem**
2. ***“They have no wine.”*** Running out of wine at the wedding feast was no small problem. We have already established that running out of wine would bring an abrupt and embarrassing end to the feast. Here we note that it could also be a very serious problem legally.
3. In the ancient Near East there was a strong element of reciprocity (*exchanging of things for mutual benefit*) about weddings, and that, for example, it was possible to take legal action in certain circumstances against a man who had failed to provide the appropriate wedding gift. This is quite foreign to our wedding customs, and we are apt to overlook such possibilities. But it means that when the supply of wine failed, more than social embarrassment was involved. The bridegroom and his family may well have become involved in a heavy monetary liability. Knowing the seriousness of the lack of wine at the wedding feast helps us to better appreciate the blessing of Christ’s miracle of changing water into wine. It resolved the issue of embarrassment and legal charges against the groom.
4. **The Experiencing of the Problem**

This problem at the marriage feast gives us a lesson about experiencing marriage problems. Here we look at the people who experienced the problem, the posthaste in experiencing the problem, and the preparation for experiencing the problem.

1. *T****he people who experienced the problem*.** Marriage problems are common to all marriages. And our text reminds us that they come even to God’s people. In fact the best of people are not exempt from marriage problems. **Even those couples who have invited Christ to their marriage are not exempt from marriage problems.**
2. They will, of course, be exempt from those marriage problems which come from leaving Christ out of their marriage. But the point we make here is that all marriages face problems.
3. All marriages must expect “trouble in the flesh” (1 Corinthians 7:28). Having marriage problems does not make your marriage inferior. Problems are common to all marriages. The key is how you deal with the problem.
4. ***The posthaste in experiencing the problem*.** These marriage problems can come at any time in the marriage. And as this marriage in our text indicates, they can come posthaste (immediately) in the marriage. **They can come even before the marriage celebration is completed.** The quick coming of problems to marriage is not unique to marriage, of course. No life goes long without problems. Marriage does not have to continue long years before problems are experienced, for even before the wedding reception is over, serious problems may arise. And as we will see next, this should prompt us to prepare for these problems.
5. ***The preparation for experiencing the problem*.** With marriage problems common to all marriages, and with marriage problems often coming posthaste (immediately) to the married couple, it behooves married couples to prepare adequately for these problems so that when they come, the problems can be overcome successfully. **We cannot stop the problems from coming, but we can overcome them.** To prepare adequately to overcome these problems, we need to be sure that Christ is in our marriage. **This first miracle of Christ teaches emphatically that having Christ in the marriage makes possible the successful solving of problems in the marriage.** Christ’s presence in marriage will stop many marriage problems from coming; and for those that do come, it gives tremendous advantage in overcoming them.
6. **The Expressing of the Problem**

Here we examine how the problem at the marriage feast in our text was taken to Jesus Christ. The one who told Christ about the problem was Mary, the mother of Christ. We note three things about Mary expressing to Christ the problem concerning the wine running out at the marriage celebration. They are Mary’s report to Christ, Mary’s rebuke from Christ, and Mary’s rule about Christ.

1. ***Mary’s report to Christ*.** “When they wanted wine, the mother of Jesus saith unto him, They have no wine” (v. 3). Taking the problem concerning the lack of wine to Christ shows the prudence of Mary, the position of Mary, the passion of Mary, and the persuasion of Mary.
2. **First, the prudence of Mary**. Mary was wise to take the problem to Christ. When we have a problem, we need to take it to Jesus Christ to solve. Jeremiah E. Rankin wrote an excellent hymn entitled *“Tell It To Jesus”* which is still found in many hymn books. It gives wise advice about what to do with our problems, namely, tell them to Jesus. Too often when problems come folks tell everybody but Jesus. Some go to psychiatrists and psychologists, some go to the phone, some to drugs, and some to alcohol. But a lot of people fail to go to Jesus Christ with their problems, yet He is the One Who can solve them all.
3. **Second, the position of Mary.** The fact that Mary came to Christ about the problem as she did indicates that Mary had a position in this wedding celebration that was more than just a typical attender. This special position is also indicated in her commanding the servants at the wedding feast (v. 5). And the position is indicated in the statement about her presence at the wedding in comparison to the statement about Christ and the disciples being at the wedding. Our text says, “the mother of Jesus was there” (v. 1); but Christ and His disciples were “called” (invited) to the wedding. The differences in these two statements says Mary was more than just an invited guest but had a close relationship with at least one of the married couple which resulted in her having some position of authority at the celebration. As we noted earlier, it spoke well of the character of those involved in this marriage that Mary (believed to be family) was a good friend at the least.
4. **Third, the passion of Mary.** To Mary’s credit, she was concerned about the needs of others. We ought to be concerned for the wants and needs of our friends, and not seek our own satisfaction and happiness. Too often, however, it is our own needs that dominate our concern. Mary did not make the situation about herself. She kept the focus on the need.
5. **Fourth, the persuasion of Mary.** Coming to Christ about the problem of no wine indicated that Mary was convinced that Christ could solve the problem. Before Christ was born, Mary had been given information from God through the angel Gabriel that Christ was no ordinary person. Her virgin conception of Christ and the conduct and wisdom of Christ over the years when He was in her home and under her maternal care would confirm that fact. When we know Who Jesus is, we will seek Him for help. The world does not know Christ and does not seem interested in learning about Him. But knowing about Christ is the most important knowledge of all.
6. ***Mary’s rebuke from Christ*.** “Jesus saith unto her, Woman, what have I to do with thee? Mine hour is not yet come” (v. 3). The response of Christ to Mary’s report was that of a rebuke. This rebuking response may surprise the first time reader of this Scripture text. Mary’s report does not seem on the surface to have anything in it that would merit such a rebuking response. Rather, as we have just stated, there were some commendable features in Mary’s report. But Christ knows the heart of a person, and it is not the words only that Christ is knowledgeable of here. He was also cognizant of the attitude of Mary’s heart. The rebuking statement by Christ to Mary which said, “Woman, what have I to do with thee? Mine hour is not yet come” is a threefold rebuke of Mary. It rebukes Mary in the area of her authority, her advice and her agenda.
7. **First, *authority***. The rebuke about authority is especially seen in the word “**Woman.**” The rebuke of authority can be seen in the entire rebuking statement, but in addressing Mary as “Woman” instead of as “mother,” the problem of authority is especially noted. While the term “woman” is not a statement of disrespect as it would seem to be in the English language (*it was used on the cross when Christ in compassion put Mary under the care of the Apostle John by saying, “Woman, behold thy son,” see John 19:26*). Saying “Woman” instead of “Mother” revealed that Mary was coming to Christ from a maternal standpoint, not as a humble supplicant seeking help. She was telling Christ to do something on the basis of her authority as mother and family matriarch. **But “Woman” said that Christ’s ministry was not under the authority of His earthly mother. Christ’s ministry was under the authority of His Heavenly Father.** Therefore, it was not her place to give orders to Christ. “The use of the Greek word *gunai* [woman] instead of *meter* [mother] does show her she can no longer exercise maternal and matriarchal authority.” Her maternal authority was no longer in effect. Christ for a time was indeed “subject unto them [both Mary and Joseph as parents]” (Luke 2:51), but the season of subjection to her and Joseph are now over. Mary must no longer think of Him as being merely her son. She to must reverence Jesus as the Son of God, the long awaited Messiah and Savior of sinners.
8. NOTE: In spite of this rebuke regarding authority, the Roman Catholic Church still insists that Mary has special influence upon Christ because she was His mother; and, therefore, we should pray to Mary. But this account of the first miracle of Christ provides a very strong refutation of the intercessory work of Mary which the Roman Catholic Church advocates. The bible clearly teaches that Mary does not influence the decisions of Jesus; then or now!
9. **Second, *advice*.** “What have I to do with thee?” This question in the response of Christ to Mary’s report is an **elliptical expression**. Such an expression is one in which some words are left out of the statement but are generally understood by the listener to be part of the statement. As an example, instead of saying, “If it is possible, would you come early for church service?” an elliptical statement would say, “If possible, come early for church.” To fill in the blanks in this elliptical style question, it can be stated, **“What have I to do with your advice and counsel regarding my ministry?”** Christ did not need her advice and counsel. He did not need her orders. His orders and counsel came from His Heavenly Father.
10. This question, “What have I to do with thee?” is also found elsewhere in Scripture and was sometimes used to denote indignation or contempt” (Matthew 8:29; Mark 1:24; 5:7; and Luke 8:28). This question “signifies that the community of feeling to which one of the individuals involved in the dialogue or conversation, has their appeal rejected by the other. This problem is expressed in Isaiah 55:8, 9 where God is recorded as saying to man, “*For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts.*” There are two occasions where we find Mary interjecting herself into the Lord’s domain of service (John 2:3, 4 and Matthew 12:46–50) and on each occasion Jesus set her aside.”
11. **Third, *agenda*.** “Mine hour is not yet come.” These words in the last part of Christ’s statement of response to Mary “clearly indicate Christ’s consciousness of the fact that He was accomplishing a task entrusted to him by the Father and every detail of it had an appointed time. When Jesus knew that this moment had arrived, He would act, but not before. This is why He was not subject to Mary as too when to do anything. His agenda was set by His heavenly Father, not His earthly mother.
12. However, Christ’s rebuke of Mary did not say He would not address the problem of the wine running out. The rebuke of Mary did not rebuke Mary for coming to Christ in a time of need. That was not the issue in the rebuke. The issue in the rebuke was Mary coming to Christ in the **wrong attitude**. The problem with her attitude, as we have been noting, was that instead of coming as a humble supplicant, she came in maternal authority attempting to tell Him what He was to do and when He was to do it. But while Mary was rebuked for the way she came to Christ, the need of wine was still taken care of by Christ. He did not deny this was a problem that needed to be resolved.
13. ***Mary’s rule about Christ*.** “*His mother saith unto the servants, Whatsoever he saith unto you, do it*” (v. 5). Mary’s response to Christ’s rebuke cannot go without mention. She issued a rule to the servants at the marriage celebration about obeying Christ. The issuing of the rule and the character of the rule revealed a good attitude and some good advice.
14. **First, Mary’s good *attitude*.** Mary’s words for the servants at the marriage feast is evidenced that she accepted what Christ said to her. Her response demonstrated both meekness and faith. Her *meekness* took a lowly position before Christ. She readily took the humble position and bowed down in her heart to His rebuke. Not many can respond that well to the Lord’s rebuke. We sometimes get offended by the sermon when sin is pointed out and those guilty of that sin will take as a personal attack on them rather than humbly acknowledge their failure and turn from their sin. Her *faith* gave orders to the servants in anticipation of Christ resolving the problem. Like the Syrophoenician woman (Matthew 15:21–28), Mary’s faith could survive testing and correcting. She still believed Christ could help and acted accordingly. Mary’s attitude after the rebuke was superb.
15. **Second, Mary’s good *advice*.** “Whatsoever he saith unto you, do it.” What great advice Mary offers. It is an excellent statement of what service for Christ is all about. It is also an excellent statement about how God’s people are to live. We are to obey Christ in everything He says, for “Whatsoever” means everything. Some folk will do some things God says to do, but not all things (“whatsoever”). However, most folk will do “whatsoever” the world says to do even if it is dumb, defiling, and dangerous to do. In giving this advice to the servants, we see the position of Mary, about the person of Christ, and about the perplexity of orders.
16. **The *position of Mary*.** Mary giving the servants orders is another indication that she had some prominent position at the marriage feast to justify her giving orders to the servants. She may have been family or a very good friend of at least one of the married couple which spoke well of their character. Most theologians believed that she was a member of the grooms family and running out of wine would be an embarrassment to the family name. (*We also need to note that Mary giving orders to the servants was most acceptable; but Mary giving orders to the Savior was definitely not! Mary had authority over the servants, but she did not have authority over the Savior*.)
17. **The *person of Christ*.** Telling the servants to take orders from Christ was necessary, for the servants might would have viewed Christ as just another guest. (He was not an official member of the wedding party or the serving as a party host.) But Mary’s orders corrected the ignorance of the servants about Christ. **They needed to view Him as One Whose orders must be obeyed.** We need to faithfully share a message that exalts the person of Christ. We need to let people know that He is not just another person, but He is the Son of God, the Second Person of the Trinity, and the only Savior of mankind. Whatsoever He says, “WE SHOULD DO!”
18. **The *perplexity of orders*.** Telling the servants to obey Christ in “whatsoever” He told them to do was necessary, because it was possible that what Christ would order these attendants to do would, perhaps, even seem foolish [in fact it did], so they might not have been willing to do it. (His instructions were not inline with any wine making procedures.) Sometimes, God’s orders are indeed perplexing. We may not understand the reason why He gives them, and we may think they are out of touch with our circumstances. But “whatsoever” says to obey every order, for God’s wisdom is greater than ours.

**THE POTS IN THE MIRACLE**

*“And there were set there six water pots of stone, after the manner of the purifying of the Jews, containing two or three firkins apiece” (v. 6).*

The six water pots played a very significant part in this miracle. These six water pots of stone were made wine jugs by Christ in this miracle. These were not ordinary wine jugs; they were hug. Each water pot could hold two to three **firkins** of water which is the equivalent of **17 to 25 gallons of water**. This meant that the total capacity of the six water pots was between 100 to 150 gallons. In one single batch, Christ made 100 to 150 gallons of wine. Now that’s what I call a miracle.

Why were the waterspouts there? Normally these water pots furnished water for the numerous washings in accordance with Jewish tradition. The peculiar customs of the Jews about ceremonial washings and purifying made it necessary to have a large supply of water at hand. Scripture says, “*The Pharisees and all the Jews, except they wash their hands oft, eat not, holding the tradition of the elders. And when they come from the market, except they wash, they eat not. And many other things there be, which they have received to hold, as the washing of cups, and pots, brasen [bronze] vessels, and of tables.*” (Mark 7:3, 4).

Water would also be needed to wash the feet of guests coming into the house. And since the people of those days did not have modern plumbing as we do, they could not turn on a faucet for water; they had to draw water from a well and store it in large containers such as the stone water pots in our text.

Making so much wine shows the greatness of Christ’s miracle and how Christ abundantly blesses us. This was not the only occasion where God’s blessings were abundant. For example in the feed of the 5,000, they had 12 baskets of left overs (Mark 8:8; John 6:13). Christians should learn to be as liberal in giving as our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

Let’s take a closer look at the text.

1. ***Who are the participants in the miracle.*** “Jesus saith unto them [the servants], Fill the water pots with water” (v. 7). In this His very first miracle, Christ “shows us that God is pleased to use human instrumentality in performing the wonders of His grace.” Christ did not do anything in this miracle that was unnecessary for Him to do. The servants filled the vessels and took the wine from them to the governor of the marriage feast. The servants could do that, so Christ ordered them to do so. Christ would not exempt them from this work. What Christ did was what no one else could do. He made the water wine. But the work which men could do, Christ saw to it that they did it.

All of this reminds us that Christ is not running a miracle welfare program. *He does not do things for us which we can do for ourselves.* Christ could have filled the water pots Himself simply by willing the water pots to be filled. But Christ chose to involve people as much as possible. Christ does not work miracles in a way that will discourage labor and promote laziness or irresponsibility. His miracles do not exempt men from responsibility or duty. Involving people in perform His miracles not only helps the character of man, but it also provides high privilege for man, for it is high privilege to be involved in God’s work. You can be sure that not one of the servants at that marriage feast who had carried the water regretted his involvement in that service after the water was made wine. Our churches, however, are filled with those who do not want to serve God. But their failure to serve only cuts them out of great privileges and even greater blessings.

1. ***The precepts in the miracle****:* “Fill the water pots with water … Draw out now, and bear unto the governor of the feast” (vv. 7, 8). In performance of this miracle, Christ issued some commands to the servants. These precepts were another important part in this miracle.
2. ***The Presence of the Precepts:*** We have a command of Christ associated with the performance of a miracle. Throughout this study on miracles, you will notice that miracles often have a command attached to them. **The repeated presence of commands drives home the message that when Christ is about to bestow a blessing, He often gives a command that requires obedience**. Man does not take commands well. We want to have privileges without responsibilities. We wants to have the benefits of obedience without being obedient. We wants to have the benefits of being faithful without being faithful. That’s not how god works. Some of Christ’s miracles have commands associated with them which must be obeyed if the miracle is going to occur. **Obedience is a key to great blessings. If you are short on blessings, maybe the problem is that you are short on obedience. Improve your obedience and you may just improve your blessings.**
3. ***The Perspiration in the Precepts****:* “Fill the water pots with water” (v. 7). This first precept involved in the miracle would especially require some very hard work. These servants had to go to a well and draw water from the well to fill the water pots. Since the six water pots together held up to 150 gallons, the servants’ work was not going to be easy. God’s commands are generally not easy to do, but they are possible to do, and they are necessary to do if we want the blessing. Those who shy away from hard work will have a lean cupboard when it comes to the blessings of God.
4. ***The Perplexity of the Precepts****: Mary had prepared the servants for a perplexing command by telling them to do “whatsoever” Christ said. And it’s a good thing she prepared them, for this command from Christ to fill the water pots would be perplexing. Human reasoning would say that filling the pots with water was not what the marriage celebration needed. What it needed was wine, not water. Some of God’s commands are indeed perplexing. He does not always tell us why we should do something. He does not always give us the details. But we do not need explanations in order to obey. When we are perplexed, that shows our lack of knowledge. In due time they would discover that filling the pots with water was not was not such a crazy idea after all.*
5. ***The Performing of the Precepts***

“And they filled them up to the brim” (v. 7). The servants followed Mary’s instructions and obeyed Christ.

1. *The excellence of their obedience*. Filling the water pots “to the brim” means the servants filled them until there was “no room left in the water pots.” This is the kind of dedication needed in serving Christ. These servants did not just do enough to get by as we sometimes do; they did as much as they could do. Their actions maximized the blessing. If we are short on blessings, try obeying Christ “to the brim.” If you want a brim-full blessings, you must have a brim-full obedience.
2. ***Brim-full obedience is not easy.*** A brim-full obedience is not a lazy person’s effort. It takes dedication, commitment, and effort beyond the norm. It’s doing every thing you can do with the best of your ability and then some. You’re not just satisfied with getting it right one time, but you want to get it right all the time. Doing it over and over and over and over…
3. ***The effect of their obedience*.** Here we look at two specific blessings or effects from the servants’ obedience. These two effects spoken of in our text are enablement and enlightenment.
4. First, *enablement*. After the servants had filled the water pots to the brim, Christ commanded them to “*Draw out now, and bear unto the governor of the feast” (v. 8)*. T*he servants did as Christ said and “they bare it [to the governor of the feast]” (Ibid.).* If they had not obeyed Christ about putting water into the water pots, they would not have been able to serve Christ by taking the wine to the governor of the feast. But by obeying the first command, they were enabled to obey the second and third commands. Obedience enabled them to be of further service. How can we be of further service if we fail in our initial acts of obedience? If we are going to serve Christ well, if we are going to be useful in Christ’s service, we must obey. I tell the younger pastors and preachers who now call me Pop (and look at me as senior preacher), If you are going to “draw out” and preach good messages, you had better study hard and fill your heart and mind with good sermon material from which to “draw out” for your messages. If you want to sing or play an instrument well in service to God, you had better do some brim-full practicing. **God cannot use your fully if you have an empty water pot.** You must be diligent in filling it with study (preparation), practice (service) and dedication (commitment). Many who are deficient in their qualifications to serve the Lord, they simply have empty water pots in obedience.
5. Second, *enlightenment*. “*The ruler of the feast … knew not whence it was [did not know where the new wine came from]; but the servants which drew the water knew” (v. 9).* Notice it is the servants who “drew the water” who had the knowledge of where it came from. Had they failed to draw the water and fill the water pots, they would have lacked enlightenment as to the power of Jesus Christ. You can only be a reliable witness to what you personally experience. They would have lacked knowledge of the workings of Christ. Obedience is an important key to knowledge. There is nothing wrong with going to school to get an education, but if you do not obey Christ, education will not lead to service. Obedience leads to service and service hungers for knowledge (education). We don’t study to become “workman,” we study because we are workman who are validate by our study.

It is important for us to understand the necessity of becoming obedient servants. Miracles are manifested when obedience is applied to the commands of God. Let us learn to follow God’s instructions and open the door for God to work in our life.

**Restart here on May 11, 2022**

**The Praise For The Miracle**

It’s not surprising the wine made by the miraculous power of Jesus Christ was praised as being superior to the wine that had been served previously at the marriage celebration. Man made the first batches, the Master made the final batch. Let’s look at the praises that came forth.

1. **The Taking of the Wine to the Governor:** *“Draw out … bear unto the governor of the feast. And they bare [bore] it”* (v. 8). The governor of the feast was the logical person for the servants to allow to test the wine first. After all he was the superintended of the feast and was responsible for insuring that guest were adequately wined and dined and well entertained. (The usual practice regarding marriage feasts and celebrations was to have one person appointed or assigned to oversee and superintend the occasion. According to some, the governor of the wedding feasts was “one of the guests selected to preside at the banquet… The governor was required to remain strictly sober at all times as he directed the affairs of the feast, tasted the wine first lest the drunken guests thought they were drinking wine while they were drinking water. As the success of the feast depended largely upon him, his selection was a matter of some delicacy.”) Matthew Henry said, “Feasts have need of governors, because too many, when they are at feasts, have not the governing of themselves.”
2. **The Tasting of the Wine by the Governor:** “When the ruler of the feast had tasted the water that was made wine … [he said] thou has kept the good wine until now” (vv. 9, 10). The tasting of the wine by the governor caused him to realize that this new wine was superior to the wine that had been served earlier at the feast. **If you want to properly evaluate the work of Christ, you have to taste it for yourself.** You need to try God for yourself. (Illustration: Someone asked me once does paying tithes really work. I told them that God Himself said, “try me.” If God says try me then obviously He is waiting to prove that paying your tithes really work.) **You have to try it. Taste and see that the Lord is good.** I challenge all the critics of Christ and the Gospel grumblers to just taste and see. I guarantee that any one who tastes the glorious fellowship of Christ through salvation, will discover better spiritual wine than anything the world has to offer!

The proof of the miracle is very strong in this text. Christ did nothing questionable. There was no attempt to deceive or to persuade by sleight of hand. Since the governor “knew not” about the water being made wine, his high evaluation of the wine was that of an unprejudiced judge. Also filling the water pots completely full eliminated any claim that wine was dumped into the pots to make it look like Christ caused a miracle. Water diluted wine would be so weak no one would judge it superior. Christ’s miracle had overwhelming proof of its occurrence and superiority. The governors taste test and his evaluation is proof that Jesus wine was not just good, it was the absolute best.

1. **The Talking About the Wine by the Governor:** *“The governor of the feast called the bridegroom, and saith unto him, Every man at the beginning doth set forth good wine; and when men have well drunk, then that which is worse; but thou hast kept the good wine until now” (vv. 9, 10).* The governor refers here to the usual practice at feasts and parties that occurred in ancient eastern society. The practice was to serve the best wine first then after people have drunk their fill; then serve them wine that is not so tasty so the people will not continue to drink. This illustration does not mean that the wedding feast in our text had gotten to the place where the crowd had become a drunken, rowdy crowd and needed lesser quality wine. This was just a way of explaining the general practices of society in order to express the puzzle mind of the governor to why the best wine came last at this feast. The governor of the feast unknowingly was giving praise to the miracle work of Jesus Christ.

***What made this wine stand out?***

1. ***The character of the wine*.** Did Christ by this miracle make wine as we know it today? Does His making water into wine sanction social drinking today? The answer to both of these questions is a firm “**No!**” Our wines today are far different than the wine made by Christ and those normally drunk by folk in that day. The normal wine in Christ’s day “was not a fermented wine like we drink today.” The common wine drunk in Palestine was that which was the simple juice of the grape.” Yes, when it sat for some time it could ferment and become intoxicating. (There were those who fermented wine in ancient eastern society.) But it was certainly not like our wine today. In our culture, “we use the word wine now to denote the kind of alcoholic beverage which contains a considerable portion of alcohol in comparison to ancient times. The Greek word translated “wine” in our text is *oinos*. This word was “a generic word with multiple meanings, and unfermented grape juice is *oinos* as well as fermented grape juice.” It is possible that too much of this fermented wine could make one tipsy, but it was not the same beverage we call wine today. And there is no evidence of drunkenness in the wedding feast in our text. Furthermore, it is unthinkable that Christ would encourage drunkenness by making more intoxicating beverage. It is contrary to the teaching of both the Old and New Testament and Christ Himself.
2. *The character of the world*. This miracle really illuminates the contrast between Christ and character the world. The world starts with what it think is good and goes to that which is worse. God starts with that which is bad and make it better. Scripture says, “The path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day” (Proverbs 4:18). But it adds that “the way of the wicked is as darkness; they know not at what they stumble.” (Proverbs 4:19). The path of righteousness grows brighter and brighter, but the path of the wicked grows darker and darker. All the promises of sin about a better life is a lie. Life only goes from bad to worse on the path of sin, but life gets better and better on the path of righteousness.

**The Plainness Of The Miracle**

The manner in which the miracle was worked deserves special notice. We are not told of any outward visible action which preceded or accompanied it. It is not said that He touched the water pots containing the water that was made wine. It is not said that He commanded the water to change its qualities. He simply willed the change, and it took place.” The performing of this miracle was characterized by plainness. The ordinary dominated. Filling the water pots was nothing spectacular. Taking from the water pots to the governor of the feast was also simple action. There was no great announcement, advertisement, no gathering of a great audience with some great promotion. The miracle was worked as quietly and uneventful as possible. Jesus made no parade about it, and it does not even appear that he approached the water pots. He willed it, and it was done.

The simple plainness of this miracle encourages us in the fact that great miracles can occur under normal ordinary conditions (like filling water pots). Be obedient to Christ in all matters, and your life will not be lacking in the area of miracles. You do not have to do something special or spectacular to experience the great power of God working on your behalf. “Whenever you try to serve Jesus Christ do not make a fuss about it, because He never made any fuss in what He did, even when He was working amazing miracles. If you want to do a good thing, go and do it as naturally as ever you can.” All of this is contrary to the thinking of our day, of course.

The leper Naaman, Syria’s great general, thought like the world; and so when Elisha told him to simply go to the Jordan River and dip in it seven times to be healed of leprosy, Naaman “was wroth, and went away, and said, Behold, I thought, He will surely come out to me, and stand, and call on the name of the Lord his God, and strike his hand over the place, and recover the leper” (2 Kings 5:11). Naaman was looking for a spectacular show. But Elisha did not even come out of his house to see Naaman. What Naaman needed was not a show but healing by the power of God.

What have we learned from this miracle? What are the key principles that we can apply to our own life? This miracle yield some products that are valuable to our spirituality and growth.

**The Products Of The Miracle**

1. **The Gladness Produced By The Miracle**

Meeting the need of the wedding feast by supplying wine, and a better wine at that, certainly made the wedding feast take on a more joyful tone. The wedding couple would especially experience gladness from the miracle. They would go from grief to gladness with the new supply of wine; for it prevented a disaster for them. Earlier in this lesson we discussed that running out of wine at the marriage feast was a real disaster for the wedding couple. It could bring them under scorn and could even bring them in trouble with the law. The wedding couple (or the parents involved) had either planned poorly, or they were poor and could not provide enough wine for all the guests, or more guests than anticipated showed up for the wedding. Whatever the case, Christ’s miracle solved a great problem for the wedding couple, and brought much gladness to them.

The wine also brought gladness to the guests at the wedding feast. Running out of wine would not make them happy. But the new supply of wine would change things for the guests. Instead of lack would be laughter. Instead of complaints would be cheers.

This gladness from this first miracle is typical of Christ’s miracles, for they produced gladness whenever they occurred.

1. **The Glory Produced By The Miracle**

*“This beginning of miracles did Jesus in Cana of Galilee, and manifested forth his glory*” (v. 11). Though Jesus Christ was walking on earth in the form of humanity, His Deity did indeed shine forth at times. The greatest shining forth of the glory of His Deity was at the transfiguration. But His miracles also showed some of the glory of His Deity. And the showing of His glory in this miracle left all observers without any excuse for their rejection of Christ. Christ gave great and overwhelming evidence to support His claim of being God manifested in the flesh, the Messiah, the Savior of mankind. Yet, in spite of all the great evidence, many people still rejected Him. Sin blinds us to the glory of Jesus Christ.

1. **The Growth Produced By The Miracle**

*“His disciples believed on him”* (v. 11). At this particular time Jesus had only called six disciples. Verse 11 is not saying these six disciples did not believe in until after this miracle. What this means is that the disciples grew in their faith because of the miracle. That they already believed in Him is evident in the fact that they were His disciples. The miracle simply strengthened their faith. This is particularly seen in Nathanael’s experience. Nathanael, who was from Cana, the place where this miracle happened and who was one of the disciples referred to here, was told by Christ when Nathanael first met Him, “Because I said unto thee, I saw thee under the fig tree, believest thou? Thou shalt see greater things than these” (John 1:50). Nathanael’s initial faith in Christ resulted in his later seeing “greater things” (such as this miracle of water becoming wine, and later many other miracles) which would increase his faith.

Faith produces faith (likewise unbelief produces unbelief). When one believes in Jesus Christ, that faith will be validated and encouraged. When these disciples of Christ first believed Christ, it was not long afterward that their trust and faith was validated and encouraged and, as a result, increased.

1. **The Gospel in the Miracle**

Some important truths of the Gospel message are portrayed by this miracle. Here we note seven principles of the Gospel message which are portrayed in this miracle.

* First, *condemnation*. “They have no wine” (v. 3). The lack of wine was a very serious deficiency at the marriage feast. Running out of wine at a marriage feast was considered a serious offense. It was so serious that it could bring legal condemnation upon the wedding couple. This is symbolic of the condition of sinners and thus emphasizes the great need of salvation. Sinners have a great deficiency. It is in the area of righteousness which will bring great condemnation upon them if it is not corrected. “All have sinned, and come short of the glory of God” (Romans 3:23).
* Second, *Christ*. Jesus Christ was the One Who ended the deficiency of wine at the marriage feast. He is also the One Who can bring soul salvation to mankind. Christ is the source of redemption. He is the only One who can solve the sin problem in one’s life. “Neither is there salvation in any other; for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved” (Acts 4:12).
* Third, *change*. A marvelous transformation occurred when water was changed into wine in an instant by the miracle working power of Christ. It was not a flavor mixing job. It was not water coloring but a new creation. This illustrates the wonderful transformation which takes place in the sinner who is redeemed by Jesus Christ. When you come to Christ you are saved instantly. Spiritually you are transformed into a “new creature in Christ Jesus” (2 Corinthians 5:17). Salvation is not reformation but transformation. It is a new birth (John 3:7), a new person.
* Fourth, *commencement*. Christ’s miracle of turning water into wine was the “beginning of [Christ’s] miracles” (v. 11). The word “beginning” reminds us that salvation is a new beginning for the redeemed. When a person is saved, he is “born again” (John 3:7). As we noted in the previous point, the redeemed person is a “new creature in Christ Jesus” (2 Corinthians 5:17). Real life does not begin when you are born physically but when you are born again spiritually.
* Fifth, *cost*. Christ provided over a hundred gallons of wine at no cost. The wine was a free gift to the bridegroom for the wedding feast. This emphasizes the grace in the miracle which illustrates the grace in the gospel. Salvation is all of grace. It is a free gift. “For by grace are ye saved … it is the gift of God” (Ephesians 2:8). “Ho, everyone that thirsteth … come, buy wine and milk without money and without price” (Isaiah 55:1).
* Sixth, *comparison*. When the governor of the feast tasted the wine that was made from water, he recognized that this wine was superior to the wine that had previously been served at the marriage celebration (v. 10). And what had been served previously at the marriage feast was the best the marriage couple had to offer. Applying this to the Gospel, we can say that the best the world has to offer is inferior to what Christ gives in salvation. Christ gives “eternal life” (Romans 6:23). At its best the world can give life only as far as the grave. And the quality of life the world gives is far inferior, too.
* Seventh, *consequences*. The miracle of the water turned to wine produced some wonderful results. There was *jubilation*. Wine is a symbol of joy. When the wine was gone, the joy of the feast ended. But the miracle of Christ brought back the joy. Salvation of the soul brings the greatest joy man can ever have. There was *glorification*. It “manifested forth his glory” (v. 11). Christ was glorified in the miracle of making water into wine. Salvation also brings glory to Christ. Sin makes us “short of the glory of God” (Romans 3:23), but salvation brings glory to God (Ephesians 1:12). And there was also *persuasion*. “His disciples believed on him” (v. 11). We noted earlier that this miracle helped the disciples to grow in their faith. The Gospel application is that the miracle of a soul being saved (which the miracle of water turned to wine pictures) helps to bring faith to others. As an example, “Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved *and thy house*” (Acts 16:31).