

John 2:1-11

Weddings are occasions which involve **family** and **friends** - as we gather together to **rejoice** with the bride and groom, and witness the beginning of a new **family unit** among us. Weddings usually take a lot of **planning**, but even with all the time and **effort** which the couple puts in, weddings don't always go **according** to plan. If we were to take a quick **survey** of all the married couples here in church today, I'm guessing we could find all kinds of little things which happened to make **their** wedding day especially **memorable**. Maybe somebody in your wedding party **fainted**, or maybe your **unity candle** wouldn't **light**, or it didn't **stay** lit - maybe your 3-year old **flower girl** decided to throw petals **all over** the place, instead of just dropping them in the **aisle**, or maybe your 3-year old **ring bearer** didn't want to come **down** the aisle **at all**. In our sermon text today, **Jesus** did something for a bride and groom which they would **never** forget, and neither would anyone **else** who was at the wedding. He changed **water** into **wine**, and in **doing** so He saved the wedding couple from what could have been a very **embarrassing** situation. But that's not really what this text is all about. It's **true**, **Jesus** **solved** the problem, but what is much more **important** is that He did it in His own **time** - He did it in His own **way** - and He provided much **More Than Anyone Could Ask Or Expect**.

As our text **begins**, we learn that **Jesus**, His **disciples**, and His **mother** had all been invited to a **wedding** - which was actually a wedding **feast**. Allow me to explain. The first step in an ancient Jewish marriage was the **promise** or **betrothal**. This involved a **meeting** between the **groom** and the father of the **bride** in order to establish the **purchase price** which the groom would pay, in order to marry the man's **daughter**. Once the price had been **paid**, the marriage **covenant** was established, and the man and woman were regarded as **husband** and **wife**. That was the actual, legal **marriage**. From that time on the bride was **set apart** exclusively for her **husband**, but they didn't begin their life **together** right away. Instead, the groom would **leave** the home of his bride, and would return to his father's house. They would remain **separate** from each other for a period of **12 months**, which would allow the **groom** time to prepare their new home, and the **bride** time to gather the personal possessions which she would bring into the marriage. At the end of this time of **separation** the groom would finally come to take his bride to live **with him**. After the marriage was **consummated**, **guests** were invited to enjoy a 7-day **feast**. That **feast** is the event which we have in today's text.

No doubt it would be very **embarrassing** for the bride and the groom to run out of **wine** during the time of the feast. Nobody wants to throw a big **party**, and then run out of **refreshments**. But that's what **happened** in our text - and Mary wanted to **do** something about it. Her plan was **simple**. Mary would go to **Jesus** and ask Him for **help**. She simply said, "*They have **no wine**.*" All too often when we encounter a problem in our lives, we want to tell Jesus exactly **when** and **how** He needs to **help** us. We presume to think that we already have the **right answers**, and He just needs to carry them **out** for us. Quite **often** God has something **different** in mind. When things go **sour** in life, it's hard to be **patient** with God. We want Him to **fix** things, and we want Him to fix them **now**. **We** would probably have told Jesus how **much** wine was needed, how **soon** it was needed, and maybe even what **kind** of wine we would prefer. But even though **Mary** likely didn't have any idea **what** Jesus would do about the situation, she was **confident** that He **could** and **would** do **something**.

The **reply** which Jesus gave to her **short** and **simple** statement, was a mild **rebuke**. Jesus said, "*Woman, what does that have to do with **you** and **me**? **My time** has not **come yet**.*" Jesus **wasn't** telling Mary that He didn't **care** about the problem, or that it really wasn't any of their **business**. And Jesus **wasn't** telling her that He **wouldn't** or **couldn't** help. He simply said, "*My time has not come **yet**.*" Mary got the message. She didn't know **when** it would happen, but she knew that when the time was **right**, Jesus would go into **action**. So, she told the servants, "*Do **whatever** he tells you.*"

John goes on to tell us, "*Six stone water jars, which the Jews used for **ceremonial cleansing**, were standing there, each holding twenty or thirty **gallons**. Jesus told them, 'Fill the jars with water.' So they filled them to the **brim**.*" That probably sounded pretty **strange** to the servants, and it was also a lot of **work**. After all, coming up with 120 to 180 gallons of **water** wasn't going to happen by just **snapping** their fingers. Nevertheless, Jesus knew what He was doing, and the servants were **wise** to do what He had **told** them. We all know that Jesus had changed that **water** into **wine**, not only filling the need at the **banquet**, but also providing the wedding couple with about a **year's supply** of fine wine for use in their new home. It was a lovely, practical wedding present. The **master** of the banquet, who knew more than a little bit about the **quality** of wine, told the groom, "*Everyone serves the **good wine first**, and when the guests have had plenty to drink, then the **cheaper** wine. You saved the **good wine until now!**" As is so often the case, Jesus provided **More** than had been **Asked Or Expected**.*

Everybody has **problems** from time to time. Sometimes we wish our problems would be as **simple** as just running out of **wine**. But unfortunately, our problems can be much more **complicated**. What we need to **remember** is that no matter how **complex** the situation, the **solution** will always remain the same. When it seems as if there are **no answers** - when it seems as if there is **no way out** - when it seems as if everything we try is just doomed to **failure** from the very **start** - then remember to ask **Jesus** for help. Or better yet, don't **wait** until disaster strikes. Why not just **talk** to Jesus and ask for His **help** on a **daily** basis. Communication with our **God** is **vital** important, so **pray** to Him - pray **regularly**, pray **often**, and pray **fervently**. None of our requests can ever be too **big** or too **small**, because Jesus has promised that not only will He **hear** us - He'll **answer** us.

Jesus may very well ask us to do some things which seem unusually **strange** or **difficult** in our lives, but we will always be **wise** if we **listen** to Him, and **do** what He says. The Psalmist says, *"Trust in the **LORD** with all your heart, and do not rely on your **own** understanding."* We may not know **why** the LORD makes us suffer some hardships, but we do know that He will turn them into **good** for us.

What Jesus did in our text for today was **more** than obeying his **mother** - it was **more** than saving a **party** - it was **more** than sparing that couple some embarrassment - it was so **much** more. In the **final** verse of our text John tells us, *"This, the beginning of his miraculous signs, Jesus performed in Cana of Galilee. He revealed his **glory**, and his disciples **believed** in him."* And that takes us back to the **first 3 words** of today's text. Do you **remember** them? *"Three days later."* This miracle at Cana took place just **3 days** after Jesus had **called** His first **full-time** disciples. We don't know **how much** they had already **learned** about Jesus in those first 3 days, but here we see that Jesus gave them so much **more**. We're told that as Jesus revealed His **power** and **glory** in this miracle, it **confirmed** the **fact** for them that Jesus was the promised **Savior**, and the Son of **God** - someone they would want to **follow** for the rest of their **lives**.

Jesus wants to confirm **our** faith in Him too, and He **does** it in **many** different ways. We don't need to have **water** changed into **wine**, but who can deny that there are so many things which **need changing** in our lives? We run out of **patience** and **love** for one another - we run out of **time** to spend with our aging **parents**, our **spouse**, our **children**, and our **grand-children**. **Sin** turns our lives **sour**, and **condemns** us to an eternity of **weeping** and **anguish** apart from our God, and we have **no excuse**. But Jesus changed **all** those things for us, and so much **more**. In fact the **greatest** display of the changes which Jesus has brought about for

us occurred at the **cross**. There Jesus met our **greatest** need. While we were totally **helpless**, He displayed His **glory**. As Paul told the **Romans**, “*While we were sinners, Christ **died** for us.*” He took away **all** of our sins, and set us **free** from them **forever**.

Through His **death** and **resurrection** Jesus gave us **More Than Anyone Could Ask Or Expect**. He did it in **His time**, He did it **His way**, and not only did He give us **more** than we **asked** for - He gave us **better** than we **deserved**. At the end of his **gospel** John tells us the **purpose** he had in mind for **writing** it. John said, “*Jesus, in the presence of his disciples, did many **other** miraculous signs that are **not** written in this book. But **these** are written that **you** may believe that Jesus is the **Christ**, the Son of **God**, and that by **believing** you may have **life** in his name.*” As we look at the **miracles** of Jesus, let’s recognize that Jesus is in **tune** with our lives, and He knows **exactly** what we need. When we run out of **strength**, and our faith is getting **weak** - when there seem to be no more **answers** to our problems - let’s turn to **Jesus** with the **assurance** that He will **continue** to supply **all** of our needs, and that the gifts He chooses to give us will be **More Than Anyone Could Ask Or Expect**. Amen.