
JOHN: THAT YOU MAY BELIEVE

THE ROUSING GLORY OF CHRIST

A message presented by Pastor Marc Minter
to First Baptist Church of Diana, TX on February 26, 2017

INTRODUCTION

It has often been said that Christianity in America is marked by a low view of God. The biblical convictions that mark genuine Christianity are perceived as unimportant, irrelevant, and outdated among many professing Christians in the Western world. However, this view of God is simply incompatible with the biblical record. If God is anything, He is astonishing, weighty, and glorious. Christ reveals much about God during an unsuspecting wedding party, and we want to marvel at His exceeding glory.

JOHN 2:1-11

2:1 On the third day there was a wedding at Cana in Galilee, and the mother of Jesus was there. 2 Jesus also was invited to the wedding with his disciples.

3 When the wine ran out, the mother of Jesus said to him, "They have no wine."

4 And Jesus said to her, "Woman, what does this have to do with me? My hour has not yet come." 5 His mother said to the servants, "Do whatever he tells you."

6 Now there were six stone water jars there for the Jewish rites of purification, each holding twenty or thirty gallons. 7 Jesus said to the servants, "Fill the jars with water." And they filled them up to the brim. 8 And he said to them, "Now draw some out and take it to the master of the feast." So they took it.

9 When the master of the feast tasted the water now become wine, and did not know where it came from (though the servants who had drawn the water knew), the master of the feast called the bridegroom 10 and said to him, "Everyone serves the good wine first, and when people have drunk freely, then the poor wine. But you have kept the good wine until now."

11 This, the first of his signs, Jesus did at Cana in Galilee, and manifested his glory. And his disciples believed in him.

THE POINT I'M AIMING AT TODAY:

Christ is exceedingly glorious... Do you see and believe?

MESSAGE OUTLINE:

(1) A BRISK WALK THROUGH THE TEXT

(2) CHRIST IS EXCEEDINGLY GLORIOUS!

(3) DO YOU SEE CHRIST AS EXCEEDINGLY GLORIOUS?

MESSAGE

(1) A BRISK WALK THROUGH THE TEXT

2:1 *On the third day* there was a wedding at Cana in Galilee,

- John brings us to the 7th day of a full week
 - **Day 1** – John’s (the Baptist) testimony about Jesus (1:19-28)
 - **Day 2** – “*the next day...*” John the Baptist yells out “**Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!**” (1:29)
 - **Day 3** – “*the next day again*” John the Baptist yells about Jesus, and two of John’s disciples become Jesus’ disciples (1:35-37).
 - **Day 4** – Those first two disciples (Andrew and John [the Gospel writer]) “*stayed with*” Jesus “*that day*” (1:39; i.e. Day 3). So, Andrew brought Simon/Peter to Jesus on Day 4 (1:41-42).
 - **Day 5** – “*The next day Jesus decided to go to Galilee...*” and picked up Philip and Nathaniel (1:43-47).
 - **Day 7** – “*On the third day* [counting from Day 5] *there was a wedding at Cana in Galilee*” (2:1).
- The 7th Day = Completion and Rest
 - John began his Gospel by throwing his reader back to Genesis: “**In the beginning was the Word...**” (1:1)
 - “**In the beginning, God created...**” (Gen. 1:1).

- At the completion of God’s week-long work of creation, He “rests”
 - “2:1 Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them. 2 And *on the seventh day God finished his work* that he had done, and *he rested on the seventh day* from all his work that he had done. 3 So *God blessed the seventh day and made it holy, because on it God rested* from all his work that he had done in creation” (Gen. 2:1-3).
 - There is much packed into the theme of seventh-day (Sabbath) rest throughout the Scriptures.
 - A Sabbath (a day of rest from ordinary work) is part of the created order (Gen. 2:1-3).
 - God establishes a Sabbath as part of the 10 Commandments, and builds this command on top of the foundation laid in the creation week (Ex. 20:10-11).
 - Here we are able to see that the “Sabbath” is not a day of laziness, but a day of rest from ‘ordinary work’ (Lev. 23:8).
 - It is a “Sabbath to the LORD,” and it is “blessed” and “holy” (Ex. 20:10-11).
 - Nearly 20 times, God makes use of the “seventh day” pattern in the Levitical law, ensuring that the pattern would be impressed into the minds of His people.
 - God likened entrance into the Promised Land for the Israelites to enjoying Sabbath ‘rest’ (Deut. 12:8-9).
 - And the author of Hebrews links that temporal promise of a Sabbath (rest and peace) to the eternal and ultimate promise of Sabbath for God’s people.
 - *“the promise of entering [God’s] rest still stands... for we who have believed enter that rest”* (Heb. 4:1-3).
- Therefore, we should be looking for John to point us towards completion and rest, in some way.

...and *the mother of Jesus was there. 2 Jesus also was invited* to the wedding with his disciples.

- Mary is not mentioned by name in John's Gospel
 - She is referenced in this narrative and when Jesus died on the cross (Jn. 19:25-27); and she is mentioned in passing two times (Jn. 2:12 and 6:42).
 - There is much speculation we might do here, but I think the simplest and most reasonable explanation is that John intends to point to Jesus over and above anyone or anything else.
 - His own name is a distraction he avoids, and it seems to me that Mary's is as well.
- It appears that the groom was a relative of Mary
 - Mary "was there" at the wedding (v1), and Jesus "was invited" too (v2).
 - The invitation and participation indicates close friendship at the least.
 - Verse 3 seems to indicate more of a familial relation...

3 When the wine ran out, the mother of Jesus said to him, "*They have no wine.*"

- Once again, Mary seems not only a relative, but a significant one
 - How did Mary know about the shortage before the "master" or head waiter (v9)?
 - Why would she be able to order the servants to do anything in response to the problem (v5)?
 - The most plausible explanation (from my perspective) is that Mary was a close enough relative of the groom to have some role in serving the guests of his wedding.

4 And Jesus said to her, ***“Woman, what does this have to do with me? My hour has not yet come.”***

- We must not assume that Mary was asking for a miracle.
 - This is the first of Jesus’ miraculous signs (v11).
 - She gives no indication that she is expecting supernatural provision.
- Jesus sometimes yanks an ordinary situation into a bigger story.
 - There was a woman at a water well who asked Jesus a reasonable question, but His answer was completely unexpected (Jn. 4).
- Jesus’ sudden and abrasive answer here is indicative of a detour.
 - **First**, Jesus’ answer is sudden and abrasive.
 - **“Woman”** is not cruel, but it sure isn’t endearing.
 - **“What does this have to do with me?”**
 - (Greek: *tis emoi kai soi*) KJV: ***“What have I to do with thee?”*** or better yet: ***“What have you to do with me?”***
 - This phrase is also in the synoptic Gospels, but every time it is cited as what demons say to Jesus (Matt. 8:29; Mk. 1:24, 5:7; Lk. 4:34, 8:28).
 - A demonic spirit yelled out to Jesus, ***“What have you to do with us, Jesus of Nazareth? Have you come to destroy us? I know who you are—the Holy One of God”*** (Lk 4:34).
 - **Second**, Jesus’ answer is a clear break from ‘normal’ life into ‘public’ ministry.
 - John uses “hour” to distinctly refer to Jesus’ crucifixion.
 - Some Jewish leaders wanted to arrest Jesus, but they were unable ***“because his hour had not yet come”*** (Jn. 7:30, 8:20).
 - Jesus finally said that His ***“hour has come”*** when His crucifixion was in sight (Jn. 12:23).
 - In fact, Jesus said, ***“Now is my soul troubled. And what shall I say? ‘Father, save me from this hour’? But for this purpose I have come to this hour*** (Jn. 12:27).

- But why speak so harshly to Mary, if He is going to solve the problem anyway?
 - Jesus rejects Mary’s harmless request to introduce what He is about to do as part of His divine mission (similar to the way Jesus healed the paralytic in Mark 2).¹

5 His mother said to the servants, *“Do whatever he tells you.”*

- Mary’s different, second approach
 - While Jesus did rebuke Mary, His mother, she nevertheless trusts Him and instructs the servants to do the same.

6 Now there were six stone water jars there for the *Jewish rites of purification*,

- I think Mark tells us something of these ‘purification jars’
 - In Mark 7, we read of an interaction between Jesus and some Pharisees.
 - The Pharisees “saw that some of his [Jesus’s] disciples ate with hands that were *defiled*, that is, *unwashed*. 3 (For the Pharisees and all the Jews *do not eat unless they wash their hands properly*, holding to the *tradition of the elders*, 4 and when they come from the marketplace, they *do not eat unless they wash*. And there are *many other traditions that they observe*, such as the washing of cups and pots and copper vessels and dining couches.) 5 And the Pharisees and the scribes asked him [Jesus], *‘Why do your disciples not walk according to the tradition of the elders*, but eat with defiled hands?’ 6 And he said to them, *“Well did Isaiah prophesy of you hypocrites*, as it is written, ‘This people honors me with their lips, but their heart is far from me; 7 in vain do they worship me, *teaching as doctrines the commandments of men.*’ 8 *You leave the commandment of God and hold to the tradition of men”* (Mark 7:2–8).

¹ “[Jesus] has embarked on his ministry, the purpose of his coming; his only [guide] is his heavenly Father’s will (5:30; 8:29). This must have been extremely difficult for Mary. She had borne him, nursed him, taught his baby fingers elementary skills, watched him fall over as he learned to walk; apparently she had also come to rely on him as the family provider. But now that he had entered into the purpose of his coming, everything, even family ties, had to be subordinated to his divine mission.” Carson, D. A. (1991). *The Gospel according to John* (p. 171). Leicester, England; Grand Rapids, MI: Inter-Varsity Press; W.B. Eerdmans.

- Therefore, it seems that these purification jars were not symbolic of the Mosaic law, but of the traditions/laws that many people constructed around the Mosaic law.
- The symbolism is huge!
 - Jesus has selected a massive symbol of works-based-righteousness (you earn your right standing before God by doing right stuff) as the contrast for whatever He is going to do next.

...each holding *twenty or thirty gallons*.⁷ Jesus said to the servants, “**Fill** the jars with water.” And they *filled them up to the brim*.

- Note John’s emphasis on the amount and fullness
 - Each jar held “*20-30 gallons*” (that’s a total of 120-180 gallons across 6 jars)
 - John quotes Jesus as saying, “*Fill the jars*”
 - John says “*they filled them up to the brim*”

⁸ And he said to them, “**Now draw some out** and take it to the master of the feast.” So they took it.

- “Now”
 - “**Now** there were six stone water jars...” (Greek de: connotes ‘already’)
 - “**Now** draw some water...” (Greek nun: connotes ‘contrast from then’)

9 When the master of the feast tasted *the water now become wine*, and did not know where it came from (though *the servants* who had drawn the water *knew*), *the master* of the feast *called the bridegroom* 10 and said to him, “Everyone serves the good *wine* first, and when people have drunk freely, then the poor *wine*. But *you have kept the good wine until now.*”

3 things we need to note here:

- First, 5 statements on a socially relevant topic – *wine* (6 X in the narrative)

1. The social Baptist tradition

- Southern Baptists have historically and commonly held a view of alcohol that only perceives wine/alcohol as negative (i.e. sinful).²

2. The lack of a biblical or theological position on behalf of Baptists

- Southern Baptists are insistently congregational, but we do commonly affirm the confessional statement of the Baptist Faith and Message (1925, 1963, and 2000).
 - There is *no statement on alcohol (+/-)* in the BF&M

3. The Bible speaks of drunkenness as sin

- The wise teacher in Proverbs says, “Hear, my son, and *be wise*, and *direct your heart* in the way. *Be not among drunkards* or among gluttonous eaters, for *the drunkard* and the glutton *will come to poverty...*” (Prov. 23:20-21).
- And again, “Who has *woe*? Who has *sorrow*? Who has *strife*? Who has *complaining*? Who has *wounds without cause*? Who has *redness [or dullness] of eyes*? *Those who tarry long over wine*; those who go to try mixed wine [*or strong drink*]” (Prov. 23:29-30).
- Men and women are both warned to *avoid “addiction” or “slavery” to “wine”* (1 Tim. 3:8; Titus 2:3)
- The Apostle Paul explicitly *forbids drunkenness* in Ephesians 5, “*Do not get drunk with wine*, for that is debauchery [*or corruption or sin*]” (Eph. 5:18).

² There are many ‘resolutions’ from the Southern Baptist Convention that unequivocally oppose the use of alcohol (see all SBC resolutions here: <http://www.sbc.net/resolutions/search/>)

4. The Bible speaks of wine in positive terms

- The Christ-like figure, **Melchizedek**, *brought out wine to commemorate Abraham's victory* over the 4 kings who kidnapped Lot (Gen. 14:18).
- When Isaac blessed Jacob, he said, "**May God give you the dew of heaven and the fatness of the earth and plenty of grain and wine**" (Gen. 27:28).
- **Wine is among the offerings God commands** His people to give through the Levitical law (Lev. 23:13). This is significant, because offerings are given out of a gratitude for God's provision.
 - God's command of such an offering is a clear statement that He is the provider of the wine.
- God told Aaron that he and his priestly line should *enjoy the "best of the wine and grain"* that the Israelites would bring as an offering to the Lord (Num. 18:12).
- Part of **God's blessing** to His people as they entered into the Promised Land was upon their "**grain and their wine and their oil**" (Deut. 7:13).
- God speaks of His **restoration of Israel** through the prophet Amos in terms of "**restoring lost fortunes,**" "**rebuilding ruined cities,**" "**planting vineyards,**" and "**drinking sweet wine**" (Amos 9:13-14).
- Clearly, wine is at least sometimes viewed not as sin, but as a blessing of God.
- In our passage today, we will miss the point Jesus is making if we are unwilling to think of wine in this way.

5. The biblical and wise position

- There are two ditches on either side of the right road.
 - Ditch 1: Foolish Lawlessness
 - Ditch 2: Stifling Legalism

- Second, by providing wine aplenty, [Jesus shows He is Messiah](#)

9 When the master of the feast tasted *the water now become wine*, and did not know where it came from (though *the servants* who had drawn the water *knew*), *the master* of the feast *called the bridegroom* 10 and said to him, “Everyone serves the good wine first, and when people have drunk freely, then the poor wine. But *you have kept the good wine until now.*”

- Providing wine aplenty and celebrating the gracious blessings of God are both features of the anticipated coming of the Messiah.
 - Peter tells us on the day of Pentecost that what happened was a fulfillment of the prophet Joel’s prophecy (Acts 2:16).
 - Joel said, “**28 And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my Spirit on all flesh; your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, and your young men shall see visions. 29 Even on the male and female servants in those days I will pour out my Spirit**” (2:28-29).
 - But this is what “**came to pass afterward...**”
 - Verses 23-27 speak of a celebratory restoration
 - “**23 Be glad, O children of Zion, and rejoice in the LORD your God, for he has given the early rain for your vindication; he has poured down for you abundant rain... 24 The threshing floors shall be full of grain; the vats shall overflow with wine and oil.... 26 You shall eat in plenty and be satisfied, and praise the name of the LORD your God, who has dealt wondrously with you. And my people shall never again be put to shame. 27 You shall know that I am in the midst of Israel, and that I am the LORD your God and there is none else. And my people shall never again be put to shame**” (Joel 2:23-27).

- Third, Jesus not only provides much wine; [He provides good wine](#)

- Above, we looked at how John emphasized the *quantity*
- Here, we see John emphasizing the *quality*
 - **The Point:** Jesus is a more than sufficient provider

11 This, the first of his signs, Jesus did at Cana in Galilee, and manifested his glory. And his disciples believed in him.

- John wants us to see and believe that Christ is glorious!
 - John said, “*we have seen His glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth*” (1:14).
 - And, “*from His fullness we have all received, grace upon grace...*” (1:16).
 - John tells us twice that John the Baptist’s cry is “*Behold, the Lamb of God!*” (1:29, 36).
 - John says Jesus told two interested men, “*Come and you will see*” (1:39).
 - Philip says to Nathaniel, after Nathaniel expresses serious doubt, “*Come and see*” (1:46).
 - Jesus says to Nathaniel, “*You will see greater things than these*” and “*You will see heaven opened*” (1:51).
 - AND NOW, the first sign John records for us, he tells us “*This is the first of His [Jesus’] signs... and His glory was manifested!*”

(2) CHRIST IS EXCEEDINGLY GLORIOUS!

Three Ways Christs Glory is shown to be Exceedingly Glorious here:

1. Jesus is exceedingly glorious because He brings believers into divine rest

- Stone water purification jars into wine
 - His is not a new system or a better strategy...
 - Christ offers celebratory wine (meal after victory has been won)
 - He is exceedingly glorious because He arranges, prepares, works to bring about, fights to win, and shares His victory with us!
 - He makes His victory ours!
 - When He died, I died; and because He was raised, so shall I be raised with Him!

2. Jesus is exceedingly glorious because He is the perfect provisional bridegroom

- *“when the wine ran out”* (v3)
 - So early into this narrative, the bridegroom fails...
 - This is just like Adam (Gen. 3) and every other would-be savior since.
 - This is just like you and me... Our provision runs short.
 - People depend upon us, and we let them down because we are sinful.
 - We depend upon others, and they betray our hope and trust because they are sinful.
 - Ah, but Christ does not run out or short!
 - Not for the sake of His family (namely mother), not for the reputation of the bridegroom, but to manifest His own exceedingly glorious glory...
 - He provides an overabundance of wine!

3. Jesus is exceedingly glorious because His provision is of the highest quality

- The head waiter said to the bridegroom, *“you have kept the good wine until now”* (v10).
 - So many Christians are ready to say what I should do... but why?
 - “You should look to Christ.” ...Why?
 - “You should live according to Christ’s commands.” ...Why?
 - “You should give yourself away, and cling to Christ instead.” ...Why?
 - I say to you, ***“Christ is exceedingly glorious! That’s why!”***
 - Christ is better!
 - Christ is more satisfying!

- Christ is more beautiful... more excellent... more amazing than all else!
- Don't you believe your own mind on this matter...
- Don't you listen to the temptations, distractions, and time-wasters of this world...
- One day, all we will have is Christ or nothing...
- Let us throw off our dull, unsatisfying, lifeless Christianity...
- Let me have Christ or nothing!

(3) DO YOU *SEE* CHRIST AS EXCEEDINGLY GLORIOUS?

- A final warning and invitation:
 - We are told that the servants saw what Jesus did, but we are told that only the disciples saw Jesus' glory.
 - "The servants saw the sign, but not the glory; the disciples by faith perceived Jesus' glory behind the sign, and they put their faith in him (*episteusan eis auton*)."³

SUGGESTED RESOURCES:

The First Sign by Bob Deffinbough

<https://bible.org/seriespage/5-first-sign-jesus-turns-water-wine-john-21-11>

Obedient Son, Ultimate Purifier, All-providing Bridegroom by Piper

<http://www.desiringgod.org/messages/obedient-son-ultimate-purifier-all-providing-bridegroom>

Structure & Biblical Theology of John 2 by James Dennison

<http://www.kerux.com/doc/1101A1.asp>

³ Carson, D. A. (1991). *The Gospel according to John* (p. 175). Leicester, England; Grand Rapids, MI: Inter-Varsity Press; W.B. Eerdmans.