

## Lesson 6 – The Wedding in Cana (John 2:1-11)

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It may be only ironic that it was on the third day of Jesus' ministry in Galilee that his glory was first revealed to his disciples (John 2:1, 11). The author, later in this chapter, records the length of time Jesus said was needed for the temple, his body, to be raised (John 2:19-22). Both of these events, though different in magnitude, were miraculous signs that occurred on the third day and were sources of belief in Jesus for his disciples.

Here, in Cana of Galilee, Jesus' mother and his disciples were attending a wedding feast. It is immaterial to the story who it was that was married or the details regarding any connections to Jesus or his family. The account simply implies that it was a formal affair and in accordance with social expectations of the time period. The main characters are Jesus and his mother, yet as the story develops, all that are present will become the beneficiaries of the act of one person, Jesus.

We often sing a song, "Does Jesus Care?" and it describes several circumstances within a person's life that challenge our lives spiritually, but are the result of physical or emotional circumstances. This event is the beginning of Jesus' works that demonstrate how much he cares. The story adds some perspective about Jewish customs regarding purification and wedding feasts. The Jews required large water pots for ceremonial washings and it was expected that the better quality wine be saved for serving later in the feast. The fact that Jesus' mother was so insistent that Jesus solve the problem of a wine shortage indicates the social implications of poor planning, especially for the bridegroom.

Thus far in the narrative concerning Jesus, the prologue has painted a glorious picture of who Jesus was and what he would do. John the Baptist has proclaimed that he is the Lamb of God and that God's Spirit has signified this. Nathanael has personally seen the power that Jesus possessed and other disciples of John have been drawn to Jesus from John's testimony. But, here at Cana, Jesus will openly demonstrate his divinity for the first time.

All of us can relate to a situation as the apostle recounts the story. Maybe in our modern culture the story would unfold like this. All the invited guests have assembled for a grand wedding at the given location. Family and friends have arrived from out of town and are staying at the reserved hotel. The formal invitations were mailed and respective RSVP's received. The invitations describe a formal reception and dinner will follow the ceremony on the grounds of the resort. Having seen the number of guests that have arrived for the wedding, you realize the magnitude of the expense this gala will require. But, following the ceremony, you witness a extremely anxious and frantic father of the bride engaged in a very animated conversation with the hotel staff. Someone has dropped the ball, the banquet room was reserved for 100 guests and not the 200 well wishers that arrived. How embarrassing! What a disaster for the bride and her family to conclude such a joyous occasion. What could you do? What could anyone do to save face and avoid such social humiliation?

On this occasion, Jesus' mother, recognizing the dire circumstance turns to someone who can help. There is no smoke and mirror act that would beg the legitimacy of Jesus' ability. The remedy for this social debacle lies within the words of the master. The solution requires only simple obedience.

Questions:

1. The writer indicates that this was the first of Jesus' signs. Without consulting a bible dictionary or a Greek to English Lexicon, explain what this word, sign, means from the narrative.

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2. The details of this story indicate that a large quantity of wine was produced from water through Jesus' instructions (John 2:6, 7). What does this detail imply about Jesus' ability and the number of guests that were present?

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3. What do the remarks made by the master of the feast concerning the later wine indicate about Jesus' ability (John 2:8-10)?

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4. The writer adds that it was here, at Cana of Galilee, that Jesus manifested his glory (v 11). In your own words, what did the author mean by this statement?

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5. The disciples, having witnessed and experienced this event, had a new perspective of who Jesus was. Explain what is meant by believing in him (v11).

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6. Although it was not Jesus' intent to reveal himself at this point in time, the fact that he did demonstrates something about Jesus (John 2:4). What does this indicate?

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