

1Yr09 – That Your Joy May Be Full John 2:1-11

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Open your Bibles. Turn them to the Gospel of John. Title of the message, “That Your Joy May Be Full.” We are in John Chapter 2 and we are going to do the first eleven verses.

Martyn Lloyd-Jones – That Great Preacher of just ONE Generation ago – Said in a sermon called “True Joy”: *The Christian is meant to be a joyful person, one who is meant to experience the joy of salvation. There is no question about that; it is something which is taught everywhere in the New Testament, and so it is our duty as Christians to have this joy, and to be filled with it. And we must give ourselves neither rest nor peace until we have it.*

Big statement by a big preacher about a big subject – joy. We are to be filled with joy. Filled with a supernatural joy that is evidenced in our physical experience. Let me tell you something right from the start. Hear this, because I am going to tell you over and over. *This supernatural joy can only be experienced in a real, meaningful, personal relationship with Jesus Christ, with a daily intimate interaction with Jesus Christ.* It is the only source of supernatural joy. Jesus is going to give us a sign, an illustration that he desires to create supernatural joy in our relationship with him.

In John 15, the first half of John 15 we call the “Abide Chapter,” there we learn the secret of abiding in a relationship with Jesus Christ and all of the benefits that come through that. And in John 15:11 it says:

John 15:11 (ESV)

11 These things (about Abiding) I have spoken to you, that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be full.

That’s what we are talking about, that the joy of Jesus Christ might be in us and that our joy would be full to the brim. And so Jesus is going to perform his first miracle. That miracle is about Jesus Christ desiring to bring supernatural joy into your life with him.

Let’s pray. *Lord Jesus, we pray that our hearts and our minds would be open to what you want to do. God that’s what we want. We want to be caught up in what you desire to do in our lives. We want to be consumed with it Lord. We want to know, God, that you’re at work, that you are doing something tremendous in our lives. Show us through this phenomenal, miraculous illustration how you desire to bring supernatural joy into the most important relationship that we have in our lives, our relationship with you. Reveal it to us we pray in Jesus’ name, amen.*

So, joy is a massive subject in the Bible. Just short of four hundred times, that’s a lot, the subject of joy appears in both the Old Testament and the New Testament. When you get

over three hundred times you figure this is probably something pretty serious in the Bible. Almost four hundred times in the Bible, joy is talked about.

In John 17, the High Priestly Prayer, Jesus prays that one of the primary ways that the world would know that we are his is by our supernatural joy. By the joy that we have that is evidenced in our lives. His joy in our lives.

So we are headed to the text in John 2. Before we get there I need to make two primary truths really clear to you, so you know what we are teaching when we get there.

Truth #1

The joy of the Lord is a spiritual experience.

You might be shocked to know that there are many people in church who have never really developed a spiritual relationship with Jesus Christ. Plenty of people in church have never learned and have never experienced that spiritual connection with Jesus Christ. Joy is a spiritual fruit. It comes from a spiritual experience. It is the second fruit of the Holy Spirit. It's a supernatural, spiritual experience that displays itself in our physical experience. *It's a spiritual experience that displays itself, is manifested, in our physical experience.* The joy of the Lord comes *only* spiritually. It does not come tangibly, physically, circumstantially. It doesn't come from anything except a spiritual relationship with the one who gives that joy, who is Jesus Christ.

Truth #2

The joy of the Lord is a BY-PRODUCT of life with God.

It is not something to be sought in and of itself. You can't say you've got to get that, or achieve that or attain that. It's not something to achieve, it's something you *become* as a by-product of an ever increasing, intimate, personal, powerful, transforming, daily relationship with Jesus Christ. *His joy comes as a by-product, not as an end result.* And when we start chasing joy as an end result, we're like, maybe this, or maybe that. Maybe that will bring joy.

I read a little story about Ernest Hemingway. Ernest Hemingway did everything that could ever be done. And none of it satisfied him. And if you know his story you know how tragic it was.

Listen, you don't receive joy by seeking joy. You receive joy as a by-product of seeking Christ, of seeking a personal relationship with Jesus Christ. Because it's his joy, and it can only be received by him in a regular, daily, intimate relationship with him where you are in communion with him. And so his joy can be passed to you in that relationship. And then you experience that joy. That's the only way you can have the supernatural joy that Jesus wants you to have and has promised you.

This message, we are going to see the very first miracle Jesus performed publically. (I kind of doubt it's his first miracle. Really. Honestly. Can't you see him as a kid, when he wasn't down in the temple, can't you see him like, "I'm going to go fishing today." And then he's like walking along the shore just saying, "Come on, come on." And all the fish just jump on the shore for him. I'm sure he did that.) But today we are going to see the first live miracle recorded for Jesus Christ. And let me tell you it's about Jesus bringing supernatural joy into our most intimate relationship with him.

Do you know there are three Greek words for the word "miracle?" There are three Greek words translated "miracle." One of those words means "*power*." One of those words means "*wonder*." And a third word, our word used today, means "*a sign*." We call it a "Sign Miracle. "

In the Gospel of John there are only eight miracles listed, isn't that incredible? There are only eight miracles in the Gospel of John and all eight of them are "Sign Miracles." Because John the Apostle, his job, was to present Jesus Christ as the Son of God, who he is. And so eight miracles, all sign miracles. Guys, everything Jesus did, especially in the Gospel of John was a sign. It had a purpose, it had a teaching, it had an intention. And today the sign miracle we see dramatically, miraculously illustrates Jesus' desire to bring supernatural joy into your life with him. This is what we will see when we get into the text.

Here's the other thing that's kind of cool. We are nine messages into "One Year With Jesus" and we are still in the first week of his ministry. He has only been in active public ministry for one week. After Jesus returned from the forty days of temptation in the wilderness, returned victorious I might add, we saw the interrogation of John the Baptist by the Jerusalem Priests and the Levites. That was day one. And then we saw the introduction of the Lamb of God, that was an important message. We saw the introduction of the Lamb of God, that was day two in this week setting. Day three was the calling of Andrew and John and Peter; Andrew and John together and then Andrew went and got Peter. Some people believe John got James too at the same time (that's another story.) Day four Jesus met Philip and Philip brought Nathanael. Four days of back to back ministry since Jesus returned in the Gospel of John from The Temptation.

All four of these days occurred probably somewhere just south of the Sea of Galilee on the Jordan River. There's some geographical differences of opinion on where this occurred, but most likely ten miles south or so of the Sea of Galilee on the Jordan River. We point to our text today in John 1:43.

John 1:43 (NLT)

43 The next day (notice) Jesus decided to go to Galilee. He found Philip and said to him, "Come, follow me."

This was the fourth day when Jesus called Philip. And so then Philip goes and gets Nathanael and Jesus blows Nathanael's mind. It's so great at the end of Chapter 1, it's a great text. Why did Jesus decide to go to Galilee? Well, very probably because he was invited to a wedding in a village called Cana about eight miles north of his home town in Nazareth. And so he heads up towards Galilee we read in John 2:1-2.

John 2:1–2 - (ESV)

1 On the third day (probably 3 days after the previous events) 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.

We are a week in to the ministry of Jesus. Jesus was invited to the wedding with his disciples, which is interesting to me because he just called the disciples. And so Jesus and his disciples are headed to a wedding in Cana. This is only eight miles from his home in Nazareth, so very probably there's a couple being married that Jesus knew, probably grew up with. At least the groom in this wedding could have been Jesus' age.

I really want to focus on what we call the M.I.P., The Most Important Point. So stay with me. I've already told you the most important point. Jesus is going to miraculously illustrate his desire to bring supernatural joy into your relationship with him. That's the most important point. But there are a couple of minor things in these next few verses that I just can't leave alone. So I'm just going to go over them lightly and gently.

So, they are at the wedding and we read in verse 3 of Chapter 2

John 2:3–4 (ESV)

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."

I want to give you two minor tangent points, just in case they are interesting to you. First, Jesus calls his mother "woman." This is a term of endearment. It's a respectful term of endearment. The NLT translates this as ***dear woman*** not because there is another word, but because the word translated "woman" here is a term of endearment and respect. Just to prove that, in John Chapter 19:26 (write this in your margin) Jesus is hanging on the cross and he wants to make sure that his mother is cared for. And so he looks to John, this same John – the Apostle John – and his mother standing next to John and he says to his mother "***Dear woman, here is your son.***" And then he says to John, "***Here is your mother.***"

So it's not that Jesus didn't like to use the word "mother" but here is something I just wanted to point out, and if it's not important to you don't worry about it, Jesus never called Mary "mother." The Son of God never called Mary "mother."

Okay, there's one other interesting point here. Again in John 2:4.

John 2:4 (ESV)

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

Jesus makes two statements here that I believe give us a real key insight into his relationship with Mary. The first one is ***"What does this have to do with me?"*** It's almost what we call an "idiom." An idiom is *"a figure of speech."* It's a cultural thing that may not make sense outside of the culture. So, in Greek, this phrase is literally "what is there between me and you?" Or "what is there for me and you in this?" That's kind of the literal phrase. We would say, "What do you and I have in common?" That's what Jesus is saying to Mary here. I don't know if you find that interesting or not, but I just thought I would throw that out. The answer by the way, the implied answer is "nothing." "Hey, dear woman, you and I don't have anything in common." Kind of harsh, right? Jesus was being really gentle, and very respectful, I promise you he was.

And then he adds ***"my hour has not yet come."*** Very clearly to Mary, he is saying, "Dear woman, I love you. I respect you, but this is where we draw the line. Spiritually you and I have nothing in common and you have no idea my time table." So if that's interesting news to you, take it and go with it. Don't beat anybody up who believes otherwise about Mary. They did not learn it from the Bible. So don't hold it against them. They learned it from other sources. Everybody understands I'm not bashing anybody, right? I'm just teaching the Bible. So, it's nice to actually say, "Oh, that's what it says in the Bible."

Let's go back to the M.I.P. Jesus Christ wants to miraculously demonstrate to you that his desire is to create supernatural joy in your intimate relationship with him. That's the M.I.P. That's where we are going.

If you have read this text or heard this text taught have you ever asked yourself why is the first miracle of Jesus at a wedding? And why does it involve wine? You might ask that if you weren't fully comfortable with the background that comes from this text. See, the Bible is interpreted in the background in which it was written, in the culture in which it was written. And so there is a culture and a spiritual background that you might need to know before you understand why Jesus chose for his first miracle to be at a wedding and to involve wine.

A Jewish wedding in that day was the grandest event of a person's life. Period. Many of you feel that way, I do. Along with getting saved and having children. We just look back and say how incredible the wedding was. Well in a Jewish family's life, especially in what we would call a common or kind of a "peasant" Jew, the wedding was the absolute highlight of their entire life. It was the moment of the greatest possible joy in this family's life, bar none. For the average person there would be nothing higher than the

week than the week that they got married. I say week because a Jewish wedding wasn't like ours. Imagine, moms who have prepared weddings, what if the wedding lasted a week? You think it's tough to get those little doilies out for one afternoon for the reception table, spread that out for a week – it's out of control! A Jewish wedding consumes the entire village that the families live in. The wedding had already been kind of orchestrated since the children were young. The whole town knows about it. When it goes off it is a town-wide celebration.

So after the initial ceremony there is a massive feast and then the bride and the groom are paraded through the entire town usually at night, lit up by torches with the whole village out in the streets congratulating them and being all excited. And then the bride and the groom get to their home and they have them set up on thrones and they dress them like royalty. This is the truth, they wear robes and they sit on thrones and they have open house for a week. And so for a week, multi-day at least, people are coming in and out of the home and the bride and groom are treated like royalty. In fact, what they say is law in essence in the home and in the family for that period of time. It's a big deal. It is the greatest single moment of joy in a person's life and in a family's life. It's designed to be joy-filled to the brim.

That's why our salvation is illustrated so often in the New Testament by a wedding. We are the bride. Jesus is the Bridegroom. Throughout the New Testament, over and over and over again Jesus illustrates our relationship with him by using the wedding. Wait a minute, wait a minute. So you're saying Jesus performed his first miracle at a wedding which is an illustration, almost more than any other major event throughout the New Testament, of our intimate relationship with him. Yes! That's what I'm saying. Are you starting to see the connection? It's a big deal. It's not a coincidence.

Not only is it huge in the New Testament but in the Book of Revelation, who has heard of the marriage of the Lamb? That's us! Who has heard of the marriage supper of the Lamb? Heaven is described as the marriage of the Lamb, the banqueting table, the marriage feast, the supper of the Lamb. It's when we are brought to the Bridegroom, when we begin our eternal unity with Jesus Christ in heaven. It is pictured as a wedding. And so Jesus says, "Yeah, this is the place. This is the place for my first sign miracle because throughout my ministry I'm going to relate my intimate relationship with believers to a wedding. So much so that heaven is going to be described like a Jewish wedding."

Listen, Jesus didn't do anything by chance. This was planned so that you could hear the message. Hear the message today please; the wedding is an illustration of the indescribable joy that we have as the bride of Christ looking forward to our marriage of the Lamb and the marriage supper of the Lamb. It's a big deal.

Now the question, why the wine? Why the wine for your first miracle Jesus? The wedding is the most joy filled time in a family's life. Period. Wine, in the culture, is the

supreme symbol of experiencing joy at the wedding. Wine is so tied to symbolizing the joy of the wedding that if a family, a master of the feast, didn't have wine, a guest could actually bring legal charges against the master of the feast for not providing the wine. Because there is nothing higher at the wedding than all of these people lifting a glass of wine to celebrate the joy of the couple who are getting married. *Wine is the supreme symbol in the Jewish culture of joy.* In fact the rabbis had a saying, "Without wine there can be no joy." They are not talking about the alcoholic content. They are saying it is a symbol of joy. Wine is a symbol of joy at the most joyous occasion in this family's life and especially in these individual's lives. So, no greater joy than the wedding day and no greater symbol of joy than wine.

What are we talking about this message? Joy. That's what we are talking about We're talking about joy in an event that pictures our relationship with Jesus Christ, the wedding of the bride to the Bridegroom. Both foundational truths that Jesus will teach for the next three and a half years. He is kick starting them in Cana with the miracle.

So the potential disaster we read about in John 2:3 cannot be overstated. The greatest moment of joy in life was about to crumble in ruins.

John 2:3 (ESV)

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

You must understand that what is happening here is the joy is being sucked out of this most joyous occasion like the wheat fields in Kansas get sucked out of the ground by a tornado. The joy is about to get sucked out of this most joyous occasion. When Mary says to Jesus "***they have no wine***" it would be within the context to be able to paraphrase this as saying "they are running out of joy." In this most joyous relationship of the wedding the people are running out of joy.

Have you ever had a time in your life with Jesus, if you're saved today, if you've spent time with Jesus, have you ever had a time when you feel like the joy is running out? The joy is being sucked out of your life with Christ? That's the picture. Your relationship with Christ is designed to be the most joyous, momentous, phenomenal, eternal, hopeful event and relationship in your life. And sometimes it's like a Shop Vac on steroids just sucking the joy from your life. That's the picture. "Jesus I'm running out of joy."

So Jesus is going to transform a joyless relationship to a joyful relationship. Watch as we continue in verse 5 (we skipped verse 4 because we dealt with that in the two tangents.)

John 2:5 (ESV)

5 His mother said to the servants, "Do whatever he tells you."

So at first Jesus it seems like kind of reprimands Mary, but Mary gets it. She responds perfectly. This is the perfect response to Jesus. Mary says, “We know the situation, it is dire.” So she says to the servants “Do what he says.”

There’s a nice little side teaching here. Do you want to know what to do when you’re running out of joy? Look to Jesus and then do what he says. There’s a radical concept for a Christian. Look to Jesus and then do what he says. Even when you don’t feel like it, that’s when you have to do it.

Listen, Mary understands at this moment that she and Jesus have just taken different tracks. She understands. She knew because the Lord has told her who Jesus was, but at this point she is saying, “Okay – I’m no longer in charge. You do what he says, I’m out of the picture,” and the miracle is set in motion.

John 2:6–7 (ESV)

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.

There’s two huge truths here, but there is huge significance in how Jesus chooses to perform this miracle. Please make this connection. This is the stuff where you say “That’s so cool how he did that.”

The six water jars are used for the Jewish rites of purification. This is a religious purification. This is a religious ritual designed primarily by man to prepare yourself to be able to interact with God. It’s a religious ritual. So the water jars are an example of man’s attempt to purify himself to be able to interact with God. *Jesus is going to transform the water of religious ritual (which could never really cleanse) into the wine of the New Covenant (that brings supernatural joy.)*

Look at the end of verse 7, I love this lesson. Jesus is about to transform the water of religious ritual into the water of the New Covenant but there is something else. Look at the end of verse 7. Jesus told the servants to fill these huge jars with water and it says ***and they filled them up to the brim.***

When Jesus asks you to fill up a jar with water, how far do you fill it up? Do you fill it up halfway? “That’s good enough. That’s a twenty gallon jar. Ten gallons are enough.” Do you fill it almost all the way, until you’re tired? “Eh, that’s enough. He told me to fill it. It’s more or less filled. I’d call it filled if I were him.” Or do you fill it to the brim? When Jesus asks you to fill a jar do you fill it to the brim?

Immediately when Jesus gave this command, these servant obeyed “to the brim.” Jesus is going to bring supernatural joy, transforming the water of religious ritual into the wine of the New Covenant of his supernatural joy.

John 2:8–10 (ESV)

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.”

Don’t get off track. Remember, the wedding is an illustration of your union with Jesus Christ. Throughout the New Testament into heaven the wedding is an *illustration of your union with Jesus Christ*. The wine represents the ultimate symbol of joy. Jesus Christ is bringing supernatural joy into a situation that illustrates your union with him.

If you are living in your union with Christ on something other than the supernatural joy that Jesus wants to create, you may very well still be running off the water of religious ritual. Whatever it is you’re using, it’s supplemental, it’s secondary – and you are running on empty. If you are not running on the supernatural joy that Jesus has brought into your union with him, whatever else you’re running on is going to run dry and you are going to get the joy sucked out of your relationship with Christ. Guaranteed. Because the only thing that lasts is the supernatural joy that comes from Christ in that relationship. Anything else is second best and will not last.

Let’s finish the text and then we’ll talk a little bit more about this incredible illustration Jesus has given us in his first miracle.

John 2:11 (ESV)

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

Remember the word used for miracle in this text is the sign miracle. The first miraculous sign that Jesus performed was stepping into the middle of an illustration of your union with him and then delivering supernatural joy. That is a very cool “first sign.” That’s what Jesus wants to do for you.

The obvious question is how do I live my life with Jesus Christ fueled by his own supernatural joy? The New Testament deals so much with joy, I could teach a long, drawn out series on it. So I can only hit on a couple of things. But you have to ask how. Right now you have to be going, “Yeah, okay, that’s me. The joy of my relationship with Christ is regularly on empty.”

We started in John Chapter 15, the Abide Chapter. And we said that *the true secret of learning to live for Christ is abiding in him daily*. And in that abiding experience (please catch this) you experience in that relationship supernatural joy. You don't achieve it, you don't figure it out, you don't attain it. You experience it in that relationship with Jesus Christ as your daily abiding in him in a meaningful, transforming, intimate relationship where you are reading his Word and saying, "Yes Lord, I hear you. I know you've been meaning to talk to me about that. Yes I see it. I know. Thank you."

You're actually having a relationship with him. You pray to him and say "Lord you know. You were there with me. I'm sorry. Please forgive me. Restore unto me the joy of my salvation. Renew a right spirit in me. Lord you know everything there is."

There is a real, meaningful transforming relationship that you can have with Jesus Christ, that (listen to me please) most Christians don't have. And here's how I know. Because everybody I know that has that type of a relationship is being radically transformed by it. You just see Jesus on them. You can tell they have been spending time with Jesus. You can see it in these people that are actually with Jesus. They experience the supernatural joy and then it is displayed in their physical experience. But it comes in a spiritual experience. You have to understand that. When people ask how they get the joy, I say "Listen. You've got to spend time in a real, tangible, meaningful, interactive, intimate way with Jesus Christ every day. And if you will, you'll experience his presence, you'll hear his voice, you'll experience his touch. You'll be strengthened and empowered by him. And then, you will have his joy because he gives it to you."

I'm asking myself and saying "Lord, it seems like it always leads to this with me. I always get back to this." I asked myself why. Why is it that it is so clear to me that the answer is in an ever-increasing personal relationship, growing more intimate, more real, more powerful, more transparent with Christ? Why is that always the answer? And here's what I believe. It's because it's the only way I've ever seen people radically transformed by Christ. Going to church doesn't transform people. Reading the Bible, in and of itself – especially if you are reading it like a newspaper – doesn't transform you. Purifying yourself, your religious rituals and rites, forget about it, that gives you negative points. Having a real meaningful, daily, relational, interactive, intimate relationship with Jesus Christ will radically transform your life. And you will experience his supernatural joy like the joy he created at the wedding, and then it will show in your life. That's it.

We've done two messages on this. So let me just tell you. We have done two series just about this. The first one is the "Abide Series" and you can go to wordbymail.com and get the "Abide Series." Order the whole C.D. series. (That was before video was created.) Or read it, it's all there for you to read. Or "The Fundamentals." You know I'm always encouraging you to study "The Fundamentals." Learn how to have this radical daily relationship with Christ. All our daily journals, our daily devotion journals come from

this concept and they work. Anyone who is meeting God daily like this is being radically transformed.

The supernatural joy that Jesus wants to give you comes from a spiritual experience. That spiritual experience is personal and it's relational. It comes from the Living Word, hearing Jesus in his Word. It comes from real prayer, honest prayer. And it comes from sold out worship. Worship him! Get ready for heaven! Practice a little, because that's what heaven is about. Join all of creation and worship the Savior, worship who he is and you'll realize how good that is for you. Worship does a heart good. Through the Living Word, through honest prayer and through real sold out worship you will experience the supernatural joy that Jesus Christ wants to give you.

Here's two reasons why I see Christians not do this. Number one, no one has ever told them. They may have been going to church for ten years and no one ever told them the secret was to have a daily, meaningful, interactive relationship with Jesus Christ. No one has ever taught them how to do it. Get disciplined. Find someone who can disciple you and say, "Listen, I'm going to die if you don't teach me how to do this."

Number two reason is the "I-have-to's." You have it, don't you? You've got the "I-have-to's?" It's a cultural disease. Pretty much spreads to everyone in our culture. And I get it bad. I wake up and I'm already late on my first "I-have-to." And I go to bed and I didn't finish half of my "have-to's." And it repeats the next day. And the next day. Where is Jesus in my "have-to's?" Where is my personal, interactive, relational time with Jesus in my "have-to's?" Far too often it is last. Change that and you'll experience the supernatural joy.

Let's pray. Lord Jesus, you are incredible. Your choosing the wedding and the way that you brought the first miracle is so indicative, it's so directing, Lord, it's so cool, how you demonstrated to us that you desired to bring supernatural joy into our unity, our communion, our relationship with you. And so, help us to see that it comes by experiencing you in that place. It comes by relating to you, by getting to know you. By spending time with you.

Right now, I just want to give you a chance to make that commitment. If anything I've said has pricked your heart, the Holy Spirit has brought it up make a commitment right now. And for many of us in the room, the first thing we should say is something like this.

Lord, I'm sorry. I'm so sorry. I've got such a bad case of "I-have-to's." And they're killing me. They are killing me spiritually and they are killing my time with you and they are sucking the joy out of my life because I have to do this, and I have to do that.

Lord, we're sorry. We repent and we say "I have to spend time with you. I have to learn how to do this. I have to get someone to teach me how to do this. I have to do this Lord."

Please Lord, fill us with your Spirit and inspire us to get to this place where we experience your supernatural joy. In your name and for your glory we pray, amen.