



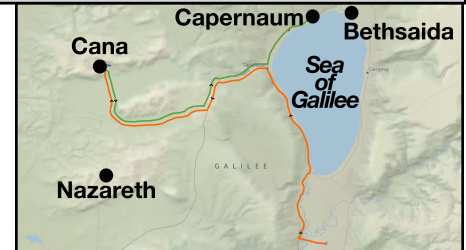
Here's Your Sign John 2:1-11

Today we discover the first "sign" demonstrating how Jesus transforms the ordinary into the extraordinary. (Plus, learn about ancient alcoholic drinks & God's intention for marriage.)

A Wedding Invitation

John 2:1-2 (CSB) ¹ On the third day a wedding took place in Cana of Galilee. Jesus's mother was there, and ² Jesus and his disciples were invited to the wedding as well.

Marriage played a central role in Jewish communities. Outside of untimely deaths, rare were the homes without both mother and father. Further into His ministry, when Jesus is asked about the bond of marriage and the legitimacy of divorce, Jesus responds quoting from **Genesis 1:27 & 2:24**.



Marriage Defined

Matthew 19:4-6 (CSB) ⁴ "Haven't you read," he replied, "that he who created them in the beginning made them male and female [Gen. 1:27], ⁵ and he also said, 'For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two will become one flesh?' ⁶ So they are no longer two, but one flesh [Gen. 2:24]. Therefore, **what God has joined together**, let no one separate."

Jesus makes God's intention of marriage very clear.

Marriage is a joining of one male and one female for one lifetime.

- Many look on marriage with **disdain** choosing to live together in sexual sin instead of following the marriage model of staying together for LIFE.
- Others have **distorted** marriage, and have highjacked the term "marriage" to apply to 'committed, monogamous, same-sex relationships'. But the Scriptures are clear that homosexual activity is a distortion of the Creator's intention (Read Romans 1:18-32).

Honoring Marriage

Hebrews 13:4 (CSB) ⁴ **Marriage is to be honored by all** and the marriage bed kept undefiled, because God will judge the sexually immoral and adulterers.

Jesus is God in skin, the Creator of human beings (John 1:3), the One who originated marriage, is giving His approval by His attendance at this wedding.

Wedding Woes

John 2:3 (CSB) ³ When the wine ran out, Jesus's mother told him, "They don't have any wine."

Running out of refreshments during this week long celebration was a shameful loss of family honor,² and for this reason, **Jesus's mother** is concerned.

If wine is allowed in the Bible, what's the big deal today?

1. **The use was different.** Wine was a necessity, not just a social beverage. Much of the water in Israel was tainted. Mixing wine with water would kill the bacteria, plus add taste.
2. **The wine was different.** **D.A. Carson** writes, "wine in the ancient world was diluted with water to between one-third and one-tenth of its fermented strength, (i.e. something less strong than American beer)." ³ Wine mixed with at least 3 parts water to 1 part wine brought the alcohol content in the range of 2.25-2.75%, well below the 3.2% that is generally considered necessary to classify an alcoholic

² Andrew T. Lincoln, *The Gospel according to Saint John, Black's New Testament Commentary* (London: Continuum, 2005), 127.

³ D. A. Carson, *The Gospel according to John, The Pillar New Testament Commentary* (Leicester, England; Grand Rapids, MI: Inter-Varsity Press; W.B. Eerdmans, 1991), 169.

beverage in our culture.⁴ **Undiluted wine**, with about the strength of wine today (9-11% alcohol), was viewed as 'strong drink', and frowned upon in Jewish culture.

3. The culture was different. If we lived in Israel, we would probably have grown up drinking wine in moderation during evening meals. In America, however, drinking is often associated with rebellion, drunkenness, and confusion. So while some believers might choose to drink alcohol in moderation, the Scriptures are CLEAR that followers of Jesus are

1) **NOT to get drunk** (Eph. 5:18 & many more) and

2) **NOT to cause confusion for other believers** (Romans 14:20-21).

* John MacArthur writes: "Though the Bible does not forbid drinking wine, and in some cases commends it (e.g., Ps. 104:14-15; Prov. 31:6; Jer. 31:12; 1 Tim. 5:23), it strongly condemns drunkenness (Gen. 9:20-27; Deut. 21:20-21; Prov. 20:1; 23:29-35; Rom. 13:13; 1 Cor. 5:11; 6:10; Gal. 5:21; Eph. 5:18; 1 Tim. 3:3, 8; Titus 1:7; 2:3; 1 Peter 4:3)."⁵

Mary Asks Jesus For Help

John 2:3-4 (CSB)³ When the wine ran out, Jesus's mother told him, "They don't have any wine."

⁴ "What does that have to do with you and me, woman?" Jesus asked. "**My hour has not yet come.**"

Why did Jesus call his mother, woman? "Woman" was a polite, but not intimate, term much like the English word "Ma'am."⁶ (Jesus spoke to other ladies in the same way - John 4:21; 19:26; 20:13, 15; Matt. 15:28; Luke 13:12).

The 30 year-old Jesus was NOT being unkind, but WAS being inflexible, not allowing his earthly mother's desire to override His heavenly Father's desire.⁷ The **hour** Jesus refers is always tied to His coming crucifixion (Jn. 7:30; 8:20; 12:23, 27; 13:1; 17:1).

Words to Live By

John 2:5 (CSB)⁵ "**Do whatever he tells you,**" his mother told the servants.

How bout if we ALL followed THAT command this week!

Transforming Ordinary to Extraordinary

John 2:6-10 (CSB)⁶ Now six stone water jars had been set there for Jewish purification. Each contained twenty or thirty gallons.⁷ "Fill the jars with water," Jesus told them. So they filled them to the brim.⁸ Then he said to them, "Now draw some out and take it to the headwaiter." And they did.⁹ When the headwaiter tasted the **water** (after **it had become wine**), he did not know where it came from—though the servants who had drawn the water knew. He called the groom¹⁰ and told him, "Everyone sets out the fine wine first, then, after people are drunk, the inferior. But you have kept the fine wine until now."

Six stone water jars...for Jewish purification. All filled, this would have been over 120 gallons, used for ceremonial washing of hands, arms, cups, pitchers, and pots (Mark 7:3-4). At one point, Pharisees and scribes confronted Jesus asking, "*Why do your disciples break the tradition of the elders? For they don't wash their hands when they eat.*" (Matt. 15:1-3)

Now Jesus is about to do something that will demonstrate His superiority over the man-made traditions.

Water...had become wine. This was no magic trick, but a complete transformation at the molecular level. This wine did NOT come from the natural process, but was transformed from bland water meant for hand washing, to fine wine...by the WORD of Jesus. **HERE'S YOUR SIGN!**

☀ Alexander Pope (poet): "*The conscious water saw its Master and blushed.*"⁸

⁴ John F. MacArthur Jr., *Ephesians, MacArthur New Testament Commentary* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1986), 237.

⁵ *Ibid.*, 79.

⁶ *Ibid.*

⁷ Gary M. Burge, *John, The NIV Application Commentary* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 2000), 91.

⁸ Ravi Zacharias, *Jesus Among Other Gods*, 80.

🌟 **Kent Hughes:** "He attends the wedding, participates in the happiness, averts disaster, and then supplies the joy!"⁹

John 2:11 (CSB) ¹¹ Jesus did this, the first of his **signs**, in Cana of Galilee. He revealed his glory, and **his disciples believed in him**.

Signs: moments when heaven and earth intersect.¹⁰

Water to wine is the sign that showed the transformational power of Jesus, to turn the ordinary into the extraordinary, a sign that **revealed his glory, and his disciples believed in him** (v.11). Much more than transforming liquids, these young **disciples** were eyewitnesses of how Jesus came to transform lives!

Jesus will take these ordinary fishermen who believe in Him and turn them into extraordinary fishers of men who will impact the world for generations to come.

Questions to Consider

- ➡ Jesus celebrates marriage - one man & one woman for one lifetime. Do you?
- ➡ Jesus transforms the ordinary into the extraordinary. Will YOU do whatever He tells YOU? Surrender to Him. Seek Him. Share Him.

YOUR NOTES

* **Want to talk further?** Please contact **Jackie** (850-673-1582), **Justin** (704-618-6144), or another follower of Jesus soon! Or call our **deacons & wives:** Fain & Linda Poppell, Tom & Martha Waddail, Steve & Debbie Bass, Freddy & Joyce Howard, Jere & Darlene Burnette, Alan & Christy Androski, Willy & Melissa Gamalero.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What challenged or encouraged you from today's teaching?
2. Some within our culture attempt to defend 'gay marriage' by noting that Jesus didn't say anything against it. **Read Matthew 19:4-6.** How might this passage demonstrate what God's intention for marriage is? What passages might you turn to demonstrate that sexual intimacy outside of heterosexual marriage is sinful?
3. Why is alcohol such a hotly debated topic among American Christians?
4. What insight did you gain from the historical background of how wine was used in Jesus' day?
5. How might you respond to this statement: "If all we take away from this passage (John 2:1-11) is about the use of wine, then we have missed the point of the story."? And, what IS the point of the story?
6. Share an example of how you have seen Jesus transform an ordinary person into the extraordinary person.
7. Share how you can pray for one another this week and make a phone call to check on each other this week.

⁹ R. Kent Hughes, John: That You May Believe, Preaching the Word (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 1999), 62.

¹⁰ Tom Wright, John for Everyone, Part 1: Chapters 1-10 (London: Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, 2004), 21.