



MIRACLES — Water to Wine

Pastor Perry Burkholder

John 2:1-12

On the third day a wedding took place at Cana in Galilee. Jesus' mother was there, and Jesus and his disciples had also been invited to the wedding. When the wine was gone, Jesus' mother said to him, "They have no more wine."

"Woman, why do you involve me?" Jesus replied. "My hour has not yet come."

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

Nearby stood six stone water jars, the kind used by the Jews for ceremonial washing, each holding from twenty to thirty gallons.

Jesus said to the servants, "Fill the jars with water"; so they filled them to the brim.

Then he told them, “Now draw some out and take it to the master of the banquet.”

They did so, and the master of the banquet tasted the water that had been turned into wine. He did not realize where it had come from, though the servants who had drawn the water knew. Then he called the bridegroom aside and said, “Everyone brings out the choice wine first and then the cheaper wine after the guests have had too much to drink; but you have saved the best till now.”

What Jesus did here in Cana of Galilee was the first of the signs through which he revealed his glory; and his disciples believed in him.

After this he went down to Capernaum with his mother and brothers and his disciples. There they stayed for a few days.

The New International Version (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2011), Jn 2:1–12.

@January 9, 2023: The beginning of our sacrament of fasting with our global family.



A Miracle: God has to intervene in a specific circumstance or issue in our lives; a move or change that only God can accomplish. Do you have any of those in your life?

The Wine Runs Out

This is a huge problem, not just for a wedding, but for the family hosting the wedding. This is deeply shameful and speaks ill of the ability for the family to provide.

In this culture, weddings would last for about a week. Guests and family members would show up throughout the week, making this a social landmark for a family's reputation.

And so here, Jesus is involved in a family's social reputation and the miracle that is needed is rescuing them from eternal shame from the community.

My Hour Has Not Yet Come

A small note on culture is that the title “woman” was a regular title that Jesus used to address his mother throughout the gospels and does not carry the offensive connotations that the English title carries in recent antiquity.

When Jesus responds to his mother, he says this cryptic statement, “Woman, why do you involve me?” Jesus replied. “My hour has not yet come.”

This hour is specifically referring to when his glory is going to be revealed to the world. And Jesus doesn't want the beginning of his ministry to start prematurely. He risks his ministry having early run-ins with the Roman Empire.

So it's not because he doesn't care about this family's problem, but he's trying to balance timing of his ministry. But Jesus' mother won in moving Jesus' heart to help this family.

Observations on Miracles

Most, if not all of Jesus' miracles require participation on the human's part. Jesus invites us into obedience with him, partnering with us as the foundation for his miracles.

The foundation for our miracles is a heart that says yes to Jesus.

Another observation is that Jesus uses mundane means to accomplish extraordinary things. Water, an everyday occurrence is turned into fine wine.

And as a result, people believed.

The First of His Signs of Glory

A miracle or answered prayer is a sign that points to God's glory. Every little thing that God accomplishes is a revelation of God's beauty and glory.

The God of the universe steps into a wedding moment to care for one family? That's how loving and caring he is. He listened to the voice of his mother and cared for this small, unnamed family.

The problems that we have are opportunities if we bring them before Jesus and meditate on his glory and see him for who he actually is. This can lead us into a deeper trust of Jesus and his character.

John wrote his gospel because he wanted to persuade his reader to believe in Jesus.

Jesus performed many other signs in the presence of his disciples, which are not recorded in this book. But these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.

The New International Version (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2011), Jn 20:30–31.

But What About When God Says No?

A lot of us don't experience miracles in the way we ask for and it shakes us to the core of our being. And we wrestle with God in those events. But God is not a vending machine where we get what we want if we insert a coin and a code.

And there may be 10,000 reasons in God's goodness for why he withholds something from us, but we are not often given those answer and God is secure enough to let us wrestle with his character and goodness.

Last year, we prayed to buy a building, and we were in this building for 18 months or so. And we believed and hoped it would go a certain way, but God allowed us to lose that opportunity. This moment shook Pastor Perry and many of us.

And what was crazy was that our team and elders heard that the steps of obedience were to pursue this building, and so why didn't this end up in success?

It felt like a moment in the boat of the storm where the disciples said, "Jesus, don't you care if we drown?" And it was some severe wrestling.



Through this experience, Pastor Perry learned how to take grief to Jesus and work through his emotions with God. He learned how to lead humbly through anger and feelings of betrayal. And he learned how to interact with Jesus in a deeper way.

Pastor Perry reflected on Job's line where Job says to God, "I've heard of you, but now I've seen you [paraphrased]." There's something qualitatively different that happens

when we take our suffering, pain, grief, and loss, and share with God in that state of misery.

It is in that space where we can meet Jesus and he changes us.

As American Christians, our tendency is to be drawn to the miracle victory portrait of Jesus and away from the crucified, bleeding Jesus who said, “follow me through suffering and pain.” We are invited to know Jesus through loss and grief.

The real miracle here was not turning water to wine, but turning people’s hearts into receptive wells to fill with the wine of eternal life. And we can know Jesus through the miracle victories and the times when he says “no.”