

SIGNS

in the Book of John



The Lord of the Wedding Feast

Key idea:

Jesus turned water into wine as a sign that He is the Lord of the New Covenant and its great wedding feast.

Key text:

John 2:1–11 NIV2011

On the third day a wedding took place at Cana in Galilee. Jesus' mother was there, ²and Jesus and his disciples had also been invited to the wedding. ³ When the wine was gone, Jesus' mother said to him, "They have no more wine." ⁴ "Woman, why do you involve me?" Jesus replied. "My hour has not yet come." ⁵ His mother said to the servants, "Do whatever he tells you."

⁶ Nearby stood six stone water jars, the kind used by the Jews for ceremonial washing, each holding from twenty to thirty gallons. ⁷ Jesus said to the servants, "Fill the jars with water"; so they filled them to the brim. ⁸ Then he told them, "Now draw some out and take it to the master of the banquet." They did so, ⁹ 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 ¹⁰ 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." ¹¹ 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.

Key points:

1. There are seven "signs" which provide an important structure to the Gospel of John and are critical for a proper understanding of the book.
2. John selected these seven signs so that we might believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that by believing we may have life in Him.
3. The improbable setting for the first sign is a wedding in Cana of Galilee, where Jesus turned water into wine.
4. Wine was often seen as a sign of God's blessing and was particularly associated with the coming of the Messianic age.

5. The sign of turning water into wine reveals that Jesus is the Lord of the New Covenant, Who has come to give grace upon grace, and to turn the water of old covenant rituals into the wine of new covenant realities and blessings.
6. Turning the water of ceremonial washing into wine revealed Jesus' glory, and His disciples believed in Him.

Questions for discussion/application:

1. What part of Sunday's text and teaching stood out most to me? Why?
2. How surprising is it that Jesus chose a wedding in an insignificant town to perform His first sign? What does that tell me about God's ways?
3. How surprising is Jesus' reply to Mary? Why does He respond to her this way? What does He mean when He says "My hour is not yet come"? How does she respond? How would I have responded?
4. Jesus apparently turned between 120 and 180 gallons of water into wine. What does that tell me about the abundant nature of God's glory and provision?
5. The master of the banquet exclaims that the wine was the best wine of the entire wedding. What does that tell me about the quality of God's glory and provision?
6. How many people are apparently even aware that Jesus did this miracle? What does that tell me about the nature of God's glory? When God is at work in my life, will others always be aware of this at first?
7. How does this sign of turning water to wine contrast with Moses' sign-plague of turning water into blood? What does this tell me about the nature of the new covenant versus the old covenant? See John 1:16-17; 2 Corinthians 3:6-11.
8. How does this sign reveal the glory of Jesus? What does turning water into wine tell me about Who Jesus is, and what He has come to do?
9. How do the disciples respond to this sign? How did Mary respond to Jesus? The servants? What is God telling me about how to respond to Jesus?
10. Whom can I pray for, share what I have learned, and invite to church this week?

Preview of next week: The Lord of the House (John 2:13-25)