



The First Sign

Key idea:

Jesus is both the real Master of the Banquet, and our true bridegroom who comes to pour out his blood so we can enjoy the wedding feast of the lamb and eternal joy with God.

Key text:

John 2:1-11

1 On the third day a wedding took place at Cana in Galilee. Jesus' mother was there, 2 and 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. The first miracle of Jesus is also a sign that points to who He is and what He has come to do.
2. Reynolds Price makes the point that this must be true or John would not have invented as Jesus' first, inaugural sign a miraculous solution to a mere social oversight.
3. The family centered culture of Biblical times meant weddings were longer and more significant to the life and activities of a community.

4. Running out of wine was a major social embarrassment, but not a crisis.
5. Jesus creating the wine shows that He is the real Master of the Banquet and Lord of the feast.
6. People who reject Christianity because they think it's a religion of rules don't understand who Jesus came to be or what He came to bring. He brings festival joy.
7. One of the metaphors used in the Old Testament to illustrate God's relationship to His people is as a husband and bridegroom to a wife. Jesus reveals in this miracle that He is the true bridegroom.
8. Jesus is thinking about what it will take to provide the wine for His wedding when He says to His mother, "Woman, why do you involve me? My hour has not yet come."
9. John Piper shows that by using the ceremonial jars, Jesus is showing He has come to change the external ways people deal with sin.

Questions for discussion/application:

1. Can we really go to Jesus for small things or is He too important?
2. What about some of the alternative explanations for why Jesus answers Mary, "what does this have to do with me? Is He asking her to affirm she wants Him to launch His ministry? Is she challenging Jesus to declare Himself? Is Jesus making clear that His allegiance is no longer to earthly relationships but only to the Father?"
3. What can we learn from Mary's comment to the servants to, "do whatever He tells you."
4. Do you see special significance in Jesus' using ceremonial jars to complete His work of turning water into wine?
5. How does the metaphor used in the Bible to describe God's relationship to His people as a husband to a bride tell us more about how He feels about us?
6. How does an understanding of God's wrath, judgement, and hell help us to more fully appreciate the love Christ has for us?
7. Is the picture the Bible paints of God's relationship to His people as a husband to His bride relevant to our own marriages? If so, how so?

8. What does it mean that Jesus doesn't announce publicly that He has changed the water to wine? What does that say about how He works in our own lives?
9. Why did the disciples see Jesus' glory in this miracle?
10. Why do the disciples respond to this miracle by believing in Him?