

THE GOSPEL OF

JOHN**The Ultimate
Wedding
Guest****INTRODUCTION**

John 2:1-12

"If I invited you to my house, showed you a bottle of water, and asked you to transform it into something else, an entirely different beverage, and you had to do it instantaneously without touching the water or even the bottle, could you do it? Of course not. Neither can I. What does that mean? It means there's something different about Jesus. He can do it.

What are we going to do with the story about Jesus [changing water into wine]? We have two choices. Choice one: say it's not true. The Bible can't be trusted. The story is a fairytale, and all who believe it are foolish. Choice two: realize the uniqueness of Jesus. He did something miraculous. How can he do this? The Bible says he can do it because he is the Creator."¹

OPEN IT

1. What was the nicest wedding you have ever attended? What made it so wonderful?

READ IT

John 2:1-12

¹ Matt Carter, *Christ-Centered Exposition: Exalting Jesus in John* (Nashville, TN: B&H Publishing Group, 2017), 47.

EXPLORE IT

2. Who was among those invited to the wedding at Cana?
3. When Jesus' mother tells him about the wine running out, she wants him to do something about it. What does he tell her about the timing of the request?
4. What were the six stone jars intended to be used for?
5. How does the master of the feast react when he tastes the wine Jesus made?
6. In verse 11, what three significant details about the miracle does John tell us?

APPLY IT

In verse 4-5, Jesus speaks to his mother in a way that seems disrespectful. It's not, but "does demonstrate less attachment than another title might. Jesus could say, Mother," but he doesn't. Mary has to learn to approach Jesus like everyone else – as a sinner in need of a Savior. Their relationship has fundamentally changed now that Jesus is embarking on his public ministry. No matter who you are, there's only one way to come to Jesus: as a sinner in need of help."²

7. What does the way Jesus speaks to his mother tell us about how we need to approach him?

² Carter, *Christ-Centered Exposition: Exalting Jesus in John*, 45.

8. How does Mary's faith that Jesus could solve the problem impact your view of Jesus' work in your own life?

In verse 6, John tells us that the water jars were intended to be used for Jewish purification rituals. People would use the water in the jars to wash themselves before eating in order to be pure, according to Old Testament commands. Why does John include this detail? It is intended to show us "that the rituals associated with the old covenant are giving way to something far greater. The shadow found in the law has been replaced by the substance. Now that Jesus is here, things have changed. The water of ceremony has been replaced with something far better. External purification has given way to internal cleansing."³

9. The reason we don't have to go through purification rituals is because Jesus Christ has cleansed us once-for-all. Explain how this is sometimes difficult to believe.

10. Even though we know Jesus has purified us, there are still times we try to purify ourselves. Explain how reading our Bibles, praying, attending church, and serving in various ways can be done for the wrong reasons, specifically to try to make us clean in God's eyes.

³ Carter, *Christ-Centered Exposition: Exalting Jesus in John*, 46.

Instead of calling Jesus' works "miracles" or using a stronger term, John always refers to them as "signs." This is because John intends us to understand that Jesus' turns water into wine (and later in the gospel, Jesus will do many other amazing miracles) in order to reveal something about himself. Jesus' works are never simply about displaying power or impressing the crowds. They are "*signs, significant displays of power that point beyond themselves to the deeper realities that could be perceived with the eyes of faith.* Jesus himself in this Gospel refers to his miracles and to his other activity as his 'work' or 'works'"⁴

11. What does this miracle say about Jesus and nature?

12. Read Revelation 19:7-10. What does this miracle say about a future wedding feast?

Read Ephesians 5:32. Paul is trying to alert us to the fact that marriage is a picture of Jesus' relationship with his church. The groom in every marriage represents Jesus. The bride in every marriage represents God's people gathered together in the church. John 2:9-10 shows that the groom was ultimately responsible for making sure there was enough wine at the wedding. When Jesus turns water into wine at a wedding, he showed himself to be "the all-providing Bridegroom for his bride, the great assembly of all those who trust in him."⁵

13. How does this affect your view of how well Jesus will provide for your needs personally?

⁴ 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), 175.

⁵ <https://www.desiringgod.org/messages/obedient-son-ultimate-purifier-all-providing-bridegroom>

14. Explain how this should enhance our view of marriage and its importance.

The more familiar we are with events in the Bible, the easier it is to be numb to their significance. We can also stop being amazed at their power. “We who read the Gospel record in its entirety are prone to take these events for granted; but to the disciples, each day and each new event brought marvels that were difficult to understand.”⁶

15. Do the stories of miracles in the Bible amaze you or do they feel routine? Offer some details on your answer and the reasons for it.

16. Spend some time meditating on the miracle at Cana. Ask God to amaze you by these signs of his glory. Then write one thought about Jesus, his power, and his glory that comes to your mind as a result of this time of meditation.

⁶ Warren W. Wiersbe, *The Bible Exposition Commentary*, vol. 1 (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1996), 290.

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