

Can You See His Glory?

John 2:1—11

Introduction

The Gospel of **John** differs from the synoptics, **Matthew**, **Mark**, and **Luke** in structure and perspective. In structure, they lay out the events differently. The perspective of the synoptic Gospels is from human to divine. Matthew shows this perspective by beginning with His genealogy, showing Jesus' human ancestry. Mark begins by introducing John the Baptist and Jesus' Baptism. And Luke begins with the announcements of the births of John and Jesus. John's perspective is from divine to human. He begins by identifying Jesus as the Eternal Word, the Son of God. He calls the miracles of Jesus signs, because their primary purpose, for him, is to point to Jesus as the Son of God. The benefit to humans is secondary. Let's look at the miracle, or sign, He performed at the wedding in Cana.

The Timing – v. 1—3

The narrative begins with the phrase *on the third day* (**John 2:1**). If you trace this back, John makes it clear to the people he is not the Christ (**John 1:26—28**). On *the next day* John identifies Jesus as the *Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world* (v. 29). *The next day again* John points out Jesus as the Lamb of God and Jesus calls His first disciples (v. 35—42). *The next day*, Jesus goes to Galilee and calls Philip and Nathaniel (v. 43—51). Three days later, He goes to the wedding in Cana with His mother and these few disciples (**John 2:1—2**). For John, the miracle at the wedding in Cana was the culmination of Jesus' first week of ministry. Mirroring the week of creation, this sign shows He has power over creation.

The Faith of a Mother – v. 4—5

When Mary points out to Jesus that their friends have run out of wine, hinting that He do something about it, He replies, *“Woman, what does this have to do with Me? My hour has not yet come”* (v. 4). Jesus is not being rude to Mary. The word translated *woman* is a term of endearment. He is following the First Commandment, putting God first. Mary doesn't have in mind the things of God, but the things of man (see **Matthew 16:23**). But He also keeps the Law by honoring His mother and doing the act of charity she requests. Martin Luther says: *Mary clings tightly to her conviction. He is kind and will not let her suffer from desperate fear due to this blow. ... [God] is good and merciful, whether He presents Himself otherwise and says otherwise even all sense and feeling think otherwise* (**Lent Postil [1525]: Second Sunday after Epiphany**). This shows Mary's faith in her Son, the Son of God.

The Miracle – v. 6—8

Jesus has the servants bring *six stone jars used for the rite of purification* (v. 6). That was their only use. To use them for anything else would be a sacrilege. Jesus shows that He is over their ceremonial laws and customs. He has them *fill the jars to the brim* (v. 7) to show that this is pure water. He doesn't leave room to somehow sneak wine into the jars to mingle with the water, making a diluted wine. He doesn't make any magical gesture and the only words He says over them is to tell the servants to take some to the master of the feast and have him taste it.

The Response of the People – v. 9—10

When the master of the feast tastes it, it has *now become wine* (v. 8). The wine is of such good quality that the master of the feast can't believe the groom didn't serve this first. When Jesus provides, He provides the best.

The Miracle as Sign – v. 11

We have talked about this as a miracle, how it physically benefited human beings. This is what the servants saw. But this worked faith in the disciples. For them, they saw the sign that pointed to Jesus as the Son of God. They saw more than a miracle; they saw the glory of the Lord in the miracle. They saw the sign. *And His disciples believed in Him (v. 11)*. What is it to you? Martin Bucer, 16th Century German Reformed theologian and pastor said: *If only we too could read this and understand it in such a way that recognizing Christ's glory we might recognize our very Savior who, as He would not allow these guests to lack wine, He will not allow us to lack anything—especially spiritual goods—related to our salvation (Commentary on John 2)*. Do we see a miracle, or do we see the sign and His glory as the Son of God?

Means of Grace

There is another sign for us today, the sign of His body and blood in Holy Communion. Could not the Son of God who changed water into wine with a word deliver His blood in the wine of the Sacrament? The sign says: Jesus is the Son of God! Believe in Him!

*And the peace of God,
Which surpasses all understanding,
Will guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus.*
