The Best Is Yet to Come

Read the Text

2:1 “And the third day” The third day of what? The third day after Nathanael’s conversion in 1:43-51.

2:1 “There was a marriage in Cana of Galilee”. Let me give you an interesting insight in to Jewish wedding customs of our Lord’s day. Jewish law stated that a virgin was to be wedded on Wednesday and a widow on Thursday. The reason for this law was that the Sanhedrin (the Jewish judicial body) sat in court twice a week. They met on Monday and Thursday. If there was a dispute about the virginity of a wife after the marriage was consummated physically, the husband could come before the Sanhedrin the next day to make his case. If the husband could make his case, the marriage could be annulled or a divorce could be granted or, in some cases, he could have her stoned.

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Did it ever seem just a little strange to you that Jesus would pick a wedding as the place to launch His public ministry? Or that His first miracle would involve supplying refreshments at a wedding reception? Could He have picked something just a little more spectacular?

- If I had been the Lord’s PR rep at the time, and knowing that He was about to embark on His messianic career, I would have advised Him to start right out with a big bang. “Lord, do something Big...Something dramatic...Something that would be a big crowd pleaser.

- Maybe He could heal a man born blind. That’s never been done before! Or, better yet, cleanse a leper! That always goes over big!

- Or, if you really want to make a statement, raise someone from the dead!

Jesus would say, “I was thinking of turning water into wine.”

- I’d respond, “What? Why would you even want to do a miracle like that? Where’s the drama? Why, Lord. That won’t even make the news!”

Jesus is already declared to be the Creator God in John 1; Now in John 2 we see Him as the Transforming God.

- This miracle of turning water into wine teaches us about the transforming power of Jesus and the joy He brings to the transformed life.

- Our Lord’s first supernatural act proves He is the master of every imaginable situation.

- Jesus showed through this miracle that He has at His immediate disposal unlimited power to do anything He chooses to do.

Someone asked John Wesley how Jesus could turn water into wine and He answered, “Oh, that’s simple. The water took one look at Jesus, God’s glorious Son, and blushed.”

- One man who was saved after being a drunk for many years said, “I have no doubt that Jesus turned water into wine. I’ve seen Him turn beer into food for my family and shoes for my kids and I’ve seen Him turn a man who talked and acted like a fool into a saint who lives for God.”

Three things I want us to see as we study this miracle:

I. The Place of the Miracle  2:1-2

Our Lord’s first miracle was not at the temple or at a funeral. It was in a home where a wedding was taking place. Not at a fast, but at a feast!

- That tells me that Jesus enjoyed life. He enjoyed joyful, celebrated kinds of occasions. He was not a religious killjoy. Some think of Jesus as a Heavenly Policeman in the sky and if He sees us having fun, He says, “Stop it! That’s not allowed!”

- Listen, Jesus loved life. He said, “I am come that you might have life, and have it more abundantly.”

It tells me also that Jesus put His stamp of approval on God-ordained marriage- marriage between a godly man and a godly woman.

- Jesus ordained marriage and He ordained the home.

- We’re living in a day that says, “What difference does a piece of paper make? We’ll just live together” What Jesus approved of was a public commitment of spoken love and commitment to each other.

Notice that Jesus was invited to the wedding, both He and His disciples. Jesus needs to be invited to every wedding and should be the honored guest in every home.

Did you notice that although Jesus was already present, He was not consulted until a crisis arose?
A lot of problems could be prevented or solved if Jesus were the Lord of the home.
- One of frustrating things for me as a pastor is that couples wait until their marriage is almost gone and then they want the Lord to come and do a miracle in their home. He can work a miracle in their home, but how much better to let Him be Lord in the home from the start and day by day.

Folks, time is too short not to build your home upon Christ. Thomas Carlyle was one of the prolific writers in literature. He was constantly producing materials for publication. In order to get his manuscripts to the publisher faster, he hired a secretary. In time, Carlyle and his secretary were married. After their marriage, Mrs. Carlyle continued to labor by the side of her husband. One day, it was discovered that Mrs. Carlyle had an incurable disease. Even after the diagnosis, she continued her labors by her husband's side. Each week she grew weaker until at last she was confined to bed. The day came when she died. On the day of the funeral, Thomas Carlyle was in deep dejection and despondency as he walked slowly back through the rain and mud. Almost subconsciously, he made his way up the steps to his home, through the door, up the staircase and into the room where his wife had spent her days of confinement. He slowly sat down in the chair by the bedside and softly wept. After a few moments, he noticed his wife's diary on the bedside table. He picked it up and read the entries. On one page he read, "Thomas spent several hours with me today. It is like heaven when he is with me."

On another page, he read, "Thomas Carlyle did not spend very much time with me today. I wish he would spend more time with me."

On another day, he read, "Thomas Carlyle did not come to visit me at all today. I know he is busy, but I wish he would spend more time with me."

Page after page and entry after entry, he read until he could take it no longer. He put the book aside, dashed out of the house, out into the rain and mud, down the street to the cemetery and at the foot of a freshly covered grave, in tears, he said, "O honey, honey, I did not know."

For the Jews of that day, a wedding was the social event, not only of the year, but for the couple, of a lifetime. Even the poorest families would save and save to make sure the wedding for their children was a special occasion. In that day the wedding ceremony would take place, but they would not rush off to the honeymoon. The wedding feast would last for a week or ten days and the party food and drink was to last for the entire time. Wine was considered essential to the joyous reception. To run out of wine would be a great source of embarrassment and humiliating shame. But run out, they did!

**II. The Plea of His Mother 2:3-5**

Most scholars agree that Mary was related to this couple in some way and had some responsibility for the catering; therefore, she felt an obligation to deal with the shortage. That's why she felt free to give instructions to the servants.
- In fact, some scholars believe the bride was one of the Lord’s half-sisters (2:12).

Notice the term “woman” is not disrespectful. It is the same term He used as He addressed His mother with from the cross. The word means “dear lady”.
- The phrase, "What have I to do with thee," could better be translated, “What authority do you have over me?” He is indicating that now their relationship is changed, now that He has begun His public ministry, from a Family relationship to a Faith relationship. There was only one voice that had authority for His ears and that was the voice of God the Father. Jesus could not consent to her authority. He could only consent to His Heavenly Father's authority. That’s why Jesus gave her a gentle rebuke.

Jesus said, “Mine hour is not yet come.” What hour is Jesus referring to? He refers to this “hour” seven times in John (7:30; 8:20; 12:23, 27; 16:32; 17:1).
- The hour refers to the hour of humiliation and suffering when He would be delivered into the hands of sinners and be subjected to man’s will. Until that “hour”, He was not to be ordered by men. He was to be about doing His Father’s business, seeking only to do His Father’s will, not Mary’s or man’s.

Mary’s reply shows that she was not hurt by what Jesus said. She understood what He was saying.
- Mary’s instructions to the servants indicated that she believed Jesus was going to do something about the fact that there was no wine.

Listen to Mary's advice - the best advice that could be given to men on earth: “Whatsoever He says unto you, do it.”
- Here’s the secret for any miracle: If Jesus tells you to do it, just do it! Sometimes it may not make sense to you, but do it anyway.
a. "Whatsoever He says unto you, do it."
-That didn't make sense to the servants. They didn't need water, they needed wine.
b. "Whatsoever He says unto you, do it."
c. "Whatsoever He says unto you, do it."
d. "Whatsoever He says unto you, Do It."

Jesus could have performed the miracle without the servants, but He chose to involve these men in this miracle as much as possible.
-They could not turn the water into wine, but they could fill the pots with water.
-He gave the servants an opportunity and the blessing of helping in the work of the Lord so they could receive a blessing.

III. The Power of the Master  2:6-10

These pots were used for ceremonial cleansing - washing pots where folks would wash their hands and faces and sometimes, their feet - not drinking pots!
-Each pot held between 20 and 30 gallons - conservatively we'll say 25 gallons each. That's 150 gallons of water.

Jesus said, “Fill them up to the brim with water.”
-It was to be a 100% effort. That's the kind of effort and commitment that is required in serving the Lord Jesus. If there is no “brim” dedication and obedience in our lives, there will be no “brim” blessings.

-Nor was it an easy task. They could not stick a water hose in each one of the pots and fill it. They had to go to the well time and time again, load after load, and carry them back to the house.

Notice too, that Jesus didn’t draw attention to Himself, but spoke softly to the servants. It was a behind the scenes kind of miracle.
-He did not command the water to be turned into wine. He didn’t pray over it or touch it. He simply willed it from a distance and it took place.
-When the servants dipped the cup in the pots, they got water. But when the guest tasted it, it was wine. Not just wine, The Best Wine!!
 _ Jesus by-passed all the normal and natural process of making wine - cultivating, planting, growing, gathering the grapes, the time involved. It was an instant, full-grown miracle - enough to make 2,400 servings.

Some will miss the miracle if they are not careful:

(1) Some see only the wine
-All some want to know is, was it fermented; if so, then it must be alright to drink; To draw that conclusion proves the depth of one’s carnality.
- I’ll tell you this: what Jesus made, you’ll not find in any store in Mississippi,
-While I’ve never tasted beer or wine in my life, I’d drink all that Jesus makes, because it will not hurt you.

(2) All some see is the water pots

(3) All some see is the gentle rebuke to Mary.

The key to the miracle is two fold:

1) Jesus is in the Transforming Business
-He transforms water into wine and He can transform you and me into His image.
-Some one said: Nature forms us; Sin deforms us; Education informs us; Penitentiaries reforms us, but only Jesus transforms us.

It took a miracle to put the stars in place
It took a miracle to hang the world in space,
But when He saved my soul, cleansed and made me whole,
It took a miracle of love and grace!
_We can be transformed by the touch of the Master’s hand._

(2) Jesus always saves the Best till last...The Best is yet to come - 2:10
-God and Satan are exact opposites.
Satan likes to bring out his big guns up front. He offers his most enticing, appealing stuff in the beginning, especially when you are young.

The devil is very good at packaging his wares. He can make very bad things look really cool. He slides it in front of you and says, "Hey, you've got to do this. You have to try this for yourself. Don't pay attention to the church crowd. What they say may have been alright for their generation, but man, you've got to live it up now. Don't miss anything. You're only young once and you only live once. Grab for the best now, while you can get it."

Listen young people: You determine the end of your life at the beginning of it. You decide where you're going to be 20 years from now TODAY by the choices you make and the roads you take.

As the years go by and the experiences build, you begin reaping what you've sown. Gal. 6:7

You can either reap the bitter end of living sinfully, or you can enjoy the sweet fruit of a godly life.

A woman was diagnosed with a terminal illness and had been given three months to live. As she was getting her things in order she contacted her pastor and asked him to come to her house to discuss certain aspects of her final wishes. She told the pastor which songs she wanted sung at the service, which Bible verses she would like read, and which dress she wanted to be buried in. The woman also requested to be buried with her favorite Bible. Everything was in order and the pastor was leaving when the woman suddenly remembered something very important to her. "Oh, there's one more thing," she said excitedly. "What's that?" came the pastor's reply. "This is very important," the woman continued. "I want to be buried with a fork in my right hand." The pastor stood looking at the woman not knowing quite what he should say. "Well, to be honest I'm puzzled by the request," said the pastor. So the woman explained.

"In all my years of attending church socials and potluck dinners, I always remember that when the dishes of the main course were being cleared, someone would inevitably lean over and say, "Keep your fork" It was my favorite part because I knew that something better was coming like velvety chocolate cake or deep-dish apple pie, something wonderful and with substance! So I just want people to see me in the casket with a fork in my hand, and I want them to ask, "What's with the fork?" Then I want you to tell them, "Keep your fork. The best is yet to come."

The pastor's eyes welled up with tears of joy. He knew this would be one of the last times he would see her before her death. But he also knew that the woman had a better grasp of heaven than he did. She KNEW that something better was coming.

At the funeral, people walked by the woman's casket, and they saw the pretty dress she was wearing and her favorite Bible and the fork in her right hand. Everybody asked, "What's with the fork?" During his message, the pastor told the people about the conversation he had with the woman before she died. And he told them about the fork and that they probably would not be able to stop thinking about it either. He was right. Who would want to forget that we can embrace the future, a future of hope because we are in a relationship with God?

For the Christian, the best is yet to come.

If you're not a Christian, the worst is yet to come.

I don't care how much fun you think you're having at this moment, or what great things you're experiencing.

The Bible says there will be a reaping for what you sow. There is a future judgment and you will be held accountable for how you lived your life and- most importantly -what you did with Jesus.

The miracle at Cana took place because Jesus was invited.

Jesus will never barge into your life - uninvited.

He waits to be asked. Once you invite Him into your life, you have absolutely no idea the difference He can make in your life today.