

Jesus Manifesting Forth His Glory.

Text: John 2:1-11

Suggested Hymns:

47, 354, 588, 159, 164

1) As The Almighty Creator

2) As The Ever-Present Helper In Need

3) As The Promised Saviour Of The World

The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, be with you all. Amen.

The text for our sermon today is John 2:1–11, ¹ *On the third day there was a wedding in Cana of Galilee, and the mother of Jesus was there.* ² *Now both Jesus and His disciples were invited to the wedding.* ³ *And when they ran out of wine, the mother of Jesus said to Him, “They have no wine.”* ⁴ *Jesus said to her, “Woman, what does your concern have to do with Me? My hour has not yet come.”* ⁵ *His mother said to the servants, “Whatever He says to you, do it.”*

⁶ *Now there were set there six waterpots of stone, according to the manner of purification of the Jews, containing twenty or thirty gallons apiece.* ⁷ *Jesus said to them, “Fill the waterpots with water.”* *And they filled them up to the brim.* ⁸ *And He said to them, “Draw some out now, and take it to the master of the feast.”* *And they took it.*

⁹ *When the master of the feast had tasted the water that was made wine, and did not know where it came from (but the servants who had drawn the water knew), the master of the feast called the bridegroom.* ¹⁰ *And he said to him, “Every man at the beginning sets out the good wine, and when the guests have well drunk, then the inferior. You have kept the good wine until now!”*

¹¹ *This beginning of signs Jesus did in Cana of Galilee, and manifested His glory; and His disciples believed in Him.* (NKJV)

Lord God, heavenly Father, sanctify us through Your truth. Your Word is truth. Amen.

Dear friends in Christ,

All the miracles of Christ, the thirty-three recorded and the great number of unrecorded miracles, were performed for the purpose pointed out in John 20:30–31. ³⁰ *And truly Jesus did many other signs in the presence of His disciples, which are not written in this book;* ³¹ *but these are written that you*

may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in His name.¹

People certainly noticed Jesus performing miracles. We read in Luke 23:8, ⁸ *Now when Herod saw Jesus, he was exceedingly glad; for he had desired for a long time to see Him, because he had heard many things about Him, and he hoped to see some miracle done by Him.*

And we read in Luke 11:16, ¹⁶ *Others, testing Him, sought from Him a sign from heaven.* And in John 2:18, ¹⁸ *So the Jews answered and said to Him, “What sign do You show to us, since You do these things?”* From these text we can clearly see that the purpose of Jesus doing miracles and signs was always to reveal Himself as the Son of God and Saviour of the world.

This was also the purpose of the miracle at Cana. It is the first miracle of Jesus, and the evangelist John tells us that He “*manifested His glory; and His disciples believed in Him.*” This is truly an Epiphany text. The intent of the Epiphany season is to show forth the Lord’s glory. May the Lord bless our meditation.

1. Jesus Manifested His Glory At The Wedding Of Cana As The Almighty Creator

St. John, in introducing this Gospel, carefully fixes the time: “*the third day.*” In the previous chapter we learn of Jesus calling His first disciples. What were their early impressions. Philip said to Nathanael, “*Come and see.*” ⁴⁷ *Jesus saw Nathanael coming toward Him, and said of him, “Behold, an Israelite indeed, in whom is no deceit!”*

⁴⁸ *Nathanael said to Him, “How do You know me?” Jesus answered and said to him, “Before Philip called you, when you were under the fig tree, I saw you.”* ⁴⁹ *Nathanael answered and said to Him, “Rabbi, You are the Son of God! You are the King of Israel!”*

Jesus then promised to Nathanael: “*Because I said to you, ‘I saw you under the fig tree,’ do you believe? You will see greater things than these.*”

Jesus then returned from Jordan to Galilee. Jesus and His five newly called disciples were invited to a wedding in Cana, most likely among the friends and relatives of Mary.

Mary, who seems to have been on an intimate footing with the members of the household, is aware of the shortage of wine and tries to spare the bridal couple of the shame of not having provided for the material comforts of their guests.

She remembers the strange words of the shepherds, of the Wise Men, of Simeon and Anna, and the words which Jesus spoke to her in the Temple when He was twelve years old, and undoubtedly also knew of His baptism in the Jordan River.

Hence the statement *“They have no wine”* became a petition for help in this extremity. Mary had an implicit faith that help would come. Seemingly unconcerned about that strange remark of Jesus, *“Woman, what does your concern have to do with Me? My hour has not yet come,”* she instructed the servants to heed every command of Jesus.

A command was soon to come. But what strange orders! *“Fill the waterpots with water.” And they filled them up to the brim. ⁸ And He said to them, “Draw some out now, and take it to the master of the feast.”* But stranger still is the effect of these actions. The miracle of turning water into wine. This great miracle shows the creating power of Jesus.

The hymnist writes,²

At Cana this first His power is shown;
His might the blushing waters own
And, changing, as He speaks the word,
Flow wine, obedient to their Lord.

No word of man has such power. St. John correctly states, *“we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.”*³ Even here the glory of the Lord was shown forth. Many other evidences were to follow. The disciples were convinced that Jesus is the almighty God. We read in Matthew 8:27, ²⁷ *“So the men marveled, saying, “Who can this be, that even the winds and the sea obey Him?”*⁴

And in John 6:69, ⁶⁹ *“Also we have come to believe and know that You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.”* And likewise in Matthew 16:16, ¹⁶

Simon Peter answered and said, “You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.”

Nicodemus also realised that Jesus was sent by God as we read in John 3:2, *² This man came to Jesus by night and said to Him, “Rabbi, we know that You are a teacher come from God; for no one can do these signs that You do unless God is with him.”*

The Jews,⁵ the centurion under the cross,⁶ and countless others knew that the miracles and signs done by Jesus could only be done by God. The centurion made the statement, *“Truly this was the Son of God!”*

The evangelists and apostles speak of Jesus as the almighty God and Creator.⁷ However, many people in our day seek to rob Jesus of His glory. What folly! Jesus is Lord of the universe. All creation must ultimately serve Him and His glorious kingdom.

2. Jesus Manifested His Glory At The Wedding Of Cana As The Ever-Present Helper In Need

The miracle at Cana also reveals Jesus as the ever present Helper in need. Because Jesus is the almighty God, no situation can arise in your life which is beyond His power.⁸ We read in Luke 1:37, *³⁷ For with God nothing will be impossible.”*

The Hymnist writes,⁹

On Him place thy reliance
If thou wouldst be secure;
His work thou must consider
If thine is to endure.

No bread? no money? no work? sick in body and mind? worried about the future? Jesus who changed water to wine, who fed 5,000 with a few loaves and two fish,¹⁰ who healed the sick, cleansed the lepers, raised the dead, is able to care for you in all your distresses. No need is too great.

Therefore, as we read in 1 Peter 5:7, *⁷ cast all your care upon Him, for He cares for you.* And in Philippians 4:6, *⁶ Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God.¹¹*

But what about little troubles, our small, petty cares? Should we trouble Jesus with these small and non-essential things? The first miracle was one where Jesus used His power not to supply essentials, but to help a bridal couple out of an embarrassing situation. Wine was non-essential and is considered a luxury; nevertheless the Saviour was not deaf to the plea of Mary.

Is Jesus able to help? Yes. But is Jesus always willing? What about His answer to Mary? At first reading it may sound like a severe rebuke. To us His addressing Mary as “*woman*” sounds especially harsh. But this was actually a term of respect and was constantly used when queens and other persons of distinction were addressed.

Jesus addresses Mary with a title of respect rather than with the affectionate appellation “mother” because in His work as Saviour she had nothing in common with Him. Our text says, *what does your concern have to do with Me?* Then Jesus adds the significant words, *My hour has not yet come.*

It sounds like a blunt refusal; yet Mary sees a gleam of hope in the words “*not yet.*” To this she clings in firm, childlike faith. Confidently she prepares to receive the blessing. What a faith!

Her faith is not put to shame. Scripture says in 1 John 5:14, *“Now this is the confidence that we have in Him, that if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us.”*¹²

The Lord’s “*not yet*” is also to test and strengthen us. If it is not yet the time, then let us learn to wait patiently and to submit ourselves to His good will.

The Hymnist writes,¹³

He knows the time for joy, and truly
Will send it when He sees it meet;
When He has tried and purged thee thoroughly
And finds thee free from all deceit,
He comes to thee all unaware,
And makes thee own His loving care.

Nor think amid the heat of trial
That God has cast thee off unheard;

That he whose hopes meet no denial
Must surely be of God preferred;
The passing days great changes bring,
And set a bound to everything.

Note also that the Lord helps us beyond our expectations and beyond our needs. Much more wine was supplied than the needs of the married couple required. This was a rich wedding present. Remember that Jesus *“is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think,”* as we learn in Ephesians 3:20.

Those who are contemplating entering the holy estate of marriage and those who are married should especially derive comfort from this story. The Lord is ready, able, and willing to help in all times of need. Invite Jesus not only as a Guest to the wedding, but have Him as a daily Guest in your home.

The Hymnist writes,¹⁴

Lord, who at Cana’s wedding feast
Didst as a guest appear,
Thou dearer far than earthly guest,
Vouchsafe Thy presence here;
For holy Thou indeed dost prove
The marriage vow to be,
Proclaiming it a type of love
Between the Church and Thee.

Believe in Jesus, your ever present Help in time of need. Turn to Him in prayer. We read in Psalm 50:15, *“Call upon Me in the day of trouble; I will deliver you, and you shall glorify Me.”*¹⁵

3. Jesus Manifested His Glory At The Wedding Of Cana As The Promised Saviour Of The World

There lies a still deeper significance in our text. John and the other disciples who attended the wedding had been called to follow to Jesus only a few days before. Even now they had heard and seen many wonderful things. John and Andrew had spent happy hours with Jesus.

The result of that first visit was that Andrew said to Peter: ***“We have found the Messiah.”***¹⁶ The next day Philip said to his friend Nathanael, ***“We have found Him of whom Moses in the law, and also the prophets, wrote — Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph.”***¹⁷ And this miracle brought an additional proof that their faith in Jesus had not been misplaced.

This was indeed the promised Saviour for whom they had longed and waited, the Saviour in whom all the prophecies are fulfilled.

These prophecies include, Psalm 14:7, ⁷ ***Oh, that the salvation of Israel would come out of Zion!*** And Psalm 130:8, ⁸ ***And He shall redeem Israel From all his iniquities.*** And Jeremiah 23:6, ⁶ ***In His days Judah will be saved, And Israel will dwell safely; Now this is His name by which He will be called: THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS.***¹⁸

Sin, the great barrier, is removed by Jesus.¹⁹ Faith in Jesus means faith in His redemption. Scripture says in John 3:36, ³⁶ ***He who believes in the Son has everlasting life.*** Note that this is present tense.

This real glory of Jesus is also revealed in Isaiah 53:11, ¹¹ ***He shall see the labor of His soul, and be satisfied. By His knowledge My righteous Servant shall justify many, For He shall bear their iniquities.***

Jesus is the only Saviour of all people, Jew and Gentile. The theme of the new song in heaven is recorded in Revelation 5:9, 12, ***“You are worthy to take the scroll, And to open its seals; For You were slain, And have redeemed us to God by Your blood Out of every tribe and tongue and people and nation.”***

... ***“Worthy is the Lamb who was slain To receive power and riches and wisdom, And strength and honor and glory and blessing!”***

So in summary, today we have seen Jesus manifesting forth His glory as the almighty Creator, as our ever-present Helper in need, and as the promised Saviour of the world.

May we, too, see this glory of Jesus and be numbered among the vast throng that will sing the new song to the praise and glory of our Redeemer. Amen.

The peace of God, which passes all understanding, will keep our hearts and minds, in Christ Jesus. Amen.

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- ¹ See also John 11:42
- ² ELHB 180 v 4. “The star proclaims the King is here”
- ³ John 1:14
- ⁴ And Mark 4:41
- ⁵ John 11:47-48
- ⁶ Matt. 27:54
- ⁷ John 1:3; 1 Cor. 8:6; Eph. 3:9; Col. 1:16; Heb. 1:1,2; Rev. 5:12.
- ⁸ Matt. 28:18
- ⁹ Hymn 409 v 2
- ¹⁰ Matthew 14:18-21
- ¹¹ See also Mark 11:24
- ¹² See also James 1:6-7, Mark 11:23, Mark 9:23
- ¹³ Hymn 407 v 4 & 5
- ¹⁴ Hymn 582 v 1, See also 588 v 1 & 2
- ¹⁵ See also Matthew 11:28
- ¹⁶ John 1:41
- ¹⁷ John 1:45
- ¹⁸ See also Isaiah 1:18, Isa 53:4-5
- ¹⁹ See Isa. 59:2; Matt. 8:17