

Street Magic 3 – Making Lack Disappear

Introduction:

This does not to be one of Jesus more spectacular miracles like raising the dead, walking on water, feed the multitude. But John felt it as important enough to list first.

Text is from John 2. Summary:

Jesus is invited to a wedding, they run out of beverages, someone needs to make a “beer run”, Jesus says, “*it’s on Me*”, and He turns water into wine.

This is Jesus very first miracle. It is what He is going to be known by. “*Oh, you’re that guy who...*” I would have picked something a little more spectacular.

Yet John sees this miracle as so important he counts down the days prior to its occurrence and then states it is the thing that convinces the disciples He’s God.

Remember, John wrote later than the other Gospels. He didn’t need to repeat Mark, Matthew and Luke. John was writing more of a commentary, seeing the bigger picture. He is not just reporting the facts like Luke, he is interpreting them, adding all the key details.

Anyone can report the news but who is it that knows what it means.

John’s gospel is built around 7 miracles, followed by 7 teachings, and 7 “I AM” statements.

John only covers 21 days in Jesus 3-1/2 years of ministry. He devotes 10 chapters to one week and 1/3 of the verses in John cover 1 day.

John understood the symbolism and what God was communicating and you have to read it carefully and understand all the little nuisances especially in this story. This is another reason we start new believers in Mark rather than John.

Let’s look at this last verse.

He thus revealed his glory, and his disciples put their faith in him. John 2:11

Would simply turning water into wine make you lay down everything and follow someone?

MY TRICK: Water into wine and back to water.

Let's start at the top and maybe gain some new insights into this passage and the heart of God.

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." John 2:1-3

"Third day" represents how early after Jesus baptism and another significant event that would reveal God's power and love on a third day, the resurrection.

These wedding feasts normally lasted seven days. People would travel from a great distance.

To run out of wine would have been an embarrassment to the wedding party and maybe Mary.

"Dear woman, why do you involve me?" Jesus replied. "My time has not yet come." John 2:4

Not angry or condescending but simply stating that our time is not always God's time.

God's perspective is always eternal. He operates outside our limitations to time and space. Like you or I opening a book at any point.

His mother said to the servants, "Do whatever he tells you." John 2:5

Faith can provoke God to action.

Obedience was necessary just as it is with us. Faith without obedience is useless.

Example: God promises to meet our needs, but He tells us to give and our gift becomes like a seed. If we don't plant a seed He will not make it grow and bring a harvest.

Nearby stood six stone water jars, the kind used by the Jews for ceremonial washing, each holding from twenty to thirty gallons. John 2:6

Six = number of man.

Stone = cold, dead, always symbolizes man before salvation.

Empty = water represented life and in this case forgiveness.

These pots would be filled with water and you would dip your fingers in them before you came into someone's home. It as a sign of cleansing from sin so you won't contaminate the home.

Expression: "I'm washing my hands of this" from Pontius Pilate do this.

The spiritual picture John is painting is that the jars represent us. Before we come to know God we are our own god, stone cold hearts and empty inside, just existing. See **Ezek. 36:25-27.**

Through religion we can try to clean ourselves up a little, but never enough to feel right in God's presence.

Jesus said to the servants, "Fill the jars with water"; so they filled them to the brim. John 2:7

Now we see a picture of new life coming into view. The water filling those pots represented life to these people. Jesus said that salvation would be like "a well within us springing up to eternal life." See **John 7:37-39.**

When we come to Christ He fills our life, He quenches that thirst. Same analogy Jesus uses two chapters later with Samaritan woman at the well. "Never thirst again", He tells her.

Then he told them, "Now draw some out..." John 2:8

This water must be poured out. To stay in the pots it would stagnate. This I proved when I lived by myself. I was big on dishes "soaking". In a few days the water had broken down the stuff inside but now it had become part of a bigger and smellier problem.

Now here is one of the key thoughts...

...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. John 2:8-9

When the water was poured out it became wine. Wine always represents the Holy Spirit. When we obey God in faith and give, or serve, or love, or prayer, it releases God through our lives. We are full of the water of life, but when it is poured out to others it's not just US, it GOD!

That is why giving someone a cup of cold water is nice, but giving it, “in the name of Jesus” has power and a reward.

Illustration: This week I was on a Fire Dept. call on a cardiac arrest the man died. I spoke with family and responded in all the right ways, offering comfort, making sure they were safe and had information and prepared them for what they may re-experience and how to help their children. I did everything by the book and just as I have been trained.

When I left God rebuked me and said, “you didn't give Me any opportunity to minister to them.” I didn't pray, or offer God's Word. It was nice and compassionate, but there was no power in it.

Something amazing here is that Jesus does a creative miracle. He doesn't just start with a grape or even a seed. He started with nothing. Only God can do a creative miracle.

God doesn't need stuff when He does it but when He works through us He usually asks us for something, some time, a talent, some of our treasures. He used Moses rod, David's sling, your gifting or resources.

He did not realize where it had come from, though the servants who had drawn the water knew. Then he called the bridegroom aside¹⁰ 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.” John 2:9-10

We must ask the question, why? It seems kind of wasteful or even excessive to use God's power to make 120-180 gallons of wine, doesn't it?

But God is creator, He meets our needs, “according the riches of His glory.” God isn’t cheap.

He loves to lavish gifts on His children, not spoil them. He wants us to have an abundance so we can give it away.

Paul said, ***Now he who supplies seed to the sower and bread for food will also supply and increase your store of seed and will enlarge the harvest of your righteousness. ¹¹You will be made rich in every way so that you can be generous on every occasion. 2 Cor. 9:10-11***

God is concerned about all of our problems. He doesn’t disregard us the way we can do with our children and look at their problems as insignificant compared to our problems.

“It’s only puppy-love.” What if God had the same perspective? War, terrorism, global warming, trying to figure out Oprah’s theology.

No a good parent takes time, listens, makes the child’s issue important to them as well. Takes their mediocre effort and displays in the most important place in the entire house, **the fridge.**

Those little problems become big problems when we don’t “bother” God with them. Like a child trying to untie a knot and makes it worse by the time they bring it to you.

This, the first of his miraculous signs, Jesus performed at Cana in Galilee. He thus revealed his glory, and his disciples put their faith in him. John 2:11

What can we learn with the disciples as we watch this miracle take place?

- The disciples understood the empty, stone, cold pots represented them.
- As they watched wine flow out where water had filled the pots they understood this meant God could work through them.
- When Jesus meant what was a seemingly small need they understood that He cares about the smallest details and needs in our lives.
- They understood from Old Testament prophecies like Amos 9:13-14, Genesis 49:10-11, and Isaiah 62:4-5 that when Messiah came He would bring an abundance of wine.

- They also understood this wedding represented the Marriage Supper of the Lamb when we as the bride of Christ will be brought to a heavenly wedding feast.

I say the disciples saw of this, but they still had their doubts, just like us.

After Jesus death Peter is disillusioned and decides to go back to what he knows. When he was in charge of his life he was a fisherman.

It is while he is out in the boat that Jesus prepares another meal for him by the shore and helps restore his faith.

Closing:

Maybe you've disillusioned by church and religion.

You've done a lot of "ceremonial washing." A lot of, "God I'm sorry, again."

Like peter you're fishing. You feel empty, cold, and gotten a little hardened by the blows of life.

Be restored today in relationship with God. Let Him fill you with living water so your life can have meaning. Have the presence of God with you always.

In Psalm 23 David said, ***"I will not fear for you are with me."***

Then offer yourself, your time, your talent, your treasures to God by reaching out and serving others. Telling them what god has done for you. Let the Holy Spirit turn your ordinary water into wine.

Trust God in the big and small things, He cares about all the details of your life.

Hopefully, now you by seeing into this passage you can stand there with the disciples and understand why Jesus revealed the glory or the greatness of God and put your faith in him the way they did.

Prayer