

Hello everyone. Hope you are staying warm! Have a great week!!!
Pastor Don

John 2:1-12 "Saving the
best for last" Jan. 20, 2013

The preacher finished his sermon on temperance with these words, "If I had all the beer in the world, I'd take it and throw it into the river." "if I had all the wine in the world, I'd take it and throw it into the river." And then, finally, he said, "And if I had all the whiskey in the world, I'd take it and throw it into the river." He sat down. The song leader then stood very cautiously announced with a pleasant smile, "For our closing Hymn let us sing 'Shall We Gather At the River.'"

Little Johnny was asked by his mother what he had learned in Sunday school. Today our teacher told us how God sent Moses behind enemy lines on a rescue mission to lead the Israelites out of Egypt. When he got to the Red Sea, his army built a pontoon bridge and all the people walked across safely. Then, he radioed headquarters for an air strike. They sent bombers to blow up the bridge when the Egyptian army was trying to cross. They all drowned in the red sea and the Israelites were saved. Now Johnny, mother asked, is that really what your teacher taught you? Well, no, but, if I told it the way the teacher did, you'd never believe it!

Some miracles are hard to believe aren't they? That is where faith comes in. Christians walk by faith, not by sight.

An alcoholic became a believer, was asked how he could possibly believe all the nonsense in the Bible about miracles. "You don't believe that Jesus changed the water into wine do you?" "I sure do, because in our house Jesus changed the whiskey into furniture."

What miracles have we seen? Have we told others about them? Do you think people believed the servants when they told others that they filled the water pots with water and Jesus turned it into wine? It is our job to tell about Jesus; whether others believe or not is up to them. The question is do we believe and do we tell?

This is the 3rd and final epiphany or manifestation of Christ's Lordship before He begins His 3 year mission to save the world. This miracle over nature proves that there is truly nothing our God can't do. All we have to do is trust Him and obey Him. Do we? Pray.

John says on the 3rd day there was a wedding in Cana. 3rd day from when? It was the 3rd day since the last entry. So today's scripture takes place 3 days after chapter 1 ends. Chapter 1 was a busy chapter. John introduces Jesus to us as the word of God in the flesh. Then we meet John the Baptist, he baptizes Jesus and introduces Him to the world as the Lamb of God. Then Jesus starts collecting disciples.

Chapter 2 starts with Jesus and His disciples at a wedding. Since Mary, Jesus' mother was there too, it is probable that the couple was somehow related to her; especially since she was so concerned when they ran out of wine. A wedding lasted a week to ten days in Jesus' time. Running out of wine was not a good thing. It was quite embarrassing and the humiliation could scar the couple for life. Do we care about the concerns of others? Mary did, she asked Jesus to do something to help them.

Jesus teaches us a good lesson; you are never too big to help and obey your mother. It seems like He is arguing with her. He says woman what does your concern have to do with me. But the term woman is not an insult or a slight; it is term of respectful address. Calling her woman instead of mother was a way of distancing himself from her and the rest of his earthly relatives. He was showing that He came for all people and would not give preferential treatment to those He was related to by birth.

He tells Mary that My hour has not yet come; what does that mean? My hour refers to Jesus' death and resurrection. Jesus was on a time table. Nothing happened without God's approval. Every miracle, speech, and action Jesus did, God approved of and timed perfectly. He was about to perform His 1st miracle.

In verse 11 John calls this a miracle a sign. There are 8 signs in the gospel of John. This is the 1st one. It shows Christ's power over nature. Only God can create something from nothing. The Messianic age had been described by the prophets as one where the wine will flow freely. Jer.31:12 "Therefore they shall come and sing in the height of Zion, Streaming to the goodness of the Lord—For wheat and new wine and oil, For the young of the flock and the herd; Their souls shall be like a well-watered garden, And they shall sorrow no more at all." Hosea 14:7 "Those who dwell under his shadow shall return; They shall be revived like grain, And grow like a vine. Their scent shall be like the wine of Lebanon. Amos 9:13-14 "Behold, the days are coming," says the Lord, "When the plowman shall overtake the reaper, and the treader of grapes him who sows seed; the mountains shall drip with sweet wine, and all the hills shall flow with it. 14 I will bring back the captives of my people Israel; they shall build the waste cities and inhabit them; they shall plant vineyards and drink wine from them; they

shall also make gardens and eat fruit from them." With these verses in mind, it is appropriate that Christ's 1st miracle or sign should be to turn water into wine. With His eyes always on the cross Jesus' statement that His hour has not yet come could be His way of showing us that the pain of the cross must come before the blessings of the millennium.

Mary tells the servants to do what ever Jesus tells them to do. Did she expect a miracle? We don't know what she thought; only that she trusted Jesus to handle the situation.

Do we trust Jesus to handle the situations that we give to Him? Do we ask for His help and trust His answer or do we continue to tell Him what we want done? Mary submitted to Jesus' way of doing things. She let go and let God; do we?

Jesus said to fill the 6 stone water pots with water. These huge water pots held 20-30 gallons of water which was used for purification. Jewish tradition required Jews to wash their hands not only before they ate but between courses and after wards as well.

Next Jesus said to draw some out and take it to the master of the feast. Notice Jesus did not taste it first or even look at it. He knew what He was doing, no need for Him to check His work. He is confident in His work, are we?

The water was changed into wine to be drank, not just left set in the huge water pots. Christ's work is to be used, not just left setting on the shelf some where. Christ gives us talents to use for Him, not bury in the ground. Are we using our God given talents for His glory and His benefit?

In Jesus's day, weddings had a guest who served as master of ceremonies, called the governor of the feast. This person was responsible for seating arrangements and making sure everything went smoothly. The governor of this wedding was shocked by this latest wine he had been given to drink. He called the bridegroom over and said "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!"

The master of the feast told the bride groom that he had saved the best for last. Neither one of them knew where this wine came from, only Jesus, His disciples and those who drew the water knew the truth. Christians know the truth; do we share it with those who don't? Is Jesus our last

resort? Do we wait until we have exhausted all other options before we turn to Him? Do we save the best for last?

We need to start with Jesus, He is the best. It doesn't get any better than Him. Nothing that this world has to offer can compare with what He can give us. Jesus has what is best for us and He has our best interests at heart. Do we trust Him? Do we obey him?

Jesus truly does save the best for last. Our Christian walk is a long journey that just keeps on getting better. The longer we walk with Jesus the closer we get to Him. Then one day He takes us home to live in a place He built just for us. Jesus said in John 14:2-3

"In My Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. 3 And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also." Our life on earth is to get us ready to live in heaven. Are we ready for heaven?

All of Christ's miracles were real, yet at the same time symbolic. They were signs of what Christ can do for us. The prophets said the Messiah would heal the blind, the deaf, the lame, and the leper. Jesus did these things and more. When He opened the eyes of the blind, He was symbolically opening our eyes to spiritual truths. When He opened deaf ears, He was opening our ears to the words of God. By making the lame walk, He was putting us on the road to salvation. When he healed the lepers, He was curing us of sin.

Only God could cure a leper; only Jesus can wash away our sin. All of Christ's miracles were meant to deepen and strengthen people's faith. Faith comes by hearing and hearing by the word of God. In Jesus' day people would tell everyone about the miracles they saw. Do we tell what Jesus has done for us? Miracles are not just displays of God's power; they are a way of passing on His love, grace, hope and blessings to others. All we have to do is share. Do we share our Jesus? Do we share what He has done and is doing for us? Do we bring other people to Him so He can help them?

A miracle has been defined as an event occurring in the natural world, observed by the senses, produced by divine power, without any adequate human or natural cause, the purpose of which is to reveal the will of God and to do good to man." A little Sunday school girl defined a miracle this way "Some thing we can't do, but Jesus can."

T. H. Allen describes a miracle like this in a poem he wrote. "Whatsoe'er He bids you, do it!" Though you may not understand; Yield to Him complete obedience, then you'll see His mighty hand. `Fill the water pots with water'- fill them to the very brim; He will honor all your

trusting—Leave the miracle to Him. Bring to Christ your loaves and fishes, though they be but few and small; He will use the weaker vessels— Give to Him your little all. Do you ask how many thousands can be fed with food so slim; Listen to the Master's blessing, Leave the miracle to Him. O ye Christians, learn the lesson! Are you struggling all the way? Cease your trying, change to trusting, and then you'll triumph every day. `Whatsoe'er He bids you, do it!' Fill the pots up to the brim, but remember 'tis His battle— Leave the miracle to Him."

Do we leave the battle in Jesus' hands? Do we trust and obey His commands? Are we looking for miracles? If He tells us to fill the pot with water and take it to the master of the feast will we do it? Do we really believe that God saves the best for last?

Amen, let's pray.