

Miracles of Christ - Part 2

by Charles Leiter

In this sermon, Charles Leiter explores the significance of Jesus' first miracle at Cana, emphasizing its message about the transformation from emptiness to abundant life through faith in Christ.

Duration: 40:42

Scripture: John 10:10

Topics: "Jesus Miracles", "Faith Obedience"

Description

This sermon delves into the significance of Jesus' first miracle at the wedding in Cana, highlighting the transformation from water to wine as a symbol of turning dead religion into abundant life. It emphasizes the quality and quantity of the life Jesus offers, portraying it as the best and overflowing with glory. The obedience and faith displayed by the servants in filling the water pots reflect the process of God fulfilling our prayers step by step, even when it seems illogical to us.

Transcript

Well, if you turn in your Bibles to John chapter 2, and we will read verses 1 through 11. On the third day there was a wedding in Cana of Galilee. And the mother of Jesus was there, and Jesus also was invited and his disciples to the wedding.

And when the wine gave out, the mother of Jesus said to him, they have no wine. And Jesus said to her, woman, what do I have to do with you? My hour has not yet come. His mother said to the servants, whatever he says to you, do it.

Now there were six stone water pots set there for the Jewish custom of purification, containing 20 or 30 gallons each. Jesus said to them, fill the water pots with water. And they filled them up to the brim.

And he said to them, draw some out now and take it to the head waiter. And they took it to him. And when the head waiter tasted the water which had become wine, and did not know where it came from, but the servants who had drawn the water knew, the head waiter called the bridegroom and said to him, every man serves the good wine first, and when men have drunk freely, then that which is poor.

You have kept the good wine until now. This beginning of his signs Jesus did in Cana of Galilee, and manifested his glory, and his disciples believed in him. This beginning of his signs Jesus did in Cana of Galilee, and manifested his glory, and his disciples believed in him.

We considered last night the ministry and life of the Lord Jesus. And we saw that it was a ministry of miracles. And what we want to do in this session is to look at one of those miracles, the first miracle of his public ministry.

You might say this was the opening statement of his public ministry. Before we get into this, I want to just talk a little bit about the various Greek words that are translated in some way miracle. One of the words is a word that is translated wonders in English.

Unless you see signs and wonders, you will not believe. So that's a separate word, wonders. There's another word that's translated, it means mighty acts or acts of power.

And sometimes it's translated as miracles or mighty acts. He did not do many mighty works there because of their unbelief, that word. And then the Lord Jesus referred to his miracles simply as his works.

He healed a man, he said, I did one work and you all marveled. But the word used here in verse 11 is translated rightly, signs. This beginning of his signs Jesus did in Canaan of Galilee.

And we said last night, what is a sign? Well, a sign is something that tells us something and points us toward something. And John in his gospel specifically selected seven or some people say eight signs. A sign points to the person and character of the Lord Jesus Christ.

It's what you might call an acted parable. And we saw that the miracles of the Lord Jesus were not just great works of power. They weren't just meant to amaze us.

They certainly weren't meant to entertain us. You know, somebody says I have the power that if I touch someone on the head they'll pass out and fall over backwards. Big deal.

What does that teach you about the character of God? The miracles of the Lord Jesus were not senseless signs and wonders in the sense of just acts of raw power. In fact, they were not even acts of kindness, although they were that. But they were signs to tell us something and teach us something by means of an acted parable.

We gave some examples last night. Before he healed the blind man, Jesus said, I am the light of the world. And a little later on in the gospel of John, I mean a few verses later, he specifically says, I came into the world that those who are blind might see.

And he's not talking about physical blindness, he's talking about spiritual blindness. After he feeds the 5,000, he says, I am the bread of life. I'm the true bread that came down from heaven.

Now, with this in mind, notice this. It says in verse 11, this beginning of his miracles Jesus did in Cana of Galilee. This was the first one.

Now, isn't that a little bit surprising? I mean, don't you think he would have done something more serious? This is the opening statement of his ministry. Maybe he would have delivered someone from demons to show that he had come into the world to destroy the works of the devil. Or maybe he could have healed someone to show that he had come to restore wholeness to humanity.

But this is the first thing he does. He turns water to wine at a wedding. Why does he do this? What is he thinking to do such a thing? And the liberals who are, of course, not believing the Bible, they call this a luxury miracle.

A luxury miracle, like somebody help me. Yeah, something totally unnecessary, you know, just giving out wine at a wedding. You see, they don't understand any of the miracles.

The Lord Jesus is saying something to us here. What did he want to teach us? What is he saying in this opening statement? Why did he perform this sign? Well, John gives us the clue in verses 6 and 7. He says there were six stone water pots set there for the Jewish custom of purification. Those were the water pots where Jews washed ceremonially before they went in for the meal.

You don't get a drink out of that water pot. And John specifically points it out. He said, I want you to realize this was not just any wine.

He had them fill those water pots with water. And that specifically was the water that he turned into wine. So this is the key to this whole thing.

And we're going to get to this, but I want us to just go verse by verse down through here. First of all, in verse 1, it says the mother of Jesus was there. And there's good evidence from verse 5 and even from verse 2 that she had some kind of position of influence with this family.

When they ran out of wine, she's the one that starts talking about it. But at any rate, in verse 2, it says that Jesus was invited to the wedding and his disciples. We're kind of used to this, but just think of it.

Here's this guy that goes around, and everywhere he goes, there's a group of men with him, following him. Now at this time, there were only four or five of them. But those men are saying that he is the Messiah.

You read back in chapter 1, they said, you are the Son of God, you're the King of Israel. So here's the Lord Jesus and this little group of men, and they get invited to a wedding. But even more shocking, Jesus accepted the invitation.

What kind of Messiah is this? Well, his righteousness was not like the so-called righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees. He was not a so-called holy man that laid on a bed of nails. What's the second word? Who would lay on a bed of nails like the holy men in India.

He was full of life. He was willing to bless marriage and participate in the joy of a marriage. So verses 3 and 4. When the wine gave out, the mother of Jesus said to him, they have no wine.

And Jesus said to her, woman, what do I have to do with you? My hour has not yet come. And the first thing we have to deal with is this word woman. It doesn't sound very respectful, at least in English.

I don't know how it is in Spanish. I know if my mother had said something to me, I wouldn't say woman, what do I have to do with you? But according to the Greek scholars, this was not disrespectful for him to say this this way. But according to the scholars, this has nothing to do with disrespecting the mother.

And we don't have a word in English to translate it, and even if we said lady, it wouldn't be the correct word. But it is significant that he didn't say mother. He makes it very clear in this verse, and I'm thankful this verse is here.

He makes it very clear that he's not going to do anything because Mary asked him. And he's not going to do it for the reasons that she wants it done. You see, she's thinking on this level.

What's he thinking about? His hour that's coming. So, it reminds me of when he's talking to Peter, he says, get behind me Satan, because you're not setting your mind on the things of God, you're setting them on the things of man. I think Mary had good motives, I think she was kind and thoughtful, but he's thinking on a different plane entirely.

So, if you just read that verse, you'd say he's not going to do anything. But he goes ahead and does something, and we're going to see why in a minute. Verse 5, Mary says to them, whatever he says to you, do it.

Now, she may have been wrong on some things, but she was right on this. After 30 years of observing a perfect life, she knew that what he said was going to be the right thing, whatever it was. Notice how absolute it was, whatever he says to you, it's personal too, whatever he says to you, do it.

Well, Lord, what about this man, Lord? What is that to you? You do what I'm saying to you. Whatever he says to you, not pray about it, do it. And it's amazing, these are the very words that were spoken concerning the Lord Jesus Christ.

Way back there when Moses prophesied, he says, one day there's going to be one like me that comes. To him you shall give heed in everything that he says to you. So, these servants, verses 6 and 7, they did what Mary said.

Jesus said, fill the water pots with water, they filled them up to the brim. They obeyed Jesus even though his instructions didn't seem to make any sense. They didn't need water, and particularly they didn't need between 150 and 180 gallons of water.

I don't know what they used, I don't see any 5-gallon buckets around here, but I'm sure there are some somewhere. I doubt if what they were using was as handy as a 5-gallon bucket. And I'm thinking, what did they use to fill those 5-gallon water pots? And they said, we need wine.

Take that 5-gallon bucket and start filling those water pots. They know those things are pretty heavy. 180 gallons, it makes a lot of sense, doesn't it? Think about this, you're asking God for wine in your life, and he tells you, go put some water in those water pots.

Think about this, you're asking God for wine in your life, and he tells you, go put some water in those water pots. And you say, I don't need water, I need wine. But water is the first step for God to give you wine.

Oh Lord, I want you to use me, I want you to use my life. 5 years later, you're working as a janitor somewhere. Here's Moses, Lord, use me to deliver your people.

38 years later, he's herding sheep out in the wilderness. This is the way it is, often times you ask God for wine, he's going to have you do something, he's going to have you draw some water. But that's the step toward the answer to your prayer.

But that's the step toward the answer to your prayer. They filled them up to the brim. And he says in verse 8, draw some out now and take it to the head waiter.

Now there's a test of obedience and faith. We just put that water in there, you want me to take this water and make a fool out of myself? How many times have you taken water in the name of the Lord at his command and you found it turned into wine on the way? Sometimes you're sharing the water of the Word.

You don't even realize it, it's turning into wine while you're giving it.

And so he tastes this water that has become wine and what does he say, the first thing he says, the first thing it says about it. What's it say? He didn't know where it came from. And anytime somebody gives you wine in the name of the Lord, you don't know where it came from.

He didn't know where it came from, but the servants who had drawn the water knew. Ustedes no saben de donde viene, pero el siervo que sirvió el agua sí sabe de donde viene. Ustedes no saben lo que pasó atrás, todo lo que está envuelto para que el agua fuera convertida en vino.

I was at a conference one time where Brother Bob Jennings spoke, some of you know him. It was by far the most powerful message of the conference. And everybody was talking about how glorious this message was.

Y todo el mundo estaba hablando que tan glorioso era este mensaje. Y Bob le dijo que él no tenía la suficientemente fuerza para dar el último versículo del mensaje. Es como él se sentía tan débil en su corazón.

Y finalmente él se levantó, se paró y dijo, les voy a dar agua. Y Dios lo convirtió en vino. Es de lo que estamos hablando.

And many a rolling anthem that fills the Father's throne sobbed at its first rehearsal in the shroud of a darkened room. I don't think we could do that one. But listen to it.

It sobbed at its first rehearsal. And there's many a thing that God's going to put you through that the guy that gets the wine is not going to know about it, but you're going to know about it. And you need to take heart and press on with God.

Whatever he says to you, do it. So there was a cost, there was an obedience involved. Now, what was the Lord saying to us by this first sign? We know he didn't do this because of Mary.

We know that his thoughts were on his mission. And he sees an opportunity to say something, the opening statement. What's he saying? First of all, notice the human condition.

They have no wine. You talk about a summary of what's going on in the whole world today. Men are empty.

The wine has run out. Young people are cutting themselves just to try to convince themselves that they're alive. There is no wine.

It's run out. That's the condition of the human race. And it's in that setting that he's going to do something.

He's going to tell us something. Second thing, notice the helplessness of religion to meet the need. Those water pots were there for the Jewish custom of purification.

It says in Mark that they wouldn't do anything unless they washed first. They wouldn't eat. When they returned from the market, they'd wash ceremonially.

So when they had come into that wedding, they had water poured on their hands ceremonially to try to wash and cleanse themselves. It's those very water pots that the Lord Jesus has them fill with water. You

see what he's saying to us? He said, I have come to turn the water of dead religion and ceremony into the wine of resurrection life.

He's saying, I have come to turn the water of dead religion and ceremony into wine. I have come to turn the water of Judaism into the water of Christianity. You see what he's saying here? He's making a statement.

¿Qué quiere decir el vino en la escritura? Psalm 104, verse 15, wine that makes glad the heart of man. So, in other words, abundant life. He wanted to say something to us about his purpose for coming into the world.

It's a wedding, not a funeral. The first statement, the opening statement, I have come that they might have life and that they might have it abundantly. I heard about a woman who, Spurgeon gave the illustration of a woman who couldn't pay her rent.

Y Spurgeon dio una ilustración de una mujer que no podía pagar su renta. Y alguien, bondadosamente dijo, le voy a dar el dinero para que pague la renta. Y vino y tocó la puerta con el dinero.

Y no la abrió. ¿Saben por qué no la abrió? Pensaba que era el rentero. What's Jesus saying to us? He's saying, I did not come to make life miserable.

I did not come to give you emptiness. I came to pay the rent. I came to give you a gift.

I came to give you the wine of abundant life. In thy presence is fullness of joy, and at thy right hand pleasures forevermore. What a statement to make to fallen humanity right at the very start of his ministry.

Beloved, he's talking to you and me. He says, this is what I want you to get first of all. I came to give you the wine of abundant life.

Now, what happens whenever the head waiter tastes this wine? He says, man, this stuff is terrible. He said, this is the best wine of the whole time. You know, the devil will tell you, you don't want any of that.

Don't become a Christian. You see what a lie it is? I have never met one Christian who said, I wish I could go back to what I was. I wish I could go back to that old stuff.

Yo no conozco ningun cristiano que el diga, quiero regresar a mi vida pasada. He's making a statement to us about the quality of his life that he's come to give us. What else? He's telling us something about the quantity.

Brimful, overflowing, 180 gallons. Now, I've read that this was actually quite a wedding gift to this couple because they could sell this. It was a tremendous money gift, actually.

But why wouldn't the Lord make just a little bit? Just enough to barely finish up the wedding. Why so much? Well, he's saying something to us. He's telling us something about the unlimited, vast amount of glory in life that is available for us as his children.

Nos está hablando de la reserva gloriosa de la inmensidad que tiene preparado para nosotros. Hermanos, solamente los hemos probado. Y nos está diciendo, no estemos contentos con lo que tenemos.

Preguntemos por más, por qué nos puede dar más. And here, when he's talking about the water of life, he says, If any man thirsts, let him come unto me and drink. Out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water, not just a trickle.

Say, Lord, I feel dry. And he says, rivers. It ought to cause us to come back to him and say, I want those rivers.

I want rivers to flow out of me. You remember Paul says that in the wilderness they drank from that spiritual rock that followed them, which was Christ. That rock represented Christ.

Paul tells us that. And you remember Moses struck the rock and water came out. And we have the idea, you know, just a little stream bubbling up there, not very big.

This water had to be for a million people and all their animals. Psalm 78 says this. This is in verses 15 and 16.

It says he split the rocks in the wilderness and gave them abundant drink like the ocean depths. And verse 16, he brought forth streams also from the rock and caused water to run down like rivers. I think when Moses struck that rock, water blew out of there where they were terrified.

You had to run back to get away from it. And I think when Moses struck that rock, water blew out of there where they were terrified. You had to run back to get away from it.

He says like the ocean depths. And that's what's happening here. 180 gallons of wine.

And not only wine, but the best wine. Notice the contrast. God serves the good wine first, and when men have drunk freely, then that which is poor.

That's the way it is with the world of flesh and the devil. You get the best first. If you're living in sin today, you've already had the best that it has to offer.

From now on, it's downhill. Isn't this amazing? God saves the best wine to last. We haven't even begun to taste salvation.

The vast majority of our salvation still lies in the future. Peter said that, didn't he? We wait for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. We are waiting for our salvation to be revealed in the future.

Can we see that this was a sign? He's saying to us, I came to transform the water of religion into the wine of abundant life. And it's the best tasting thing you'll ever have. And there's a lot more where this came from.

Amen.

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