

How God Changes Things

by Jim Cymbala

Jim Cymbala emphasizes the importance of inviting Jesus into our lives and presenting our needs to Him for miraculous answers to prayer.

Duration: 22:06

Scripture: Matthew 7:7-8, Mark 11:24, Luke 11:9-10, John 2:1-11, John 4:46-54, John 9:35-38, James 4:2-3

Topics: "God"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes the importance of inviting God into our lives and situations. He highlights the power of simply telling God what we need, just as Mary did when she informed Jesus that they had run out of wine at a wedding. The speaker encourages listeners to have faith and believe that God loves them and will respond to their requests. He also shares a personal experience where he was struggling to prepare a sermon and, through prayer, God revealed that he needed to reconcile with three individuals before the blockage in his heart and mind could be removed.

Transcript

How many have some things you need God to fix or help or do, whatever? Let's talk about the best way, the way you get an answer from God. Not just pray, I'm talking about now getting an answer from God. Because sometimes our prayers are talking in the air, or we're talking to ourselves, or we're complaining, or we're mumbling, or we're down and out.

But I'm talking now about how does God want us to see miracles, answers to prayer come, how does that happen? How does it happen? So let's just look at this story. You're familiar with it. I want to remind you of one or two points in it.

On the third day, this is John 2, a wedding, this is the third day after he probably called Philip. And he only had probably five or six disciples at this time, not 12. This is only John 2. On the third day, a wedding took place at Cana in Galilee, and Jesus' mother was there.

And Jesus and his disciples had also been invited to the wedding. You notice that there's no mention of Joseph. And this wedding took place about 18 years after the last mention we have of Jesus at 12 years old being sought for in Jerusalem by his mom and dad.

So 17, 18 years have gone by, and Joseph is not in the scene. Most of the experts believe he died somehow in the middle of that. And that's why later Jesus committed Mary into the keeping of John, the disciple who's writing this gospel.

Also, what's interesting is John, the brother of James, James and John, John never mentions his mother's name. Mary is never mentioned by John in this gospel. And he never mentioned his brother's name.

And he's telling this story for us to learn an important lesson. His disciples had also been invited to the wedding. And when the wine was gone, Jesus' mother said to him, they have no more wine.

Woman, this is a very, very difficult sentence. The translators are stymied by this. Woman, why do you involve me? Jesus replied, my hour has not yet come.

The best literal translation almost of it as I researched a little bit was, we're not on the same page. Why are you bringing this to me? We're not yet on the same page. What it meant between Jesus and Mary, I don't know exactly.

But he says, my time has not yet come. Was his time not yet come to do his first miracle? That doesn't seem to fit because he's gonna do his first miracle. Is his time not yet come to give his life on Calvary and the wine has something, a symbol of it? That's probably a stretch.

So it's one of those portions hard to understand in scripture. His mother said to the servants, do whatever he tells you. Nearby stood six stone water jars, the kind used by the Jews for ceremonial washing, each holding from 20 to 30 gallons.

These were these big jars, which they used, which was more sanitary, which they used for the Jewish custom of the washing of the hands before you could eat. So they had no faucets, they had no plumbing. So the people would come and servants would pour out the water and you'd wash your hands and dry them off.

And that's the way you were not only clean, but ceremonial clean because they were taught you don't eat until you've washed. So this water was being used for all the guests. We don't know how many were there.

Jesus said to the servants, fill the jars with water. So they filled them to the brim. Then he told them now draw some out and take it to the master of the banquet.

They did so and the master of the banquet, who wasn't the groom or the bride or the parents, tasted the water that had been turned into wine. When the water turned into the wine, that is left out. We don't know when it was being poured out, when it was being carried over.

We just know water turned into wine. He did not realize where it, the wine had come from, though the servants who had drawn the water, they knew. And then he called the bridegroom aside and he said, everyone brings out the choice wine first.

And then the cheaper wine after the guests have had too much to drink. By the way, this fellow who said this was not a very nice couth person or sophisticated because the language in the Greek is rather rough. In other words, he's like saying, wow, most people bring out the best wine first.

And then when people are tipsy and don't even know where they are, they bring out the cheaper wine and say they won't even know the difference. So it wasn't a very nice thing he was saying and alluding to. But

you have saved the best till now.

What Jesus did here in Cana of Galilee was the first of the signs through which he revealed his glory and his disciples believed in him. The way that miracle took place was that at the wedding where they ran out of wine, Jesus was there. Why was Jesus there? Because they invited him.

And Jesus always comes where he's invited. Do you get that? Okay. If Jesus is not there, there is no miracle.

So let's look at that and just apply it to ourselves. In your life right now, in the totality of everything you're facing, I plead with you and I plead with myself. Would you please invite Jesus into every part of your life? Every part of your heart, every part of your mind.

Listen, all the members of your family being taken care of, would you just invite Jesus in? To as many as received him, he gave them the power. He came to his own. Why didn't his own get helped? Because his own received him not.

But as many as received him, invited him in, he came in and gave them the power to become sons and daughters of God. So the first rule today is, don't you want answers to your prayers tonight? Invite Jesus into everything. Right now, invite Jesus in.

And if you've been running the show, stop running the show and say, Jesus, come in and run every area of my life. Listen, don't try to make a deal with him. Look at me, everyone.

Don't try to make a deal. Jesus, I'm not inviting you in. I don't want you running my life, but do this thing for me.

That's using God, trying to use God. You can't use Jesus like that. You got to invite him into your life to take over everything.

Now that's fitting and proper now to say, let's talk business now. You got to help me now because I've invited you in. How many right now want to invite Jesus into every part of your life? Raise your hand up high and say, amen.

Every part of my life, everything. My wife, my children, my grandchildren, everything. Jesus, run the show, take care of everything.

I invite you in. Come on, let's clap and say amen to that. I don't want to be controversial what I say next, but how did the miracle happen? He's there.

He was invited. Wherever he's invited, he comes. If you don't invite him in, he's not going to come in.

He comes where he's invited. Number two, Mary tells him in one sentence, the thing that turned the miracle or started it. They have no more wine.

They have no more wine. Five words. She didn't even say, would you please do something? She just told him because she must've known about him.

Remember, she had raised him. It was enough to tell him they have no more wine. Now, it wasn't her wedding.

Why would she care about their wine? They ran out of wine. Back in those days, 2000 years ago, if you hosted a wedding and you ran out of supplies, that was a disaster, a social disaster. That was shameful.

That was losing face. They ran out. Whatever prompted her, she just told him the need.

Whatever your problem is tonight, like I'm going to pour my heart out to God, just tell God what you need. Tell him. Let the Holy Spirit help you and pray.

You don't have to use 5,000 words. Tell him what you need and then begin thanking him for what he's going to do. But just tell him what you need.

Wouldn't it be horrible if someone was here today and you went home and it was written over you when you were sleeping tonight? They have not because they asked not. Would that not be terrible? And I've had that happen in my life. Many years ago, overwhelmed by problems, I felt bad for myself.

I called other people I didn't know what to do. When I analyzed it, I never even stopped and just talk natural. Don't use King James language.

Don't pray like you saw growing up in Jamaica or Trinidad or Poland or Brooklyn or Puerto Rico or anyone else. Just tell God what you need. This is how all the miracles happen in the Bible.

He says to the blind people, what do you want me to do? We want to see. That's it. That moved God to help them.

It's amazing how we have made prayer an art form and many times lost the simplicity and the power. Just have faith tonight that God loves us. Come on, does he not love us? I said, did God love us? Does God love us? And if he gave us, if he gave Sylvia his son and she never asked for his son, you mean he's going to turn her down when she tells him what she needs? What kind of faith, what kind of God would that be? Tell him what you need and then wait and worship.

Maybe remind him. Be diligent. Be earnest.

Be fervent. Do whatever the spirit leads you to do. But don't think by the repetition of words, God's going to answer.

He answers by faith. And sometimes one sentence does it. Sometimes five minutes.

Sometimes it takes an hour to pray through and get there. But tell him what you need. Don't complain about your life and what people are doing to you.

Tell him what you need. That's how the miracle happened. Mary said that.

He was invited. That's how the miracle happened. Because when he's in the house, anything can happen.

So invite him in your life. You never know what he'll do. And then tell him what you need.

Is it \$100? Is it \$10,000? What is it? Is it a job? Tell him what you need. Don't, Lord, I'm going through such. He knows what you're going through.

Tell him what you need. Like you're informing him things he doesn't know. Like they're up in heaven going, wow, I didn't know that.

Write that down. Wow. Just tell him what you need.

Oh, God, we need so much tonight. Then Mary said, because she knew him, one of the greatest things she ever said in the Bible. Mary said two great things to me.

Well, she has her song that she gave after Gabriel announced the virgin birth. But when the angel told her that she would give birth to a baby with no sexual contact with anyone, a virgin birth, she said, let it be according to your word. I mean, that kind of faith.

She might've been as young as 16, 15, they think, 17. Most likely she was nowhere near her 20s, mid 20s. This is a young lady, a virgin.

And she just said, you said it, do it. That takes faith. When God is telling you that something's gonna happen that has never happened before or since.

But she believed. This is the other great word she said. Do whatever he tells you.

You want an answer to prayer tonight? Now, listen, this has been the challenge in my life many times. Do whatever he tells you. Tell him, worship him.

And now it might be answered while you're praying. But now be careful because many times the answer comes by you obeying a prompting from God. And sometimes those promptings are very strange or different or unusual.

They're not logical. Like in this case, do whatever he tells you. Servants look at him.

He goes, fill all those jars with water. We don't need water. We got lots of water.

We need wine. Wine. You see, sometimes God asks us to do things.

Just says, obey me. It's like a trigger point. And they do it.

And then the water's turned into wine. Do whatever he tells you to do. He might tell you nothing.

He might tell you something. He might tell you to go and call someone tonight and apologize because there's a rift between you. He might call you.

I don't know what he might say to you. But whatever he tells you to do, it might be blocking that answer that you and I want, right? Tell him what you need and then do whatever he tells you. So one night I'm, oh, the other building must've been.

Yes, the other building. We were in a Foppish Avenue. So I'm preparing this message.

And I used to use notes then and it was Saturday and I was behind the eight ball and I'm trying to get something that will feed the people. And I can't get the sermon. I mean, I got the text.

I got the verse. I know it's alive in me. But I can't, like, what's the sequence? What should I tell the people? God, what do you want me to say from that passage? I can't get it.

I can't, there's a block. There's a block in the room. There's a block in my heart.

There's a block in my head. There's a total block. And it's getting later.

And I'm going, God, please, you know, for the people's sake, please help me. And as I'm just praying and waiting, God brings three people to mind. Three.

I hear him say, call to them and apologize and get right with all three of them. We weren't fighting the three different people. But there was a wall.

How many know when it's you're talking but it's not the way it should be? How many get what I'm talking about, right? So call them, ask for forgiveness and just tell them you love them. But I didn't do anything to them. I know whatever you think you didn't do, just call them and apologize.

But it's late. They might not be home. I'm searching for excuses, right? It's hard to call some people, right? You hardly talk to them.

And I knew, do whatever he tells you. I knew that. I called them.

Don't you know they all were home? Like they were waiting at the phone or something. Hello, how are you doing? Yeah, this is Jim. Oh, yeah, what's up? Listen, I just want to say, if I ever hurt you, if I ever offended you, if I ever did anything to hurt you, I am so sorry.

I really, I love you. And I want it to be right between us. In one case, if I remember now, so many years ago, they went, thank you, I appreciate that.

And God bless you. And they hung up. In two other cases, I think they start to cry.

I said, no, I'm the one who hurt you, I think. When I hung up from that third call, I had so many sermons coming in my head and in my heart. Like the word just came alive.

I needed a sermon. I needed food for the people. But I had to do whatever he told me.

These are private things. But how many know God works that way? Sometimes it's to say you're sorry to your wife or your husband. That's the hardest one of all, boy, right? Boy, I'm really doing total disclosure here.

This was in the other building too. Oh, 20 something years ago, 25 years ago. So we're coming to church.

And what had happened in the morning or whatever, we had some words. She said something, I said something. And no big argument, throwing stuff at each other.

It was just a wall. I come to church. She goes and she's playing in that building, right where Jamal is.

And the person's leading, I think it was Pastor Hammond. And I put up my hands in the air because I want to worship God. And it's like God says to me, you got to be kidding, right? No, I'm here to worship you.

Praise God. We have come to worship. We're going to worship.

No, you're not going to worship. You're going to go over and apologize first. And then you can worship.

No, I can't do that. Number of reasons. First of all, it's not my fault.

Second of all, how can I walk across the platform? People are going to see me do that. And they're going to wonder what's up with that. I'm not.

And boy, it got bad. How many know when God is on your tail, it can get really bad? How many? Can you say amen with me when you know? So I waited for a little break or something and they were leading. And I did that little humble walk.

Come on, husbands. We got to do that sometimes. I got like in a humble posture, like, you know, just like that.

And I went over. And before I could even touch her shoulder and say, I'm sorry, she turned, said, Jim, I'm sorry. I'm sorry.

I love you. I said, I'm sorry. I was wrong.

And then heaven opened up. Then you can worship. Come on, let's put our hands together.

Do whatever he tells you to do. Do whatever he tells you to do. And one last word for you.

I don't care what he's done for you. I don't care what answers you've had. And that includes this church.

The best wine was saved for last. And that's a lesson for us. God always saves the best for last.

Listen, whatever blessings you've had, whatever answers to prayer, I don't care what place you've been in God, what do you think God lets you go up? And now you're going to have to go down because you're older or life is harder or the demons are too strong. No, it's like from glory to more glory, from faith to more faith. Come on, let's give a loud clap for God.

The best is yet to come. Come on, really, the best is yet to come. We praise you, God.

Every eye closed. Those of you who are like me, you need something from God tonight. You need something specific.

Maybe one or two things. Don't bring 11. Try to focus it to the two, one or two most important.

It's very hard to pray for 11 things at once with faith. But one or two things that only God can solve. Only God can solve.

And it's important. Get out of your seat and come on up here. Stand in the front.

We're going to pray. We're going to invite him into the house, into our lives. We're going to tell him what we need.

We're going to do whatever he tells us. And we're going to thank him because the best is yet to come. Come on, come.

Father God, we thank you. We thank you tonight that you've directed us to invite you into our lives in a total way. Our families, finances, future, everything.

We invite you. Run the show, be Lord of all. We invite you, Jesus.

And we know you're coming and have come because you always come where you're invited. We've told you tonight what we need. We're going to continue to remind you, but we want you to know we are trusting you, God, to answer the petitions we brought.

Because your word says not to be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and supplication, we're to tell you what we need. And you said you would give us your peace that passes all understanding and that we're to mingle thanksgiving in. So we give you thanksgiving.

In fact, we clap right now, Lord, for you. We give you thanksgiving for all that you've done, all that you're going to do. And we pray tonight, God, that we will continue to keep praising you and be remembering the best is yet to come.

Say that with me, everyone. The best is yet to come. One more time.

The best is yet to come. We praise your name. We praise your name.

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