

Jesus Manifests His Glory

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John 2:1-11

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Today we have the first of miracle, where Jesus changes water into wine. The evangelist John gives us a statement at the end of the account which summarizes the importance of this miracle.

This beginning of signs Jesus did in Cana of Galilee, and manifested His glory; and His disciples believed in Him.

Jesus gives us and his disciples a sign to manifest his glory, that is to reveal or show who he really is. This is why this miracle has such an important place in our Epiphany celebrations. The word epiphany or ephanaeroosen, is right there in the text. Jesus did this miracle so that we might know who he is.

Yet, miracles like this one do not create faith. We see that clearly in the account of Elijah on Mount Carmel. Yes, all the people shouted, "the LORD, He is God," but the next day they were back to worshipping Baal. Their hearts had not changed. Faith is repentance, and repentance is a change of the heart. Miracles although they might grab people's attention do not change the heart.

Jesus tells us in the parable of the rich man and Lazarus, **"If they do not hear Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded though one rise from the dead."** Luke 16:31

Jesus also tells us, **"No one can come to Me unless the Father who sent Me draws him."** John 6:44

Miracles like this do not create faith for that you need the word of God. They do draw people's attention. They do strength and encourage. Thus, this morning as well we see Christ manifested in his glory. This would mean nothing to us if we did not already know Jesus to be the Christ, it would be only another story. But since we do know that he is the Christ, we see his glory manifested.

John 2:1-5 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."

Kids what do you think would happen if you address your mother as "woman?" I'm pretty sure not even most of the husbands here could get away with that.

The term woman although it sounds derogatory in English, was not in the original language. There are places where Jesus clearly uses that same word as a term of endearment. Such as while on the cross when he says to Mary, "Woman behold you son."

Nevertheless, even without that word "woman," Jesus does seem to be dismissing his mother's concern. He seems to be telling her, "No, that is not my problem." So why then does Mary tell the servants to obey him. Why then does Jesus perform the miracle? This discrepancy between Jesus' words and his own actions has led to a lot of speculation. We don't need to speculate. Jesus himself tells us the only explanation that we need to know.

"My hour has not yet come."

This response doesn't explain everything, but it does explain what we need to know about this text.

In response to Mary's request, Jesus doesn't actually tell her no. It sounds like he is telling her no, but he doesn't actually say it. What he does is to point her beyond the immediate concerns of a wedding to what really matters, namely the cross.

In the Gospel of John here at the very first miracle Jesus makes this statement, "My hour has not yet come." Then this phrase is repeated throughout the gospel of John. "His hour had not yet come." Finally in chapter 17 Jesus prays in the garden

"Father, the hour has come. Glorify Your Son" John 17:1

Through his whole gospel John is constantly pointing us ahead to the greater glory that is yet to come, until we finally come to the cross. This first miracle was done to manifest his glory, but the true manifestation of his glory is not such minor miracles of earthly convenience but the far greater miracle of his death.

Jesus isn't telling Mary, "No." He is telling her this is not why I came to earth. My true glory is not changing water into wine, but grace and forgiveness that I will give to you when I die for your sins.

Last week we heard about Jesus' baptism. We learned that Jesus did not come to earth in order that we could give something to him but so that he could give something to us. So also, this week we learn that Jesus did not come to earth to give us unlimited wine at our parties, he came to earth to die for our sins. That is certainly a lesson we ought to take to heart. Jesus did not come to earth to fill our goblets with wine. He came to die for our sins.

This however does not undermine or negate the effect of Jesus' miracle here. The fact that this is not his hour yet, does not diminish the glory that we see here. The cross shining through this miracle makes this miracle a reason to rejoice. We do not need to disapprove of this miracle. We do not need to sit in the corner at a wedding frowning at the merriment.

Jesus died on the cross for our sins so that we can rejoice. His giving of wine at the wedding in Cana is not despite what he came to do, but because of what he came to do. Having come to procure the

forgiveness of sins, we also receive ALL the blessings of God, which include family, friends, spouse, children, good food and drink.

His hour had not yet come. This is not what he came to do, but because he came to die, we receive the blessings of God. Those blessings are displayed in this miracle in a very earthly manner.

1 Corinthians 10:31 Therefore, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God.

Just as God's word points us through the miracle to the greater miracle of his death which was yet to come. So also, everything we do should be done in light of the cross. Not in the sense that the cross should throw a pale of darkness over our whole life, but in the sense that Jesus' sacrifice means that we can rejoice in all his blessings.

John 2:6-10 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!"

Jesus not only gives but he gives in great abundance. These pots were something like 25 gallons a piece. Which would mean a total of something like 150 gallons of wine. That is quite a lot of wine. Not only is it a lot but of the very best quality.

There are many who object to this miracle. They say that if Jesus had really given so much wine he would have been tempting the people to sin by encouraging them to an extreme of drunkenness. The problem with that is that you cannot blame man's sin on God's abundant blessings.

God is always excessive with his gifts and blessings, but this never ought to be an excuse for us to abuse that excessiveness. We certainly ought to enjoy God's blessings but not abuse it.

1 Corinthians 6:12 All things are lawful for me, but all things are not helpful.

Ephesians 5:18 And do not be drunk with wine, in which is dissipation; but be filled with the Spirit,

God is excessive not only in earthly gifts but even more so in his grace and spiritual blessings especially the forgiveness of sins.

Psalms 103:12 As far as the east is from the west, So far has He removed our transgressions from us.

John himself reminds us

John 1:16 And of His fullness we have all received, and grace for grace.

Isa 1:18 "Come now, and let us reason together," Says the LORD, "Though your sins are like scarlet, They shall be as white as snow; Though they are red like crimson, They shall be as wool.

In the parable of the unforgiving servant the king forgave his servant a debt of 10,000 talents which is something like \$13.2 billion dollars. Yet what do men do with this excessive gift? We immediately abuse it, saying in our hearts, "It doesn't matter if I sin because God will just forgive me."

The excessive gifts of God are never an excuse for man's sinfulness.

Romans 6:1-2 What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound? 2 Certainly not! How shall we who died to sin live any longer in it?

John 2:11 This beginning of signs Jesus did in Cana of Galilee, and manifested His glory; and His disciples believed in Him.

Jesus' glory is manifest in this first miracle. He changes water into wine. He does it in great abundance and of the best quality, but the true glory of Christ is seen in the abundance and quality not of the wine but of his grace that is given to us on the cross. This was not his hour. This was only a glimpse of the hour to come. It is through the message of the cross that we are drawn to Christ. It is through his grace that we know him to be our savior. Yet here we have this wonderful reminder that because he died for our sins, we can rejoice also in all his blessings.

Psalms 95:6-7 ⁶ Oh come, let us worship and bow down; Let us kneel before the LORD our Maker. ⁷ For He is our God, And we are the people of His pasture, And the sheep of His hand.