

The Gospel of John

Chapter 2:1-25

January 5, 1997

- **The Gospel of John Outline:**
 - Chapter 1 Our Lord is the Word, the Light and the Life
 - Chapter 2 The Lord of the Wedding Feast; Zeal for the purity of the temple
- **Review & Introduction**

In the previous chapter John has clearly established the deity of Christ and began his narrative on the call of the Apostle. In addition, the interaction of our Lord with John the Baptist inaugurated the Priestly ministry of Christ and in this chapter we see Christ beginning to minister to the people. It is quite interesting though to see how Christ's ministry is revealed slowly in a methodical if not strategic manner by the Father.

- **Exposition**

John 2:1-25

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."

- Much has been written about this first of miracles and of Jesus' response to His mother. There are many items to note. First, those getting married were probably very close (if not even relatives) to Jesus because both He and Mary are invited to the wedding feast. Secondly, notice that by this time (a very short period of time) the disciples are already publicly associated with Jesus as they too are invited to the feast.
- During the multi-day feast Hebrew custom dictates that it would have been an extreme embarrassment to run out of wine at a feast. When the wine did run out Mary notifies Jesus of the situation. It is not clear what she expected Him to do or in what tone she notified Him of the situation. However, Jesus response is not, "OK mother I will take care of it." Jesus calls her "woman" which is not an abrupt or disrespectful term in Hebrew at all (even though it can be in our culture) and simply lets her know that she is not directing the timing of his revelation.
- A common recurring theme in the gospel of John is that of God's perfect timing. Even though we are subject to this time continuum and we know not what is in store, God knows all things, sees all things and controls all things. With this perfect knowledge comes perfect timing. What a joy it is to know that the Father is not stifled by unexpected results or bad weather. Everything happens just as He plans even when to us it appears to be inopportune.
- The term "my hour has not yet come" most likely refers to the time of Christ's crucifixion as seen in John 17 or it may also refer to the full miraculous revealing of Jesus to the masses. Notice how Jesus speaks similarly in John 4:21.

5 His mother said to the servants, "Whatever He says to you, do it."⁶ 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!"

- It would not be likely that Mary knew exactly what Jesus would do, but she does expect (despite His response to her) that He will do *something* as she instructs the servants to obey Jesus' instructions.
- It is probably no accident that this miracle paints a strong picture of the transition from the old covenant to the new. John makes a point of specifying that the water was the water used for the ritual purification according to Hebrew custom. It wasn't just any water; it was the special water used to clean the hands before eating. Christ then turns this water into wine which is a picture of the new covenant in His blood. The picture portrayed here very well may have been prophetic.

11 This beginning of signs Jesus did in Cana of Galilee, and manifested His glory; and His disciples believed in Him.¹² After this He went down to Capernaum, He, His mother, His brothers, and His disciples; and they did not stay there many days.

- The number of people who actually were aware of what Jesus did was apparently few. Jesus does not seek the opportunity to teach the masses or reveal Himself yet. But clearly His purposes were accomplished because the disciples saw the miracle and in response they believed in Him. This result is the primary purpose of the miracles that Jesus performs; to foster belief in Him as the messiah.

13 Now the Passover of the Jews was at hand, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem.¹⁴ And He found in the temple those who sold oxen and sheep and doves, and the moneychangers doing business.¹⁵ When He had made a whip of cords, He drove them all out of the temple, with the sheep and the oxen, and poured out the changers' money and overturned the tables.¹⁶ And He said to those who sold doves, "Take these things away! Do not make My Father's house a house of merchandise!"

- After the events of Cana, Jesus partakes in the celebration of Passover and finds the temple filled with those who sell sacrificial animals. Jesus responds indignantly not necessarily because of the commerce going on, but that this was not an appropriate activity for the temple. The people had become so dulled to the importance of the temple that they were carrying about as though they were in the market.
- This is chronologically the first cleansing of the temple by Jesus. The other gospels record another episode three years later after Jesus' triumphant ride into Jerusalem during Passover.

17 Then His disciples remembered that it was written, "Zeal for Your house has eaten Me up."¹⁸ So the Jews answered and said to Him, "What sign do You show to us, since You do these things?"¹⁹ Jesus answered and said to them, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up."²⁰ Then the Jews said, "It has taken forty-six years to build this temple, and will You raise it up in three days?"²¹ But He was speaking of the temple of His body.²² Therefore, when He had risen from the dead, His disciples remembered that He had said this to them; and they believed the Scripture and the word which Jesus had said.

- Jesus demonstrates obedience to the old covenant requirement not only by His participation in Passover but by His reverence for the temple of God. Jesus holds in high regard the temple of God.
- The people demand that Jesus establish on what authority He chases them out and on what grounds does He call God His Father? Jesus' response certainly escaped the understanding of the people and even the disciples because John explains that it wasn't until after the resurrection that the disciples understood Jesus' remarks.
- John's explanation has great implication for new covenant believers. As Jesus had great zeal for the purity of the old covenant temple and that the new covenant temple was His body, we as members of this temple (the body of Christ) should have a great deal of zeal for the purity of our temple. Paul gives us excellent instruction on how it is that we defile the temple personally. Our covenantal tie to one another means that if there is defilement in one portion of the temple then the whole body will be affected. We must ask our Lord to give us a similar indignation of corruption of our bodies (temples) as well as ask Him for forgiveness so that we might maintain the purity of the body of Christ at large. (1 Cor. 6:12-20)

23 Now when He was in Jerusalem at the Passover, during the feast, many believed in His name when they saw the signs which He did.²⁴ But Jesus did not commit Himself to them, because He knew all men,²⁵ and had no need that anyone should testify of man, for He knew what was in man. NKJV

- Again Jesus performed many miracles (although John does not describe them) and many believe in Him. However, we see again that God's timing is not necessarily ours in that Jesus was not yet ready to fully reveal Himself to them because He knew that their response to Him would not be proper. But when the hearts of the people were prepared, as determined by the Father, He reveals Himself to them and gradually works His way toward His crucifixion.