

## John (13)

In coming to chapter 2—we come to a rather major transition—the first chapter was largely divided into two parts—[1] the prologue (1:1-18), wherein Christ is introduced as the Head of a New Creation and Mediator of a New Covenant, [2] the calling of the first 5 disciples (vv19-51), wherein Andrew, John, Peter, Philip, and Nathanael are called as disciples—now in chapter 2—we find our Savior formally begins His public ministry and performs His first sign...

Thus—we come this morning to the first of seven sign miracles recorded in the first 12 chapters of John's gospel—that is—we transition from the witness of John the Baptist to the witness of Christ's works, Jn.5:36—"I have a greater witness than John's; for the works which the Father has given Me to finish – the very works that I do – bear witness of Me, that the Father has sent Me..."

### I. The Miracle Explained

### II. The Miracle Applied

#### I. The Miracle Explained—in five simple considerations

1. [1] A wedding, vv1-2—"On the third day there was a wedding in Cana of Galilee, and the mother of Jesus was there. Now both Jesus and His disciples were invited to the wedding..."
2. The "third day" is likely the third day from the calling of Philip and Nathanael—the wedding took place in Cana of Galilee...
3. Cana was a smaller village in Galilee—probably about 10 miles north of Nazareth—where our Lord was raised...
4. Thus—the fact that Jesus' mother was present, suggests that Mary (Jesus) knew one of the people being married...
5. This of course would explain why Jesus is present at the wedding along with His disciples—he likely knew them and was even possibly related...
6. Now—it further seems probable that Mary, Jesus' mother, was involved with the wedding beyond merely attending it...
7. This would make sense if she was close friends with one if not both of the families involved in the wedding...
8. Lenski—"This wedding must be thought of in the Jewish fashion. In the betrothal bride and groom were pledged to each other in a way that truly made them man and wife, although the two did not at once live together following this ceremony. An interval, longer or shorter, followed, and then the feast took place. The groom with his companions brought the bride with her companions to the groom's home, and there without any further pledge the celebration began, starting toward evening with a feast as grand as possible and continuing for a week, the couple now living together..."
9. [2] A need (vv3-5), v3—"And when they ran out of wine, the mother of Jesus said to Him, They have no wine..."
10. The warmth of climate and lack of ability to properly clean the water—rendered wine to be the common drink...
11. Thus the lack of it was troubling in many ways—not only on a practical level, but it was also embarrassing...
12. The wine of Scripture and the wine of this wedding was fermented—that is—it was more than mere fruit juice...
13. It's true that it was oftentimes highly diluted with water—but nevertheless it was the fruit of the vine fermented...
14. V3—"And when they ran out of wine, the mother of Jesus said to Him, They have no wine"—this was a serious need...
15. As I've already said—wine was the primary drink in this culture—thus we can hardly grasp the severity of this need...
16. Mary approaches Jesus—"They have no wine"—with the implication being—Can you do something about it...

17. V4—"Jesus said to her, Woman, what does your concern have to do with Me? My hour has not yet come..."
18. Now—let me briefly say—that the name "woman" wasn't used in any dishonoring or disrespecting manner...
19. It was simply a common and straightforward way to address a woman—we might say—"lady, miss, or madam..."
20. V4—"Jesus said to her, Woman, what does your concern have to do with Me"—literally—"what to me and you..."
21. The meaning of this phrase is likely—"What in common do we have"—that is—our Savior is distancing Himself from Mary...
22. William Hendriksen—"Mary must no longer think of him as being merely her son; for, the more she conceives of him as her son, the more also will she suffer when he suffers. Mary must begin to look upon Jesus as her Lord..."
23. This is the meaning of the next phrase—"My hour has not yet come"—that is—Christ understood that his time was determined by His heavenly Father...
24. Now—throughout John's gospel—this phrase is used by our Savior or about our Savior—seven or eight times...
25. Jn.7:30—"Therefore they sought to take Him; but no one laid a hand on Him, because His hour had not yet come..."
26. Jn.8:20—"These words Jesus spoke in the treasury, as He taught in the temple; and no one laid hands on Him, for His hour had not yet come..."
27. That is—our Savior was ever conscious of the fact—that He came for a specific task assigned by His Father...
28. Basically speaking—Mary is asking Jesus to use this occasion as the means to publically reveal Himself as the Messiah...
29. Thus our Savior reminds Mary—that His times are in His Father's hand—it was not for Mary to decide or determine...
30. Now—as we shall see—our Savior does perform the miracle—but in a way that only His disciples would discern...
31. Lk.2:49—"And He said to them, Why did you seek Me? Did you not know that I must be about My Father's business..."
32. [3] A command (vv6-8)—here we learn—our Savior graciously agrees to perform the miracle in a less-than public manner...
33. Near by John informs us—"there were six waterpots of stone, according to the manner of purification of the Jews, continuing 20 or 30 gallons apiece..."
34. In other words—these were not pots used for drinking—these were very large pots carrying many gallons of water...
35. According to the OC—there were many specific laws wherein water was used as symbolic of moral cleansing...
36. By the first century—the Jews, in following the teaching of the scribes and Pharisees, washed their hands before every meal...
37. This, of course, wasn't for sanitary but religious purposes—it was symbolic of a moral and religious cleansing...
38. Verses 7-8—"Jesus said to them, Fill the waterpots with water. And they filled them up to the brim. And He said to them, Draw some out now, and take it to the master of the feast. And they took it..."
39. The servants filled the waterpots with water and then took some to the master of the feast—the headwaiter...
40. Because such weddings were so large and long-lasting—one person was put in charge of the all the particulars...
41. Thus the servants brought to the steward, the master of the feast, a smaller pot filled with newly made wine...
42. Now—we must not overlook the particulars of this miracle—Jesus turned water to wine by a mere act of His will...

43. The actual miracles is mentioned in v9—"the water that was made wine"—that is—all the water in every pot was turned to wine...
44. There's been several speculations about when the water turned to wine—well—simply put—the text doesn't say...
45. Was the water turned as it was put into the pots—or was it all changed sometime after—what we do know—by the time the servant poured some out to take to the master of the feast—the water had been turned to wine...
46. Furthermore—some have questioned HOW much of the water was changed into wine—which I think is obvious—all of it—otherwise—why did He have six pots filled with water...
47. Some have doubted this—based upon the large quantity of wine—that is—they would be over 100 gallons...
48. [a] They would have needed many of these gallons to satisfy the many quests, [b] any that was left would have served as a nice wedding present for the young couple...
49. [4] A response (vv9-10)—after the steward of the feast tasted the wine—he called the bridegroom to himself...
50. V10—"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..."
51. Now—I don't think this is intended as a rebuke—but the steward is simply stating a known and accepted fact...
52. The best wine is usually served first and then the inferior—when after the taste buds have become dulled by the wine...
53. But—the point being—our Savior not only turned water into wine—but He turned water into the BEST wine...
54. [5] A reason (vv11-12), v11—"This beginning of signs Jesus did in Cana of Galilee, and manifested His glory; and His disciples believed in Him..."
55. Now—the NT uses three words to describe a miracle—John almost always uses the same word rendered—sign...
56. A "sign" is something that point to something else—it intends to point people away from the miracle to something else...
57. William Hendriksen—"A sign indicates a miracle viewed as a proof of divine authority and majesty. Hence, it leads the attention of the spectator away from the deed itself to the divine Doer..."
58. Thus—miracles were signs intended to point people to Christ and believe upon Him as the promised Messiah...
59. Now—this doesn't mean that the disciples were unbelievers—but they believed more fully as a result of the sign...
60. Jn.5:36—"I have a greater witness than John's; for the works which the Father has given Me to finish – the very works that I do – bear witness of Me, that the Father has sent Me..."
61. Jn.20:30-31—"And truly Jesus did many other signs in the presence of His disciples, which are not written in this book; but these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in His name..."
62. Thus—it's important to remember—signs were performed for the purpose of communicating spiritual truth...
63. For example—in ch.6 after multiplying the bread and feeding the masses—our Savior said—"I am the bread of the world..."
64. In ch.9 after restoring sight to a blind man—our Savior says—"I am the Light of the world"—in ch.11 after raising Lazarus from the dead—He says in v25—"I am the resurrection and the life..."
65. In other words the miracles were intended to point toward spiritual truth—they were signs pointing to eternal realities...
66. So too—with regards to this first sign at Cana—our Lord manifested His glory—the glory of the Son of God...

## II. The Miracle Applied—in two broad categories

### A. Theological

1. That is—before we apply this passage practically—we have to first ask the question—what is its primary theological purposes...
2. In other words—the seven signs that John has selected—are intended to teach us important theological truth...
3. Remember what "a sign" means—it's something that intends to point to something else—it points us to Christ and His work...
4. Now—I suggest the primary theological purpose behind this sign is—to underscore the superior nature of the NC over the OC...
5. This is something that I mentioned throughout ch.1—John introduces Christ as the Head of a new creation and Mediator of a new covenant...
6. Thus—our Savior's first miracle had very important dispensational implications—it means far more than Jesus approves of marriage...
7. Now—I suggest there are three closely related lessons in this miracle—concerning the relation of the OC and NC...
8. [1] The OC was empty—this of course is illustrated in the empty pots, v6—"there were six waterpots of stone, according to the manner of purification of the Jews..."
9. This illustrates the fact—that the OC with its sacrificial system and laws—was unable to cleanse the conscience...
10. Now—the problem was that the Jews, for the most part, sought to use the OC in and of itself as a means to God...
11. But—this was never the intent of the OC—the goal or purpose of the OC was always to point sinners to Christ...
12. This of course doesn't imply that no OC person understood this—Hebrews 11 describes many who were truly converted...
13. But—unfortunately—especially in the first century—the religion of most Jews was but an empty formalism...
14. Now—it's best to understand the purpose of the OC as twofold—[a] it provided the law, [b] it pointed to Christ...
15. In other words—the OC was intended to show the Jews the holy character and just demands of God's holy law...
16. But—it was also and equally intended to point the Jews, through the scarification system, to the blood of Christ...
17. Thus—the OC in and of itself possessed no ability to cleans the conscience—it was only typical and external...
18. In fact—if all you have is the OC, and fail to use it as a schoolmaster to lead you to Christ—it only condemned...
19. 2Cor.3:7—"The ministry of death, written and engraved on stones"—that is—that's all the OC does in and of itself...
20. [2] The NC fulfills the OC—that is—in and of itself—the OC was an empty covenant that pointed toward Christ...
21. V7—"Fill the waterpots with water. And they filled them up to the brim"—that is—with water that became wine...
22. Christ fulfilled the OC just as the wine filled the waterpots—He fulfilled everything that it demanded and promised...
23. Matt.5:17—"Do not think that I came to destroy the Law or the Prophets. I did not come to destroy but to fulfill" Jn.1:17—"For the law was given through Moses, but grace and truth came through Jesus Christ..."
24. Melancthon Jacobus—"The first miracle of Moses was a turning of water into blood. The law works wrath and death. The first miracle of Christ is a turning of water into wine. The gospel brings its heavenly *wine and milk, without money and without price...*"
25. [3] The NC is better, v10—"Every man at the beginning sets out the good wine, and when the guesse have well drunk, then the inferior. You have kept the good wine until now..."
26. The best wine was kept until last—that is—the better or best covenant, out of the OC and NC, was kept for last...

27. Thus throughout the book of Hebrews—the writer repeatedly refers to superior nature of the NT—it's a better covenant, with a better Mediator, sacrifice, blood, and hope...
28. Now—this principle of the best coming last—is also true with regards to the new creation preferred over the first...
29. Thus—it's true also of our lives—no Christian has his best life now—but the next life will be better than this...
30. Matt.9:19—"No one puts new wine into old wineskins, or else the wineskins break, the wine is spilled, and the wineskins are ruined. But they put new wine into new wineskins, and both are preserved..."

## B. Practical

1. I suggest this miracle was not only intended to communicate dispensational truth—but also several personal lessons...
2. [1] The use of means—here I want to point out how this miracle weds together man's work and God's sovereignty...
3. Simply put—we are similar to these servants—who commanded to fill the waterpots with water and no more...
4. In other words—they were not responsible to change the water into wine—but they did have to fill the pots...
5. I can only wonder what these servants were saying—we need wine and here we are filling these pots with water...
6. Furthermore—remember these were not small pots—they likely were close to a hundred (or more) pounds each...
7. My point being—we are told to do certain things, for example—parents are commanded to bring up their children in the Lord...
8. Or—they are commanded to fill the waterpots with water—but brethren—they are not responsible to turn the water to wine...
9. Now—if we fail to fill the pots with water, and then simply blame God for how our children turn out—that's wrong...
10. But—this principle is true for every Christian not only parents but think about pastors—they can only fill pots with water—not wine...
11. J.C. Ryle—"We are to hear Christ's voice, and do as He says, and then leave the result to Him. Duties are ours. Events are God's. It is ours to fill the waterpots. It is Christ's to make the water wine..."
12. [2] The dignity of marriage—most commentators point out—that the first miracle performed by our Lord is at a wedding...
13. I suggest that this may also point back to chapter one and the fact that Christ is portrayed as Head of a new creation...
14. Remember what God did after He created the first creation—He made a woman for man and wed them together...
15. Now—obviously marriage is very important to Christ—especially as it portrays the love He has for the church...
16. A.W. Pink—"Christ here sanctifies the marriage relationship. Marriage was ordained by God in Eden and in John 2, the Savior for all time, set His stamp of approval upon it. To be present at this marriage was almost Christ's first public appearance after His ministry commenced. By gracing this festive gathering, our Lord distinguished and glorified this sacred institution. Observe that Christ was invited to be there. Christ's presence is essential to a blessed marriage..."
17. [a] As Head of a new creation, our Lord follows the pattern of the first creation—what was the first thing God did after creation—He established the institution of marriage...
18. Thus as Head of a new and better creation—one of the first things our Lord does is—blesses the institution of marriage...
19. [b] As Mediator of a new and better covenant—our Lord blesses marriage as it vividly pictures His covenant relations to His church...
20. [3] The emptiness of native man—I suggest the empty pots not only illustrate the Jews in general but man in particular...

21. Man by nature is empty concerning any spiritual life—he lacks all spiritual significance, worth or meaning...
22. Thus—I suggest that this first sign of Jesus, illustrates the need and provision of God's regenerating work and grace...
23. Man needs regeneration is that he's empty by nature—and God provides it—in that He fills the pot to overflowing...
24. [a] Empty moralism—this can be illustrated in many of the Jews—who had put their hope in keeping the law...
25. [b] Empty materialism—this can be illustrated in many professing Christians in our country—who have put their hope in possessions...
26. Ps.23:5—"You anoint my head with oil; my cup runs over"—that is—it overflows with the wine of the NC...
27. Jn.10:10—"The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. I have come that they may have life, and that they may have *it* more abundantly..."
28. The fact that Christians are indwelt with the Spirit—means they overflow with spiritual joy and contentment...
29. Now—this doesn't mean that Christians are always happy, trouble free or never have struggles and difficulties...
30. But it does mean—that every Christian has the Spirit of God within them—convicting, teaching, and leading them...