

## John Ch 2

“Whatever He Says To You, Do It!”

John Ch 2 unveils to us the 1<sup>st</sup> miracle that Jesus ever performed. and To me it's worth pointing out the humility of Jesus that's woven through this scene. Because if it were me; I'd be prone to burst on to the scene with some sort of magnanimous, earth shattering, kinda rock your world miracle that, “Oohed and awed” all the bystanders. Raise someone from the dead, or instead of getting in the boat to teach the people, just walk out on the water to get everyone's attention.

Think about it, if you were able to select the miracle that seemed to be the most fitting to be the arrowhead of the Lord's public ministry, what would it be? Maybe the raising of Lazarus, or the calming of the seas, or even the feeding of the 5,000, but I dare to say that of the vast majority of us, none of us would've selected this event. Something that happened so nonchalantly, so discreetly, that even the majority of the people who were there ever had a clue that it happened. One commentator said, “The inventive genius of man would have conceived an introductory scene which combined the chief features of the Transfiguration and of the giving of the Law.”

You know, thunder and lighting, the Shekinah glory all about, but I love the humility of the Lord, no need to establish Himself as somebody, no need to gather everyone's attention and place it on Himself, just quietly meeting the needs of others. How we should learn from the Lord. Jesus said, “*Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart.*” Matt 11:29 A man of humility, placing the needs of others before His own recognition, He didn't need the accolades and praise, or *recognition* of man, He was content in His *relationship* with the Father. Who needs the eyes of man when you have the eyes of God, who needs to *accolades* of man when you have the *approval* of God? and So Jesus simply saw the need, and met it. We so often see the need, and then point it out for someone else to meet, or get upset when it's not met in a way that accords with what we think the protocol should be.

But that wasn't the way the Lord operated, if a need was made known to Him, whether by Him observing it personally or someone else drawing His attention to it due to their inability to take care of it, if He was able, (which as for Him He always was) He simply took care of it. God help us that if we see a need, be it something simple, something practical, a need at the fellowship, trash on the ground, a need in our family, or whatever that we just take care of it rather than analyze and criticize someone else for not living up to our expectations. God's giving you the opportunity to be used by Him, to meet a need, take advantage of it, don't worry if anyone sees you or not, what you do in secret to the glory of God, will be rewarded on that Day openly, then we'll all see, and your reward will be eternal, if you draw attention to it now, then enjoy it because that's all the reward you'll get. Notice with me the 1<sup>st</sup> 3 Vs of Ch 2.

Vs1-3

Now if you follow the flow of the chapters and understand the layout of the land you realize that here in vs 1 where John calls our attention to the 3<sup>rd</sup> day, he's more than likely in reference to the 3<sup>rd</sup> day after Jesus called Nathanael. and There are those who wonder if John isn't perhaps purposefully revealing the fact that what happened was on the 3<sup>rd</sup> day in that there in vs 11 he says that this sign that Jesus is about to perform, "Manifested His glory." and The thought is that there may be an allusion here to the fact that Jesus glory will ultimately be revealed in its highest or fullest sense, on the 3<sup>rd</sup> day, in regards to the resurrection to which Jesus even refers here in just a minute. Is there any legitimacy to that claim, I'm not sure, it's possible I suppose.

But what I want to draw your attention to is the fact that #1 Jesus was *invited* to the wedding and #2 Jesus accepted the invitation and came *to* the wedding. and Let me tell you wise is the couple that invites Jesus to be in the midst of their wedding. There's something about a marriage that's very near and dear to the heart of God. Creation began with a wedding of which God Himself officiated as He presented Eve to Adam and we read, "*Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and they shall become one flesh.*" Gen 2:24

Creation will end with a wedding as the bride of Christ, the church will be presented to Him with out spot and with out blemish, clothed in white to live in eternal intimacy, and adoration of the bridegroom Jesus Christ Marriage speaks of that type of relationship that God desires to have with mankind, a relationship that's personal, that involves intimate communion and is full of love, yet involves order and godly structure.

So by nature a godly marriage relationship is evangelistic, it's meant to be a tool whereby people can look in and can be drawn to God in that, "If that's the kind of love relationship that I can have with God then count me in." I don't have a legal, religious routine with my wife, I have a relationship that's personal and intimate, I know her, and she knows me, we walk through life together, talk together, confide in one another. Yet how many people seek to establish and legal and religious routine with God? That's not what God wants, He wants to walk with you through life, to talk to you, He wants to reveal the deep things of His heart to you and He wants you to confide in Him, to develop a relationship that's personal and intimate with you, and with me.

So Jesus was invited to this wedding, to be there in the midst of it, and we see here that Jesus accepted the invitation, He was there. and What we need to realize in this is that by His presence at this wedding; Jesus is sanctioning, or endorsing the marriage ceremony in all it's civil, ceremonial, and legal rites. He placed His seal of approval upon all of the various aspects of the wedding, civil, ceremonial, and legal, from the very onset of His ministry.

The reason I point this out is because (unfortunately all too often) you run across the mentality (even in the church), “Hey, what difference does that little piece of paper make, why can’t we just commit to one another, love each other, live together, and just be married before God?” Yet here Jesus in His very presence at the wedding is saying, “This procedure is right and proper before God.” Because people who make this private commitment before God find it all too easy to reconsider their commitment when times get tough, there’s no accountability there. and Then they recommit to someone else at another time, or there’s this mentality, “We need to live together 1<sup>st</sup> in order to see if we’re compatible.” It’s like hunting or fishing with out a license, it’s just not right; it’s not legal. You may or may not realize that the divorce rate for people who have lived together prior to being married is approximately 50% higher than those who don’t.

It doesn’t help matters to live together prior to being married, if anything it’s harms the relationship, not even dealing with moral matters but just statistically. But on the moral level (and I’m obviously dealing with believers here, non-believers are going to live like non-believers), on the moral level (as for living together apart from the legal marriage ceremony) the bible deals very directly and forcefully with the sin of fornication.

For those who take the mentality that a legal, and formal ceremony is unnecessary, not only do they take a position that violates the law to which the bible says, “*Let every soul be subject to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and the authorities that exist are appointed by God.*” Rom 13:1 But the question needs to be reconciled then, what constitutes fornication? Because the bible is very clear regarding the sin and ramifications of the fornicator, so if marriage legalities and formalities are unnecessary, then what’s your definition of fornication? You see, Jesus says the marriage ceremony, the legal license is right.

Here in vs 3 we read where they ran out of wine, now in that day, in that culture the marriage ceremony would go on for 7 days, and the bride for that entire time wouldn’t be seen, she’d be tucked away in the back room. and The bride and groom would enjoy one another, it would be like a honeymoon with all your friends and family outside the door, but at the end of the 7 days the groom would bring her out and there would be this big celebration and all in the re-emerging of the bride. and In that there are some interesting connotations in that after the rapture, we, the bride of Christ will be tucked away for 7 years in Heaven. At the end of that time Jesus Christ returns to the earth and as you know, we (His bride) will return with Him, we’ll re-emerge with the bridegroom.

But because of this weeklong celebration here, apparently there was some miscalculation and they ran out of wine. A radical social embarrassment, and there are a # of things that we can draw from in this vs, we see that Jesus wasn't called upon until the material or physical resources were completely depleted. Now in retrospect we know that the need was always there, but it wasn't acknowledged until there was nothing else they could do. and How often we're like this, we try and stretch this, or make due with that and it's not until our every other resource is depleted that we call upon Jesus. But at least in that Mary's to be commended because she knew where to turn when a need arose of which she could do nothing about. She didn't talk to John about the matter, or Peter or Andrew, she went to Jesus.

When you have need in your life and I have a need in my life we do well to follow her example, your friends, and/or your family can't always adequately meet the need in your heart, and to expect them to bring the ultimate fulfillment to your life is wrong, only Jesus Christ can truly satisfy and tend to the deep needs of your heart and your life. No one else is able, she turned to Jesus, and we do well to do the same. The bible tells us, "*Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God.*" Phil 4:6 and That's what Mary is doing, taking her need to Jesus. Notice vs 4

Vs4

Now when we read this it almost sounds harsh, "Woman," but in reality the word used there is the same word Jesus used as He called out to Mary from the cross, it's a word that's used no less than 223 times in the NT, and it's just a general, respectful term used to acknowledge a lady. It's not necessarily endearing, but it's respectful and basically this is Jesus' signal to Mary that He's no longer in that position of being directed by her as His mother. It's like, "I know you're my earthly *mother*, but I have to be sensitive and subject to the timeline of My Heavenly *Father*." and He's saying, "It's not our responsibility to tend to this matter."

But Mary is just like the rest of us, impatient with the Lord's timing, we want things done when we want things done. But the Lord so often has to say to us, "What does your desire have to do with Me, it's not time yet, the hour of My glorification isn't yet." You see in reality Mary may've been concerned with her *vindication*, but Jesus was pointing her to the time of His *glorification*. We can so often mask our requests of the Lord in some manner of how it benefits Him, Mary's all, "Do something about this, show them who you are, it's time to come out and show the world that You're the Messiah."

Jesus said, "Not yet" you see for some 30 yrs now Mary's reputation has been in question, they all know she was pregnant before she was married, and they haven't seen any proof of anything that would somehow vindicate her in that. and Later on in this epistle when Jesus was engaged with the religious leaders they said to Him, "*We were not born of fornication;..*" John 8:41 The implication in the context being, *You were!* So for 30 yrs Mary's reputation has been assaulted, and assailed, maligned and criticized. and Finally Mary sees an opportune time for vindication, and though Jesus will vindicate her sure enough, He's telling here, "It's not about your vindication, it's about My glorification."

The hour He's in reference to here is of course His death and resurrection, the supreme evidence that He produces as to the reality of His deity, the fact that He is God come in the flesh. Will Mary have her vindication? You bet, but it won't precede His glorification, and Jesus will take care of you as well, but not until the hour by which He can be glorified, so maybe this is a word for you today. Jesus is saying to you, "I know what's going on in your life, and I'll take care of it, but not yet, My hour has not yet come." It's not about your hour, or the hour of my convenience, it's about His hour, the hour that magnifies, and glorifies Him.

But our catholic friends would do well to realize here how Jesus refuses to take directives regarding His messianic prerogatives from anyone, He's submitted to His Father's will and only His Father's will, He's under no authority of Mary whatsoever. Now I don't know if this is all the conversation, or if maybe Jesus winked at her, letting her know it would be ok, but by some means, though He made clear that it was time for her to let go as His mom, she knew He would meet the need. She knew Jesus, and Jesus is about meeting the need, so notice vs 5.

Vs5

You see, Mary didn't have authority over Jesus, she (in her last recorded words here) gives advice that we all would do well to heed, she directed people, (not to come to her) but to obey the words of Jesus. "Whatever He says to you, do it!" Mary is saying, "Don't look to me, look to Him, do what He tells you to do." What has Jesus told you to do? Get involved in the ministry? Support your husband, love your wife, submit to one another, be diligent at work, be godly parents, share the gospel at school? Then do it, whatever He says to you, do it. Jesus said, "*You are My friends if you do whatever I command you.*" John 15:14

Time obviously forbids us but we could spend all kinds of time right here talking about the things Jesus has told us to do, this book is full of things. He said, "*Abide in Me, and I in you.*" John 15:4 He said that we're to abide in Him and His word is to abide in us. He said, "*This is My commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you.*" John 15:12 We read in Luke 17:3-4 where Jesus said, "*If your brother sins against you, rebuke him; and if he repents, forgive him. And if he sins against you seven times in a day, and seven times in a day returns to you, saying, 'I repent,' you shall forgive him.*" So we know that Jesus has said, "Abide in Me, stay connected to Me, don't get out there and do your own thing, stay hooked up with Me and in Me, abide in My Word, love one another, forgive one another." So here comes the question, are you doing these things? Whatever He says to you, do it.

## Vs 6-10

Now I suppose we should deal with the obvious practical aspects of this portion 1<sup>st</sup> and then we'll spend a moment on the spiritual. People it seems inevitably will at times in order to somehow justify their desire to drink will look to this and say, "Well Jesus drank", "Jesus turned water to wine, so if it's ok for Him, it's ok for Me." and Though they fail to follow the standard Jesus set in every other area of life, they want to latch hold of this one. and Besides the fact that dysentery was common and the water was generally disgusting and so alcohol was used to kill bacteria and other germs and the wine was generally 2parts water to 1part alcohol people want to hold on to this so that they feel somehow justified in doing what they want to do.

But the fact is, is that if people truly want to follow Jesus' example when it comes to consuming alcohol, then they should read what He said at the Last supper. We read in Luke 22:18 where Jesus said, *"I say to you, I will not drink of the fruit of the vine until the kingdom of God comes."* So if you truly want to follow Jesus' example; then don't drink again until the kingdom of God comes. The fact is, that alcohol is a completely different cultural thing to us that it was to them, and it's doing nothing but destroying lives in America and so many other places today. The proverbs say, *"It is not for kings to drink wine, Nor for princes intoxicating drink; Lest they drink and forget the law, And pervert the justice of all the afflicted. Give strong drink to him who is perishing, And wine to those who are bitter of heart. Let him drink and forget his poverty, And remember his misery no more."* Prov 31:4-7

So if you're perishing, meaning "damned", you don't know the Lord, and you're bitter of heart, then I guess you can go for it, party it up, grab all you can in this life, it's all you'll ever get. But as for those in the ministry, you kings unto your God, and those of you in leadership positions, it's a no go, lest you forget the Word of God and your judgment, and discernment be tainted. and Of course the pastoral epistles deal with this same issue, we need to maintain our clarity of thought, and be sharp in our understanding lest we be caught off guard, and fall into compromise.

But I like the fact that Jesus used these waterpots of the Jewish ceremonial cleansing rites. and He in essence said, "Cleansing isn't about what you do externally, it's about taking in internally the wine of God's Spirit." The bible says, *"Do not be drunk with wine, in which is dissipation; but be filled with the Spirit."* Eph 5:18 and Jesus is saying, "It's not about the external, or the outward, it's about the inward, God's looking to the heart, the washing and cleansing of the heart."

We know that wine is the biblical symbol of joy, and theirs ran out, the world can't meet the need, but God gives joy unspeakable and full of glory and it never runs dry. You see in this miracle the Lord brought fullness where there was emptiness, joy where there was disappointment, something internal for that which was only external. In humility very few even knew that He did it, He just quietly met the need and allowed others to share in the blessing. He could've done the whole thing, but He allowed the servants to take part in it, had they not obeyed, things would've been different that day.

But they didn't ask questions, they didn't say, "What's water in a vessel have to do with the fact that we need wine?" and Notice Jesus didn't tell them the end from the beginning, He directed each step, and when they obeyed the 1<sup>st</sup> direction, He gave them the 2<sup>nd</sup>, and not until they'd been obedient. We so often want A-Z Jesus says, "You'll get 'B' when you're obedient to 'A'."

Now when did the water become wine? We don't know, I like to think that as soon as the master of the feast purposed to take it in, maybe as he was reaching for the cup and that transition was being made from one hand to the next it became wine. Because we're sort of like those vessels, and Jesus wants to fill us up to the brim with the living water of His Word. and He wants us to ladle it out for people. But something happens, not so much when we ladle it out as when that person purposes to take it in, and in that transition when it goes from my hand into yours and you purpose in your heart to take it in; God converts that water to wine. and As you take it in, it does something in your inner man; it fills you with joy and deals with you internally as by the Holy Spirit. Moses' 1<sup>st</sup> plague was water to blood, Jesus' 1<sup>st</sup> miracle was water to wine, the Law brings judgment, the Spirit brings joy.

Vs 11

You may've heard of neat little stories of Jesus' childhood, healing birds and doing little miraculous things, sounds neat, not true, this is the beginning of signs that Jesus accomplished.

Vs 12-16

What do we see here, "*Be angry, and do not sin.*" Eph 4:26 Righteous indignation, these people were making merchandise of the people of God. and These people were out in the court of the Gentiles where they should've been leading people to Christ, and instead they were setting up barricades the kept them away from Christ. Selling temple approved sacrifices, and exchanging foreign currencies for the temple shekel at radically low exchange rate, taking a lot and giving them a little. You know whenever you see Jesus angry in the scriptures it's always when people are placing barricades that prevent people from reaching Him. Be it causing a child to stumble, or not allowing children to come to Him, or when He healed a man on the Sabbath and met opposition, or here in the court of the Gentiles.

His anger was always against that which prohibited people from coming to Him, be it religious legalism or whatever. But I like the flow of this ch because it goes from *conversion* to *cleansing*. From converting the water to wine, to cleansing the temple, and that's always the way it goes. You've heard you have to catch the fish before you can clean it, Jesus purged the temple that much is for sure, but He had to go in 1<sup>st</sup>. and We know that our bodies are meant to be the temple of God, and so often we meet people who want to get rid of this and do away with that and then they say they'll be open to God. But this shows us that only Jesus is truly equipped to deal with those things in our lives, Jesus is the One who cleanses the Temple and He needs to come in before He can do that.

Oh how we need to let Jesus overturn the tables of greed, or lust, or envy, or anger, in our hearts, those vices that hinder us from drawing near to God, let Jesus purge your life fresh today. He was never furious and out of control, sometimes it just takes a word like He issued to those who were handling the doves, other times we need the scourging, just let Jesus chasten your life, *“For whom the LORD loves He chastens, And scourges every son whom He receives.”* Heb 12:6

#### Vs17-22

Notice they didn't ask “Why”, they all knew why, they just wanted to know by what means He was going to demonstrate His authority to do it. and No doubt motioning to Himself He said, “Destroy this temple, and in 3 days I will raise it up.” and So from the beginning of His ministry He begins to allude to His death and resurrection, the cross that awaits Him. Of course they missed that altogether and thought He was in reference to the temple that they were in. Notice in vs 11 His disciples believed, in vs 17 they remembered and now here in vs 22 they remembered and believed.

#### Vs23-25

Again different people follow Jesus for different reasons, be it they think He'll make them rich, or maybe they'll never be sick or subject to the frailties of life, some follow Him till they get the favor they need then they split. and So in vs 24 the word translated “commit” is the same word that's translated “believed” in vs 23. They believed in Him, but He didn't believe in them, why? Because He knew their hearts, their love and commitment wasn't genuine, they were wowed by the signs but not committed to the Son. We'll pick up on this next week, but one final thought. Jesus knew what was in them, He knew their hearts. Question, who alone knows the heart of Man? *“I, the LORD, search the heart, I test the mind, Even to give every man according to his ways, According to the fruit of his doings.”* Jer 17:10 Only God knows the heart, John is always pointing us to the deity of Jesus, He's God, whatever He tells you, do it.

Maybe as by the Spirit of the Lord He's telling you now that it's time to open up your heart and surrender to Him, do it. Don't let this moment pass you by, it's hard to kick against the goads, to go against what you know is right. and If God is dealing with you, convicting your heart that you might give your life to Jesus, because He gave His life for you, then respond to His call. Jesus willingly hung upon the cross having shed His blood for the remission of your sin, so that if you'll just call upon Him you'll be saved. You can have new life, let Him overturn the tables in your heart; only Jesus can cleanse your heart and your soul. As far as the east is from the west, so He'll cast your sin from you, but only if you let Him, will you do what He says today, will you give your heart to J.C?