

Introduction: Who are the people who are closest to God? And, what is the greatest need of every person on earth? Before you answer these questions, realize that God's ways are not our ways. His ways are perfect and ours are not. (Isaiah 55:8-9) Furthermore, as The Creator of everything, including every person, He knows what we really need as opposed to what we think we want. *** Today's event from early in Jesus' public ministry goes a long way in answering these two all important questions. I will start with giving general, simplified answers. Then we will get specific details about the general answers from closer examination of our Bible passages. *** First, it is people who are lowly, humble and know they are needy and unable to meet their needs by their own resources, who are closest to God. **** Second, we are all born with dead spirits, unable to connect with The God who loves us and sent His Son to earth as a human baby boy born to a virgin, so we can be reconciled to Him. Until we let go of our own desires and turn to God in the humble dependent faith of a child, we are dead to God and dead to who He made us to be. Once our spirits are made alive by The Holy Spirit, who also comes to live in us, we can begin real life: life with God, life in God, and God teaching us by the same Spirit who inspired The Bible. Over time, as we more and more live God's way, our souls get healed; and, we find He will give us the physical strength necessary to do His will for our lives. God works in people in this order: first spirit, then soul and finally, body. We are three part beings. God is concerned with our full being, but not always as we think. *** Let's now examine our texts.

I. Mary tells Jesus there is no more wine for the wedding-feast and He commands the servants to fill pots with water.

(John 2:1-8)

- A. Mary, Jesus and His disciples are called to a wedding-feast; Mary tells Jesus there is no more wine, He says it is not yet His hour, and she says to the servants, 'Do what He tells you'. (Verses 1-5)
1. In the third day there was a wedding-feast in Cana of Galilee and the mother of Jesus was being there. (Verse 1)
Wedding-feast: The word also means wedding or marriage. In Jesus' day engagements lasted up to a year. Marriages were to grow stronger over a lifetime. So wedding-feasts were celebrated with joy.
Mary: Cana ('place of reeds') was twenty miles west of the Sea of Galilee. Mary is the first guest named and is referred to by her relation to Jesus.
 2. Both Jesus and His disciples were called to the wedding-feast. (Verse 2)
Jesus: We would say Jesus and His disciples were invited. But, in keeping with a high view of marriages, the stronger word 'called' is used.
 3. When they lacked wine, the mother of Jesus says to Him, 'Wine they are not having'. (Verse 3)
No wine: In saying this, she is strongly implying Jesus should do something about it.
 4. Jesus says to her, 'What to Me and to thee, woman! Is not yet The Hour of Me'. (Verse 4)
Woman: 'Woman' is a strong expression and indicates Jesus' attitude is approaching exasperation.
Not yet: Jesus had many 'hours' in His ministry on earth. His ultimate 'hour' was when He gave His life for all people on The Cross. This 'hour' is His time of public teaching and healing miracles.
 5. The mother of Him says to the servants, 'Whatever He may say to y'all, y'all must do'. (Verse 5)
Mary's command: Mary is growing in her understanding of her Son and His mission. Since Simeon's prophecy on Jesus' fortieth day (Luke 2:25-35) and her misunderstanding of His actions at age twelve (Luke 2:41-50) by continual 'keeping in mind' and 'putting together in her heart' of what she saw Jesus do (Luke 2:19, 51), she now has more understanding of who He is and so commands others in faith to 'Do whatever He says!'
- B. He commands them to fill water-pots with water, and then to draw out and bear to the feast-ruler, and they did so. (Verses 6-8)
1. There were six stone water-pots, being set there for the Jewish purification rite, each containing two or three measures. (Verse 6)
Resources: These are Jesus' available resources. A 'firkin' is nine royal gallons, so each held eighteen to twenty seven gallons. Using the midpoint, they could hold one hundred thirty five gallons.
 2. Jesus said to them, 'Y'all must fill the water-pots with water', and they filled them up. (Verse 7)
Water: Jesus commanded them to fill the pots with water and they obey to the maximum.
 3. And He says to them, 'Y'all must draw out now and y'all must be bearing to the feast-ruler, and they bear it. (Verse 8)
Draw and bear: Now Jesus commands them to draw the water and bear it to the (wedding) feast-ruler. Again they obey Him. The stage is now set for a miracle.

II. The feast-ruler tastes and tells the groom, 'Thou kept the good wine until now'; the first of the signs Jesus did: fulfilling a Psalm about Yahweh refreshing hearts. (John 2:9-11; Psalm 104:14-16)

- A. The feast-ruler tastes the water made wine and tells the groom, 'Unlike everyman, thou kept the good wine until now'. (John 2:9-10)

1. But as the feast-ruler had tasted the water that had been made wine, and he not having known from what it is; but, the servants who had drawn had been knowing, the feast-ruler is calling the bridegroom. (Verse 9)
Tastes: The feast-ruler was expecting wine, as he tasted it on behalf of the wedding party.
Servants knew: The servants knew they had put ordinary water in the water-pots. In 'real time' they were the only ones knowing that Jesus had done something miraculous to the water. God favors the humble.

Only servants knew of Jesus' first miracle

2. And he says to him, 'Everyman is first the good wine putting (out) and when they have been filled with drink, the lesser (they put out); but thou have kept the good wine until now'. (*Verse 10*)

Everyman: It is human nature to first put out the most expensive of anything, then assume people come to a point of not caring anymore and save money by putting out the least expensive.

Thou: But, the feast-ruler praises the bridegroom, saying this last wine served is of good and beautiful quality.

Jesus: The Gospel writer wants readers to know Jesus blessed this wedding. Jesus wants the couple to know their marriage will be stronger over time. Many relationships may fade with time, but God wills marriages grow stronger over time.

God desires weddings to produce strong marriages

- B. This was the first of the signs Jesus did in Cana; and, He revealed his glory and His disciples believed in Him. (*John 2:11*)

1. Jesus did this first of His signs in Cana of Galilee and revealed His glory. (*Verse 11a*)

First miracle: This was the first miraculous sign of Jesus' public ministry.

Revealed His Glory: It revealed His glory, if only to Mary and the wedding servants. He also revealed His grace: at His mother's initial request Jesus seemed inclined to do nothing; then, He does an amazing miracle – Grace!

Only servants knew of Jesus' first miracle

2. And His disciples believed in Him. (*Verse 11b*)

Faith: His disciples also were aware of what He did. And, John wrote his Gospel to show Jesus always acts to give faith to people and increase the faith of people (John 20:30-31).

- C. Thus Jesus fulfilled a Psalm which declares Yahweh will support-refresh His people. (*Psalms 104:14-16*)

1. [The Covenant God] is causing growth of grass for animals / and vegetation for the service of *adam* / to bring forth bread from the earth. (*Verse 14*)

Covenant God: The eternally existing Yahweh causes all kinds of green plants to grow for both animals and people (Genesis 1:29-30).

2. Wine to rejoice the heart of men / and to make shine his face from oil / and bread to the heart of men to support-refresh. (*Verse 15*)

Bread and wine: Bread and wine bring joy and strength to the heart of people. Melchizedek brought bread and wine to Abraham (Genesis 14:18) and is compared as a high priest to Jesus who gave bread and wine as a sacrament of communion with God (Hebrews 7:15-19).

Rejoice the heart: Notice that joy starts in the heart, the inner person, then becomes physical strength from bread.

Gospel: Let us refresh our memories that a right relationship with God starts with a spiritual birth coming from the surrender of self-desires in childlike dependent faith in God through Jesus (Matthew 18:1-4). Then, when daily encountering God through His Word to be empowered by The Holy Spirit to live according to God's ways, people can think God's thoughts, feel His feelings and desire His desires. In other words, a person's soul is healed. *Selah* First and foremost, this is the greatest miracle Jesus can work in every human heart.

Relationships: All this results in healed human relationships: parent-child, siblings, employer-employee, and for those called to marriage – husband-wife (Ephesians 5:21-6:9). When wives submit to husbands who love them sacrificially as Jesus loves His Church, wives will come to more and more respect their husbands so the marriage becomes stronger.

God desires weddings to produce strong marriages

Future wedding-feast: And, for all who are in The Church (The Bride of Christ – Revelation 21:9), there will be a final wedding-feast when God is fully glorified (Revelation 19:6-9). Just as with Jesus' first miracle, disciples who have grown into saints, by God's gracious gift, through righteous acts of faith, will be invited to this wedding-feast.

They will all know what the servants of the groom in Cana knew.

Only servants knew of Jesus' first miracle

3. Are watered abundantly the trees of Yahweh / the cedars of Lebanon which He planted. (*Verse 16*)

Tree: This speaks of fruit-bearing trees. But Church fathers who often spiritualized Scripture because Jesus Himself explained that the Torah, prophets and writings all pointed to Him (Luke 24:25-27, 32), would say that no tree ever bore more fruit than The Cross on which Jesus died. Will we receive Him? And, receive His work for us?

Conclusion: Through events at a wedding-feast, Jesus demonstrates His miraculous powers to household servants.

Then a groom learns that, contrary to human experience, it is God's will that the end of ordinary things in life can be superior to the beginning. Finally, Jesus Himself is the fulfillment of God's promise to support and refresh people.

Only servants knew of Jesus' first miracle