

1 On the third day a wedding took place at Cana in Galilee. Jesus' mother was there, 2 and Jesus and his disciples had also been invited to the wedding. 3 When the wine was gone, Jesus' mother said to him, "They have no more wine."

4 "Dear woman, why do you involve me?" Jesus replied. "My time has not yet come."

5 His mother said to the servants, "Do whatever he tells you."

6 Nearby stood six stone water jars, the kind used by the Jews for ceremonial washing, each holding from twenty to thirty gallons.

7 Jesus said to the servants, "Fill the jars with water"; so they filled them to the brim.

8 Then he told them, "Now draw some out and take it to the master of the banquet."

They did so, 9 and the master of the banquet tasted the water that had been turned into wine. He did not realize where it had come from, though the servants who had drawn the water knew. Then he called the bridegroom aside 10 and said, "Everyone brings out the choice wine first and then the cheaper wine after the guests have had too much to drink; but you have saved the best till now."

11 This, the first of his miraculous signs, Jesus performed at Cana in Galilee. He thus revealed his glory, and his disciples put their faith in him. (NIV84)

Jesus is Revealed ... AS A MIRACLE WORKER

It's the big reveal! If you ever watched the show Extreme Makeover: Home Edition, that's what they called the last set of the show. The family would be invited back from the Disney World trip that they were sent on, the community would gather and then they would all chant the catch phrase – who remembers it? "Move that Bus!!" Then the big Coach bus with Ty Pennington's face on it would drive out of the way and the people would see what they were waiting to see! The beautiful new house - much bigger, nicer, cleaner, safer, more modern than the one that was there before! The Big Reveal was really what the show was all about!!

The season of Epiphany is when we look at Jesus being revealed. The gospel lessons in this season are always those that show Jesus in action. He is actively working, using his power, his glory, his love to carry out God's plan of salvation. We saw him revealed last week as Messiah at his baptism. And throughout this season of Epiphany we will see our Savior revealed – appearing as Savior, Lord and King.

Today we see another, "Move that Bus!!" moment of Jesus' public ministry. **JESUS IS REVEALED**– this time **AS A MIRACLE WORKER**.

There are so many places in God's Word where the actual script is different than the one I would write. I'm guessing if you were the director of the screen play that became God's Word, you might have done a few things differently too.

Would you have written your main character, Jesus, be a mighty warrior or the humble and lowly servant that he was? Would you have chosen him to be born to royalty and wealth or to poor peasants on government mandated vacation? Would you place him in a palace or a manger? Would you make him flashy and eye catching, or would you dress him plain and ordinary, just like everyone else? Would you bring him back to his capital city with chariots and armies or alone on a donkey? Would you

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give him victory in battle or make his victory one that is only secured in death? There are so many things that God knows better than we do. In every way his ways are higher and better than ours. Paul made that point when he said ***For the foolishness of God is wiser than man's wisdom, and the weakness of God is stronger than man's strength*** (1 Corinthians 1:25).

When the fireworks show begins, it starts pretty dramatically. Usually it's a bit startling if you weren't ready for it! It starts with a bang – quite literally, right? There's no easing into it. There's no starting with some quiet ground level fireworks and then working our way up to the loud and bright ones. Usually the beginning is one of the biggest and fastest parts of the show. There's no doubting whether or not the show has begun. The beginning of the show is usually one of the most impressive parts.

And so if I were writing the script of Jesus first miracle, I'd have started it out with a bang! We're talking something loud and for all to see. It would have been public and it would have been spectacular! A fireworks display to wow the world!

But God's plan was much different! In a sleepy town in Galilee, at wedding ceremony for some friends, it was a miracle that only a few people knew took place. This was the first miracle that Jesus performed.

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⁷ Jesus said to the servants, "Fill the jars with water"; so they filled them to the brim.

⁸ Then he told them, "Now draw some out and take it to the master of the banquet." They did so, ⁹ and the master of the banquet tasted the water that had been turned into wine. He did not realize where it had come from, though the servants who had drawn the water knew.

Jesus showed his power over nature. In nature, water doesn't turn to wine, but when Jesus is in control it can. Jesus shows his compassion in this act as well. It would have been a hugely embarrassing thing for this couple to have run out of wine. Weddings sometimes lasted a week and wine was a staple drink, if there was no wine, the party might have to be cancelled. It would be a black mark on the couple and definitely not the way to start their new lives together.

I think this miracle is a good reminder of what kind of miracle worker our God is. If you would list out the hardships and tragedies that were touching the lives of people who lived in Cana at the time, my guess is that a ruined wedding would likely not be on the top of the list. There were likely those with diseases, paralysis, facing death. Once again, if you and I were writing the script, Jesus would be at the hospital ER treating the dying or at the morgue reuniting families to lost loved ones. But Jesus went to a party, because there he could show his care and concern. Though it might have been a small concern on the scale of world events, it was important to Jesus, important enough for him to act.

Don't miss that lesson! It's important to Jesus. Whether your problems are tragedies or small concerns they are important to Jesus. He wants to help! Never once will Jesus reply to your prayer, "Not now I'm busy."

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I was watching a football game last night, and in order to do that I had to more or less ignore my kids. They wanted to spend time with me, but I wanted to spend time watching the game, in silence. I may have even at one point said the following: “If you are under the age of fourteen you are not allowed to talk!” You can rejoice that you have a better Father than me! Our God is never too busy to hear us. He’s not preoccupied with other bigger problems. He doesn’t ask you to take a number or wait until it’s convenient for him. He loves to hear and loves to answer prayer.

So let’s remember that and pray to him. Let’s let him carry our problems, big and small to him. There’s no need to filter our requests or weed out the less important ones. Let’s take all our requests to Jesus! He wants to carry them all, he longs to answer our prayers, and he will answer them in a way that’s best for us.

Too often we overestimate our own strength. We think we can or we feel we should be doing our share and pull our own weight. We think that we can’t bother God with something because it’s too small. “God has other people’s real problems to deal with!” Or maybe we’re on the other side of the spectrum. Maybe we underestimate God’s strength! The cancer is so far progressed that even the doctors are calling it terminal – at a loss for what could be done to stop its growth. The relationship ended in such a hostile way that even God can’t fix it, we suppose. “It would take a miracle for that problem to go away!”, we think, but we forget what Jesus revealed at the wedding in Cana – He is a Miracle Worker!! And he loves to change things for us, to do the really hard things, even the impossible things to bring us blessing and hope.

Sometimes our doubt is not related to God’s power to help, but to his desire to help. He must not care about me. I’m sick, I’m hurting, I’m tired, but God must not care!! “He can change it but he won’t!”

And those two paths end up in the same place, us feeling sorry for ourselves, lamenting the lot we have in life, wallowing through life in self-pity. And that’s not even the worst part, the worst part is that it’s called sin to not pray to God. It’s selfish and arrogant sin to carry our burdens on our own and to refuse to ask God for help. When we doubt his love or his path for us, when we refuse to accept his plans as what’s best for us, it shows a lack of contentment, a lack of trust, a lack of faith in God’s ability or desire to help! And because of our sin, we deserve the trials that come our way. For the times that we try to go through life without God, we deserve to go through eternity without God. We deserve pain and punishment, death and hell for these and all our sins. We don’t deserve blessings but a curse from our God.

But our God is one who changes things. He changes our guilty verdict into perfection. He changes our sin into purity, he changes our dismal future into a rock solid hope. He changes things for us – an even more drastic change than water to wine, he changes death to life. He creates faith where it wasn’t before, where it had no hope of growing on its own, Jesus changes things!

And he changes attitudes as well! Now we need not be overcome by grief, but rather we can rejoice with Paul - ***I consider that our present sufferings are not worth comparing with the glory that will be revealed in us*** (Romans 8:18). No matter what this world might throw at us, no matter what challenges – health, financial, relational – might come our way, there is hope in the one who has been revealed as Messiah, as Miracle Worker. No matter what hardship, trial, or tragedy we

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might face, nothing can separate us from the love of Jesus – nothing can take away his love – nothing can compare to the riches and glories that are waiting for us in heaven.

And much like Jesus' glory was revealed through his mighty power, so that glory will be ours – glorified perfect bodies and a will and mind united and 100% in harmony with God. The day that God's glory is revealed in you is most certainly a wonderful day! The beginning of a glorious future

This, the first of his miraculous signs, Jesus performed at Cana in Galilee. He thus revealed his glory, and his disciples put their faith in him.

There in Cana, Jesus opened the eyes of those who were following him. They heard that Jesus was the Messiah, and now they had some proof. Jesus revealed his glory to them in this display of power and they believed. Another miracle. That the disciples would believe, that they would not reject the message or try to disprove the miracle, but rather the gospel that Jesus preached changed their hearts and those hearts believed that Jesus was the glorious Savior-God.

Though we don't see miraculous displays as often as the disciples did, we have the Miracle Worker as our brother. His Word records his power and his love and he worked conversion in our hearts. Our faith lives probably didn't begin with a bang, but with some humble water and some simple words we were washed and sanctified into God's family. With the simple message of grace, the gospel did what the gospel does – it changes people, it changed you! With the Spirit living in your heart, you'll never be the same!! Rejoice in it! Celebrate the change!!

And now filled with a message about a Savior who changed water to wine, who changed crippled to well, who stops disease in its tracks we can go and announce his glory and love. Our Savior changes things – sin to pardon and death to life. That's a message worth revealing. That's a savior worth sharing. That's a change worth living to the glory of God and to the benefit of his Church.