

A SURPRISING FIRST MIRACLE

SERMON OUTLINE

Introduction: Jesus' first sign

John 2:11 – This, the first of his signs, Jesus did at Cana in Galilee, and manifested his glory. And his disciples believed in him.

"I'd rather laugh with the sinners than cry with the saints, the sinners are much more fun." – Billy Joel

1. Why running out of wine was a disaster

John 2:8 – ...the master of the feast...

John 2:3-4 – When the wine ran out, the mother of Jesus said to him, "They have no wine." 4 And Jesus said to her, "Woman, what does this have to do with me? My hour has not yet come." (or "... why are you bothering me about a wedding disaster? I'm not dying!")

Genesis 2: 22, 24-25 (NLT) – (The Lord God) brought her to the man ... 24 ... and the two are united into one. 25 Now the man and his wife were both naked, but they felt no shame.

Revelation 21:2-3 (NLT) - I saw the holy city, the new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven like a bride beautifully dressed for her husband. 3 ... He will live with them, and they will be his people. God himself will be with them. (See John 3:29 – Jesus is the bridegroom.)

2. What a wedding disaster has to do with Jesus

John 2:5-8 – 5 (Mary to the servants) ... "Do whatever he tells you." 6 Now there were six stone water jars there for the Jewish rites of purification, each holding twenty or thirty gallons. 7 Jesus said to the servants, "Fill the jars with water." And they filled them up to the brim. 8 And he said to them, "Now draw some out and take it to the master of the feast." So they took it. 9 When the master of the feast tasted the water now become wine, and did not know where it came from (though the servants who had drawn the water knew), the master of the feast called the bridegroom 10 and said to him, "Everyone serves the good wine first, and when people have drunk freely, then the poor wine. But you have kept the good wine until now."

Isaiah 25:6, 8-9 – On this mountain the Lord of hosts will make for all peoples a feast of rich food, a feast of well-aged wine ... 8 He will swallow up death forever; and the Lord God will wipe away tears from all faces... 9 It will be said on that day, "Behold, this is our God; we have waited for him, that he might save us. This is the Lord; we have waited for him; let us be glad and rejoice in his salvation."

3. What this disaster has to do with us

- The party-heart of God
- The necessity of humble trust
- The potential of grace
- The uniqueness of Christian perspective

Purposeful reflecting...

- Ask the Lord to speak, then spend five minutes in silence. If you catch your mind wandering, that's okay; gently re-direct your attention to the presence of God. He promises never to leave or forsake us. It may help to repeat a verse of Scripture or Bible truth. Time in silence is about learning the skill of paying attention to God.

Experience

- Think back over the various people present at the Cana wedding (Mary, the bride and groom, the master of the feast, the servants, the disciples). Imagining what they may have experienced, which one resonates most with you? Why?
- What happens in your emotional heart to imagine that what Jesus wants most for you is to experience a party atmosphere filled with abundant joy?

Transform

- Reflect on Isaiah 25:6-9. Is this how you tend to think of "heaven"? How does the biblical concept that our eternity is one of physical, sensory enjoyment and pleasure impact your take on this world? How does it impact your take on the world to come?
- Where has life in this broken world proven disappointing to you? Are you able to handle those disappointments from the perspective of Jesus? Or do you find yourself frequently trapped in negative attitudes and emotions about them (e.g., bitterness, resentment, jealousy, depression, etc.)? Talk to God as appropriate based on your answers.

Share

- We all know people who are trapped in negative emotions from their life experiences. Ask God to show you one for whom you can begin to pray for freedom and healing. If you know another Christian who's a friend of this person, ask him or her to join you in praying for your mutual friend. (Share what you've discovered from the message as background.)
- Ask someone if you can tell him or her the most encouraging thing that happened to you as a result of this message. If you get permission, share the details.