

January 30, 2013

Water into Wine

John 2:1-12

LESSON FOCUS*"Call upon Me in the day of trouble; I will deliver you, and you shall glorify Me."* Psalm 50:15

Some call it a magic trick, to others it was a casual favor to a friend, but to John it was the way in which Jesus showed forth His glory.

On the third day a wedding took place at Cana in Galilee. Jesus' mother was there and Jesus and His disciples had also been invited to the wedding. When the wine was gone, Jesus' mother said to Him, "They have no more wine." "Dear woman, why do you involve me," Jesus replied, "My time has not yet come." His mother said to the servants, "Do whatever He tells you."

Nearby stood six stone water jars, the kind the Jews use for ceremonial washing, each holding from 20 to 30 gallons. Jesus said to the servants, "Fill the jars with water," so they filled them to the brim. Then He said to them, "Now draw some out and take it to the master of the banquet."

They did so and the master of the banquet tasted the water that had been turned into wine. He did not realize where it had come from although the servants who had drawn the water knew. Then he called the bridegroom aside 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."

This, the first of his miraculous signs, Jesus performed in Cana of Galilee. He thus revealed His Glory and the disciples put their faith in Him. (**John 2:1-11**)

What Was That Again?

Aside from the fact that changing water into wine requires supernatural ability, the most astonishing thing about this miracle is that because of it "He thus revealed His Glory and the disciples put their faith in Him." Helping a friend with a beverage problem as a favor to His mom? Many commentators put this miracle way down their list of great things Jesus did, if they include it at all, but John put it first and attached considerable significance to it. Must be more going on here than meets the eye.

The 3rd day of the week is Tuesday on the Jewish calendar and is still the preferred day for weddings in Israel. That's because on the original 3rd day, God pronounced things "good" twice; the only time He did so in the 7 days of Creation. Therefore the 3rd day is known as a day of double blessing, the best day of the week to begin a new life. Also Jewish wedding feasts lasted for 7 days, and to run out of wine so early would have been embarrassing to say the least. That's probably why Mary asked Jesus to get involved in something that was really not their concern.

And lastly the stone jars held water normally used only for ceremonial washing, a symbolic act of cleansing from sin, not for cleaning off the dust of the road or other dirt. They were placed at the door so a person would not enter a friend's house in a ceremonially "unclean" state and contaminate the

house. By dipping their fingers into the water and wiping them dry, a person would symbolically “wash away their sins” and be ceremonially clean. When we say, “I’m washing my hands of this matter,” we really mean we’re trying to absolve ourselves of any responsibility for it. The phrase comes from this practice, which was soon to be immortalized by Pontius Pilate in the matter of Jesus’ trial and conviction. Some believe that this water would also have contained a sprinkling of ashes from a red heifer, in case anyone had inadvertently touched something dead (see **Numbers 19**).

Jesus commanded unnamed servants to completely fill 6 (the number of man) jars that were stone, cold, and empty (a model of our unregenerate hearts; **Ezek. 36:25-27**) with water. In **John 16:5-14** the Holy spirit is described as One who would not speak of himself, but only of Jesus. In fact the only name by which we know the Holy Spirit is actually His job description; Comforter (KJV) or Counselor (NIV). This title is derived from the Greek word parakletos, which can also be translated intercessor or advocate. These servants are a model of the Holy Spirit, Who accomplishes the work of regeneration in our hearts (**Titus 3:4-7**), filling us with Living Water (**John 7:37-39**).

The water, normally used for ceremonial cleansing, immediately turned to wine and so that which had formerly only temporarily cleansed a person from sin now became symbolic of the Blood of Jesus that washes us clean forever (**Luke 22:20**). The master of the banquet remarked that the bridegroom had saved the best till last signifying that the New Covenant that permanently cleanses us (represented by the wine), is far superior to the Old Covenant that only temporarily set aside our sins (represented by the water). Thus by this miracle Jesus truly did reveal His Glory and you can see why the disciples put their faith in Him.

WELCOME ACTIVITY

Water Play

You’ll need:

Tub of water

Water toys

Towels to dry off with

Allow children time to play in the water. Watch so they don’t drench themselves!

After they’ve played for a few minutes say: **Today we’re going to hear a Bible story about water. Let’s listen!**

BIBLE STORY

Water into Wine

John 2:1-12

Open your Bible so children can see you “reading” God’s Word. Show them your Bible and the words to they know what you’re saying is coming from God’s Word. Use Tell the Story idea below.

“Call upon Me in the day of trouble;” Psalm 50:15

Jesus and the Wedding

Have you ever been to a wedding? What kinds of things did you see there? (Allow your preschoolers to share what they have seen. If necessary, prompt them with things like a cake, pretty dresses, flowers . . .)

In our lesson from the Bible today, we read that Jesus went to a wedding. At this wedding he saw his mother and his friends. He also saw the bride and the groom. He saw waiters and he even saw six big stone jugs! Have you ever seen big jugs or pitchers made from stone at a wedding? You know what? I’ve been to a lot of weddings and I have never seen big stone jugs either! How many jugs did He see? 1-2-3-4-5-6!

These jugs were BIG! In fact, each one held more water than you use when you take a bath! Each one held thirty gallons of water and they were used so that people could wash their hands. You see, when Jesus grew up, they had no sinks and running water in their houses like we do.

While Jesus was at the wedding, they ran out of the wine they were drinking. When Jesus found out, He did an amazing thing. Jesus changed the water in those six big jugs into wine. Now everyone who had come to the wedding would still have something to drink! Jesus knew they needed something and He provided it.

Pray: Thank you, Jesus, for changing water to wine. Thank you for giving me the things I need, like clothes and shoes and food. Amen.

GOD’S WORD IN MY HEART

Read this passage from your Bible. Ask students to locate it in a Bible too. Help them learn this verse.

“Call upon Me in the day of trouble;” Psalm 50:15

GAME IDEAS

Pass the Jar

Directions: This game is played like Hot Potato; however, you will give the children a small clay vessel or empty jar to represent the water and wine jars used at the wedding feast to pass around the circle. Have the children sit in a circle and hand one child the jar. Play the music and have the children pass the jar around the circle until the music stops. When the music stops say the Bible verse for today's lesson.

Color Changes

Observe color changes: drop a drop of red food coloring into a plastic cup. Talk about how this is simply red water, but the Lord could change it to wine!

Taste

Bring a little grape juice for everyone to taste

CLOSING ACTIVITY

Gather children around you.

Only Jesus can turn water into wine. He took care of the wedding guests. Let's thank him for taking care of us too!

Thank you Jesus for being my friend. Thank you for always hearing me and taking care of me. Amen.