

# John – A Devotional Commentary from God’s Daily Word Ministries

## Chapter 2

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Scripture references for lessons on John: The New King James Version.  
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## John 2:1-5 - Lesson #14

We continue our study of the Gospel of John with the beginning of Jesus' public ministry. Chapter two begins a section referred to as The Signs of Christ. In this section (chapters 2-11) we will see several miracles, but each will be a sign which points to a deeper truth and reveals Jesus as the Son of God. The first miracle takes place at a grand celebration, a wedding.

John 2:1-5

"On the third day there was a wedding in Cana of Galilee, and the mother of Jesus was there. Now both Jesus and His disciples were invited to the wedding. And when they ran out of wine, the mother of Jesus said to Him, 'They have no wine.' Jesus said to her, 'Woman, what does your concern have to do with Me? My hour has not yet come.' His mother said to the servants, whatever He says to you, do it."

The most interesting part of this passage is simply that it was a celebration and Jesus was there! The wedding ceremony would certainly include some dedicated devotion to God, but the main purpose of the day was to celebrate life, happiness and love. Jesus didn't stand on the outside with a look that said "When you finish with these trivial passing pleasures, come see Me about what is important and eternal." He rejoiced, He shared, He lived!

I'm not suggesting we spend a single moment of our life with our eyes off of Christ, but many serious Christians (myself definitely included) need to do a better job of living a life of joy; "In Your presence is fullness of joy; at Your right hand are pleasures forevermore" (Psalm 16:11). Granted, this is speaking about true joy being in the presence of God, but is it possible to be in God's presence and filled with His joy while attending a common social gathering? "Rejoice in the Lord always. Again I will say rejoice!" (Philippians 4:4). This is a great verse about rejoicing in times of trial, but it's also our challenge to live a life characterized by joy - a joy which others can see and are drawn to.

In the middle of this celebration, Jesus' mother came to Him with a problem, "They have no wine." Oh, no!! It's difficult for us to understand the significance, but in a culture where hospitality is so highly valued it would be a disgrace to the entire family to run out of supplies. Mary must have been close to the wedding family because she felt great compassion and went to Jesus for help. She wasn't sure how Jesus would help, but she knew He would.

He loves us so much! He desires to be with us EVERY moment and listen to EVERY need. There will always be places we must avoid - places which would clearly bring offense to a risen Savior - but let's remember the joy of His presence which is independent of our surroundings and learn to share His joy simply by the way we live.

Have A Great Day!

## John 2:6-7 - Lesson #15

In our last lesson we saw Jesus attending a wedding and were encouraged to share the good news by living an active life of true joy. But then, when Mary told Jesus they had run out of wine, He replies in what might appear a rude manner; "Woman, what does your concern have to do with Me?" (John 2:4).

The Greek word for woman is also used when Jesus is on the cross; "When Jesus therefore saw His mother, and the disciple whom He loved standing by, He said..., 'Woman, behold your son!'" (John 19:26). This is clearly a term of endearment and not of rudeness. Another time is after the resurrection when Jesus lovingly addressed Mary Magdalene; "Woman, why are you weeping?" (John 20:15).

If there was any rebuke in Jesus' tone toward Mary for having brought this matter to Him, it was clearly a mild rebuke because she simply told the servants "Whatever He says to you, do it" (John 2:5).

There is no indication that Jesus had ever before performed a miracle, but Mary knew He was special; "He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Highest; and the Lord God will give Him the throne of His father David" (Luke 1:32). But maybe even more importantly, Jesus (her son) had a reputation of simply doing whatever He could to make things right.

John 2:6-7

"Now there were set there six waterpots of stone, according to the manner of purification of the Jews, containing twenty or thirty gallons apiece. Jesus said to them, 'Fill the waterpots with water.' And they filled them up to the brim."

These waterpots were used for washing before a meal and even between each course of food. Jewish law required washing all the way up to the elbow or the hands would be ceremonially unclean. The water was also used to wash feet when someone arrived after walking on the dusty roads.

Since the guests were already seated, much of the water would have already been removed from the pots. So Jesus, perhaps to show that nothing else was being added to the pots, perhaps to show the abundance of His gift, perhaps to show the need for an obedient faith, directs the pots to be filled.

Jesus was about to miraculously solve a problem. But let's consider this from Mary's perspective. She first had to identify the problem and bring it to Jesus. Then, without any self direction of a specific solution, she had to leave it in His hands, trusting He would make things right. What a wonderful example! Let's bring ALL to Him and trust, without reservation, that He will work all things "together for good" (Romans 8:28). He will always prove faithful! Let's continue to trust Him with ALL our heart.

Have A Great Day!

## John 2:8-10 - Lesson #16

The problem, though seemingly not significant on an eternal scale, had been identified, brought to Jesus and left confidently in His hands. The wedding party was out of wine and Jesus had instructed the servants to fill six waterpots with water.

John 2:8-10

"And He said to them, 'Draw some out now, and take it to the master of the feast.' And they took it. When the master of the feast had tasted the water that was made wine, and did not know where it came from (but the servants who had drawn the water knew), the master of the feast called the bridegroom. And he said to him, 'Every man at the beginning sets out the good wine, and when the guests have well drunk, then the inferior. You have kept the good wine until now!'"

This was the first week of a three year ministry which would culminate with Jesus' crucifixion and resurrection. Every step of His ministry was planned and purposeful. Therefore we must never think this miracle occurred by chance or caught Jesus off-guard. No, it was a well planned beginning.

This first miracle took place at a common wedding, far from Jerusalem - the center of the Jewish world. There was no announcement of this miracle, no undue attention - no stage, no crowds. There was not even an indication that anyone except the few servants and disciples knew what had happened. From the very beginning Jesus demonstrated a humble approach to ministry, "{He} made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant" (Philippians 2:7).

And what better place for a first miracle than a wedding. What better way to record His desire to be intimately involved in this holy union; this institution which would be so attacked; this union where "the two shall become one flesh" (Ephesians 5:31) and to which Paul says "This is a great mystery, but I speak concerning Christ and the church" (Ephesians 5:32). Marriages are very important to Jesus, the most important union on earth. He desires to be invited, and He WILL join us if we ask!

The method of the miracle would also establish important principles. Jesus did not touch the water or the pots, nor did He need to test the wine to see if the miracle worked. He fully knew His ability and simply gave a command. There has been debate about the actual amount of wine - six pots at twenty or thirty gallons apiece is a LOT of wine. But this debate misses the point. The only water we actually know was turned into wine was that which was removed from the pot. We also know this wine was better than required to solve the "problem." How much water was turned into wine? Just enough!

Jesus is interested in the common everyday problems of our life. And, when they are placed in His hands, He will solve them better than anything we could imagine. His method is most often to work through humble means and require complete trust as well as obedient action. Let's be filled to the brim with the power of His Spirit and obediently draw out His most excellent provision to accomplish all He desires.

Have A Great Day!

## John 2:11 - Lesson #17

In our last lesson we saw the beauty of Jesus' first miracle being performed at a common wedding with little recognition. But clearly the changing of water into wine was accomplished for a greater purpose than to ensure a successful celebration.

John 2:11

"This beginning of signs Jesus did in Cana of Galilee, and manifested His glory; and His disciples believed in Him."

This was the beginning of "signs." Some translations use the word "miracles" and some use the phrase "miraculous signs." The Greek word is semeion and has the meaning of a supernatural indication - something miraculous which gives an indication of something else. This miracle was pointing to a greater purpose beyond the immediate event: "and manifested His glory."

This was certainly not the first time a miracle was performed in the Bible. Moses, Elijah and Elisha performed an abundance of miracles, as did many of the first apostles after the time of Jesus. But no one EVER performed a miracle in order to manifest, or to make known, their own glory. Jesus, and Jesus alone, had the right to glorify Himself; and the ultimate glory was achieved at His crucifixion, "O Father, glorify Me together with Yourself, with the glory which I had with You before the world was" (John 17:5).

Each of the seven miracles in John are a sign - a supernatural indication - which point to the glory of Jesus Christ, "these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God" (John 20:31). Each of the recorded miracles make it known that Jesus was much more than a mere man, much more than the greatest man, much more than a great teacher with an important philosophy of life. He is the Christ, the Son of God, the Word who is God!

Everything in the Bible points toward Jesus because everything is given to restore our relationship with God. Sin caused separation between God and man, and the separation is so great that no mere man - not even a great man - could ever pay the debt which sin required. The fact that God sent Himself in the form of Jesus to teach, suffer and die, shows us the seriousness of sin, and the magnitude of His love.

Yes, this was a sign. It pointed to Jesus' control over the elements of creation. It symbolized the inability of the Law to satisfy. And it was symbolic of the fulfilling joy which only His grace can provide. But it also had a practical purpose of strengthening faith, "and His disciples believed in Him." His disciples had already believed based on the testimony of John and from conversations with Jesus; but now they witnessed His glory and their faith was made strong! He left us with signs to point the way. Let's trust the One who gave Himself so we can live. Let's witness His glory and truly believe.

Have A Great Day!

## John 2:12-13 - Lesson #18

During His first week of ministry Jesus called several of His first disciples, began to teach them who He was and why He came, attended a wedding and performed His first miracle of changing water into wine, "and His disciples believed in Him" (John 2:11).

John 2:12-13

"After this He went down to Capernaum, He, His mother, His brothers, and His disciples; and they did not stay there many days. Now the Passover of the Jews was at hand, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem."

With the wedding celebration over, Jesus traveled with His family and disciples to Capernaum - a distance of just over 30 Km on the north shore of the sea of Galilee. Capernaum would serve as a ministry base around Galilee. I can't help but wonder what the conversation was like on that journey. Jesus had turned water into wine as a sign that He was indeed the Son of God. That must have occupied more than just a little of the talk on the long journey.

Imagine walking 30 Km with the One you have just believed to be the Son of God. Think about seeing the first sign which revealed your brother, or your son, as the One written of by the prophets. Maybe I have gone too far off track, but just imagine, "the Word became flesh and dwelt among us" (John 1:14). The real God took on real flesh and walked with real people down a real road. That's real awesome!

After a short stay in Capernaum, Jesus traveled to Jerusalem for the Passover feast, celebrated on 15th Nisan (late March to mid April). This was a time to remember when God caused the angel of death to "pass over" the homes which had the blood of a lamb smeared on the door posts. The first Passover occurred over fourteen hundred years before Jesus when God led the people of Israel out of Egyptian slavery. It had become an important part of the Jewish tradition.

Jesus did not come, as some suggest, to do away with the Jewish religious system. Rather, He came to establish a new covenant which was a perfection of the old covenant, "I did not come to destroy but to fulfill" (Matthew 5:17). His would be the perfect sacrifice which the Law required. It's unfortunate we have created such a separation between Christianity and the traditional Jewish heritage - Jesus never maintained such a separation. Our Lord was born and raised a Jew and celebrated as a Jew throughout His ministry. We miss a deep richness to our faith when we discard what led us to Christ.

In all He did, Jesus declared and revealed the glory of God. He was patient and loving; and, as we'll see, He was firm and decisive. God took on the form of a man and loved at each stage even to the point of death. But this was the fulfillment of His plan from the foundations of the world. Let's walk and talk with Him today. Let's celebrate with the Son of God along this wonderful journey called life.

Have A Great Day!

## John 2:14-16 - Lesson #19

Having spent time with His family at Capernaum, Jesus traveled to Jerusalem for "the Passover of the Jews" (John 2:13). This was the greatest of all Jewish feasts, and a requirement for any Jew living within a day's journey of Jerusalem. But all Jews desired to celebrate at least one Passover in Jerusalem.

John 2:14-16

"And He found in the temple those who sold oxen and sheep and doves, and the money changers doing business. When He had made a whip of cords, He drove them all out of the temple, with the sheep and the oxen, and poured out the changers' money and overturned the tables. And He said to those who sold doves, 'Take these things away! Do not make My Father's house a house of merchandise!'"

One Passover requirement was for all leaven (or yeast) to be removed from the home; "For whoever eats leavened bread from the first day until the seventh day, that person shall be cut off from Israel" (Exodus 12:15). This would become a symbol for purity of worship. God has always called us to a pure heart devoted to Him, not to a system of outward rules which always leads to hypocrisy; "Beware of the leaven of the Pharisees which is hypocrisy" (Luke 12:1).

So with a celebration focused on purity Jesus entered the center of pure Jewish worship. But when He entered the very outer court of the temple, Jesus found something much less than pure worship. The court was full of greed, deceit and cheating - extortion in the name of religious worship.

Every Jew over nineteen was required to pay a temple tax of one half-shekel, but it had to be paid in temple currency. No foreign coin with its imprint of an alien king was allowed to pollute the temple. This made a good business for the money changers who charged high commissions to exchange the currency.

Many other visitors wished to make an animal sacrifice as a thank-offering to God; but, of course, the sacrifice had to be without blemish; "it must be perfect to be accepted; there shall be no defect in it" (Leviticus 22:21). This established the position of the Sacrifice Inspector, who would reject any animal purchased outside the temple court. But, not to fear, the temple staff made certain there were plenty of approved animals for sale...at a greatly increased price.

After clearing the temple, Jesus boldly declares it to be His Father's house! This probably received more attention than the whip. No one - not Moses with the first tabernacle, Solomon with the first temple, nor Ezra with the rebuilt temple - would have dared make the statement "My Father's house." This could only be said by Jesus, the true Son of God!

Our lives are to be lived as worshippers who give to God a pure heart, not as those who pervert the system for their own gain nor walk by a set of cold and lifeless rules; "These people draw near with their mouths and honor Me with their lips, but have removed their hearts far from Me" (Isaiah 29:13). Let's give Him a heart of uncompromising purity and boldly clear the temple.

Have A Great Day!

## John 2:17-21 - Lesson #20

Jesus traveled to Jerusalem to celebrate the Passover and found the outer courts of the temple filled with unclean hearts - those who were turning worship into a cheap set of rules used for control and personal gain. His reaction was decisive and harsh, "When He had made a whip of cords, He drove them out of the temple" (John 2:15). Why did Jesus react the way He did?

John 2:17-21

"Then His disciples remembered that it was written, 'Zeal for Your house has eaten Me up.' So the Jews answered and said to Him, 'What sign do you show to us, since You do these things?' Jesus answered and said to them, 'Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up.' Then the Jews said, 'It has taken forty-six years to build this temple, and will You raise it up in three days?' But He was speaking of the temple of His body."

The primary reason for Jesus' reaction was that He was "eaten up," or consumed, by the powerful passion (zeal) which He had for the house of God - a reference to Psalm 69:9. When Jesus saw His passion trivialized by empty worship and overt thievery, He was greatly offended. What would it mean for us to be so consumed with God that we took offense whenever He was defiled, or misrepresented?

The Jews who had witnessed the temple clearing, and most likely the leaders of the temple, demanded to know by what authority Jesus had done such a thing. He had, through His actions and His words, claimed to be the Messiah. Now they wanted to see a sign to validate His claim.

Though Jesus would perform many "signs" during His ministry, there was only one which would truly show Him to be the promised Messiah, "no sign will be given to it except the sign of the prophet Jonah. For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the great fish, so will the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth" (Matthew 12:39-40). And this was the same sign which Jesus promised the Jews at the temple - three days after being "destroyed" He would be resurrected in glory!

But the Jews would not understand. In fact, they would later use His words as a charge against Him when they demanded He be crucified, "This fellow said, 'I am able to destroy the temple of God and to build it in three days'" (Matthew 26:61). The temple expansion project, begun by Herod the Great, had been going on for forty-six years; how could Jesus ever rebuild it in three days?

It should not be a surprise that people continue to misunderstand the claims of Jesus today, "the natural man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him" (1 Corinthians 2:14). God's Word is truth; His Word is life! Let's refuse to live as the "natural man." Let's receive the promises of God as truth, not as foolishness. This means we acknowledge them as true with our words AND with the actions of our daily life. Let's begin to live with a zeal for the things of God which completely eat us up.

Have A Great Day!

## John 2:22-25 - Lesson #21

Jesus had cleared the temple and boldly declared, "Destroy this temple and in three days I will raise it up" (John 2:19). We now see Jesus was talking about His crucifixion and resurrection; but, at the time, no one understood!

John 2:22-25

"Therefore, when He had risen from the dead, His disciples remembered that He had said this to them; and they believed the Scripture and the word which Jesus had said. Now when He was in Jerusalem at the Passover, during the feast, many believed in His name when they saw the signs which He did. But Jesus did not commit Himself to them, because He knew all men, and had no need that anyone should testify of man, for He knew what was in man."

Many things about Jesus were not understood until after His resurrection. To be more precise, not until God sent the Holy Spirit; "But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all things that I said to you" (John 14:26). Until we are changed from within, all the words of Jesus will sound foolish; "the natural man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him" (1 Corinthians 2:14). Even those who closely followed Jesus during His ministry were characterized as shallow and confused until they were "sealed for the day of redemption" (Ephesians 4:30) by the Helper, the Teacher, the Holy Spirit.

But as Jesus ministered in Jerusalem, "many believed in His name when they saw the signs." We don't know what signs were being performed, but they were sufficiently miraculous to cause many to "believe." The importance of this section at the end of chapter two - and its significance in leading into the exchange between Jesus and Nicodemus in chapter three - is that it introduces us to the idea of true belief.

There were those who "believed" in Jesus when they saw His signs, but Jesus did not "commit" Himself to them. It's important to understand that these two words are translated from the exact same Greek word (pisteuo). We might say; Many believed in Jesus, but Jesus did not believe in them. Why? Because He knew their heart! In another demonstration of His omniscient (all knowing) character of deity, Jesus shows He knows all men. And He knows us, not because of what others (or even ourselves) say, but because He is God and intimately knows our heart.

This again is the theme all through Scripture. Belief must be of the heart or it is not a true saving belief. Many may profess belief after an event or an experience, but Jesus will not commit Himself to us until we believe with our heart. Let's examine our heart to see why we believe what we say we believe. Let's examine our heart, and then, with committed belief, give our heart fully to our risen Lord.

Have A Great Day!