

The Book of John – 14

Introduction - After looking at the cultural background of the two events in John chapter 2, we will begin looking at the first of these events. Let's start by reading the first 12 verses. As we continue through the book of John, we come to this second chapter, and it is here that we are presented with two events.

So far, we have seen the following:

I. Prologue – The Revelation of the Word 1:1-14

A. The Word vs. 1-5, 9-14

1. The **eternality** of the Word. vs. 1a
2. The **co-existence** of the Word. vs. 1b-2
3. The **deity** of the Word. vs. 1c
4. The **Creator God**: the Word. v3
5. The Word is **life** and **the Light**. v4-9
6. The Word was **not recognized by the World**. v10
7. The Word was **rejected by His own**. v11
8. The Word is **received by some**. v12-13

II. The Witness of the Word 1:19-4:54

- A. John the Baptist v1:19-36
- B. Andrew v1:37-40
- C. Peter v1:41-42
- D. Philip v1:43-44
- E. Nathanael v1:45-51
- F. Nicodemus 3
- G. The Woman at the Well 4:1-42
- H. The Nobleman of Capernaum 4:43-54

In between the witnesses Nathanael and Nicodemus, we have these two events. As we look at these two events, we will see the **first of many signs** that John presents. The word translated as miracles in **verse 11** (σημείον *sēmeion*) means 'signs.' As we saw in the introductory lessons, these signs are selected for a specific reason.

In **John 20:30**, it is clear that the Lord did more than what is recorded in this book: *“And many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book.”*

Notice with me the first of these events in **verse 1**.

1. The _____ of the event. v1

John 2:1-2 *“1 And the third day there was a marriage in Cana of Galilee; and the mother of Jesus was there: 2 And both Jesus was called, and his disciples, to the marriage.”*

In **John 21:2**, we are told that Nathanael is from Cana of Galilee.

John 21:2 *“2 There were together Simon Peter, and Thomas called Didymus, and Nathanael of Cana in Galilee, and the sons of Zebedee, and two other of his disciples.”*

2. The _____ to the event. v2

Mary, the Lord Jesus Christ, and his disciples were invited to this marriage feast. They were “called,” according to **verse 2**.

John 2:2 *“And both **Jesus** was **called**, and his **disciples**, to the marriage.”*

I would also like to point out the **specificity of this event**. We are given the place (Cana of Galilee), the timing (the third day), and the people involved (Mary, Jesus, and the disciples). This record is specific. We move on the **verse number 3 and see the problem** for the sign.

The Bible says in **John 2:3**, *“3 And when they wanted wine, the mother of Jesus saith unto him, They have no wine.”*

3. The _____ at the event. v3

To run out of wine would be an embarrassment to the family and potentially speaks to their poverty.

Before we go further, though this is not the focus of the passage, I want to address perhaps the question in people’s minds regarding the use of alcoholic drinks. Regardless of what opinions people may or may not have concerning this passage, **the Lord Jesus Christ is without sin, and as God does not tempt man with evil**.

James 1:13-14 *“Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man: But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed.”*

Hebrews 4:15 *“For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling*

*of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, **yet without sin.***”

II Corinthians 5:21 *“For he hath made him to be sin for us, **who knew no sin**; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.”*

In **Ephesians 5:18**, Paul introduces a theological contrast between drunkenness and being yielded to the influence of the Holy Spirit. He states in that well-known passage, *“And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit;”*

I believe those who want to try to use the Bible as an excuse to drink alcohol will state that as long as I am not drunk, it is ok. The truth is that there are abundant references to wine in the Word of God, which includes both fermented grape juice and non-fermented grape juice.

1. Wine mentioned in the Bible is not the same as alcoholic drinks of the 21st century. When someone tries to compare the two, it is a case of comparing apples to oranges.
Alcoholic drinks are most often consumed today because they inebriate.

Charles Ryrie stated, “Why is alcohol not associated with other drugs? Indeed, alcohol is the drug most commonly used and abused today. But somehow, we have detached it from other drugs and think that moderate use has no significant physical, social, or spiritual consequences.” “That alcohol is a drug is undebatable. Its toxic effects are well-known and cause permanent damage to the body. Large doses can result in immediate death, and prolonged usage can also cause death.” “Unfortunately, those who drink socially think they will never slip into the category of problem or dependent users of alcohol, and they are convinced they will never become alcoholics. They think that happens only to others. Yet, if twelve people drink over ten years, one will become an alcoholic, and three others will become problem drinkers. People do slide from one category to another, sometimes without realizing it. After cancer and heart disease, alcohol is the country's third leading cause of death. Drunk drivers are responsible for about one-half of fatal automobile accidents yearly. Alcohol is also responsible for thousands of suicides and drowning deaths. In 1989 it was estimated that there were nearly twenty million alcoholics in America. It has proved to be a dangerous drug.” “The effects of alcohol on the body are numerous and serious. Brain cells are altered, the memory blocked, the senses dulled, and physical coordination impaired. Alcohol can trigger bleeding in the stomach and intestines and deterioration of the heart muscle. It also can prevent the immune system from functioning properly. But it affects the liver more than any other organ, often resulting in cirrhosis and death.”

2. Fermented grape juice was boiled down into a syrup which **would be diluted into the water in an 8 to 1 ratio** for water purification.

Pastor John McArthur, in an extensive article concerning mixed wine, which is fermented, unmixed which he quoted from 1st-century sources as being unacceptable, had this to say, "If you want to defend the fact that you can drink wine today based on the fact that they drank it in the Bible, then you need to reexamine whether what we drink today is the same as what they drank then. And we find out as we get close to the subject that they drank what was either unintoxicating, such as the syrup base, or what was so diluted with water that its intoxication level was very, very minimal."

3. Universally, drunkenness or excess of wine is condemned in the Scriptures.
4. Separation to God was characterized by **abstinence from any form of wine**.
(Priests, Nazarite Vow, John the Baptist, etc.)

Are alcoholic beverages fitting for a Christian to consume?

At first, some will try to sight Paul's commendation to Timothy to drink "a little" wine as proof that Christians should drink. But as you would think about why Paul is suggesting this, you would have to conclude that Timothy was abstaining from wine, for the Bible says, "*Drink no longer water, but use a little wine...*" (**I Timothy 5:23**) Folks who sight this verse would like to focus on the "*use a little wine*" to the exclusion of the first part that states "*Drink no longer water...*" and further wholly ignore the purpose which says "*for thy stomach's sake...*" I believe the answer for you and I can be discovered by looking at the overwhelming warnings given to us from the Bible and by answering a few questions:

1. Is there a significant danger associated with the excessive consumption of alcohol? If the answer is yes, why would you go near it?
2. What is my purpose in drinking alcohol?
3. If drinking a little is okay but not drinking a lot, how do you determine what is a lot?
4. At what point are you affected by alcohol? How do you know when you are affected?

Dr. Paul Chappell his book "Discerning Alcohol," further asked these thought-provoking questions:

1. Is today's "wine" the same as in Bible times?
2. Is it necessary?
3. Is it the best choice?
4. Is it potentially destructive?
5. Will it offend other Christians?
6. Will it harm my testimony?

With all that being said, let us move on and see the intent for which John recorded this passage. We see not **only the problem** but notice the statement by Mary to Jesus found in verse 3.

John 2:3 *“And when they wanted wine, **the mother of Jesus saith unto him, They have no wine.**”*

4. The _____ at the event.

What I mean by the use of the word intimation is that Mary was presenting the problem to the Lord for Him to address the issue. Whatever it is that was intimated by her, we see the response of the Lord recorded for us in **verse 4**.

John 2:4 *“4 Jesus saith unto her, Woman, what have I to do with thee? mine hour is not yet come.”*

At first glance, the phrase used here seems to be derogatory to some. But this phrase identifies several essential items that we should make a note of:

1. The term woman itself is not demeaning but rather the typical way of addressing a woman.

Notice **John 19:26-27** *“26 When Jesus therefore saw his mother, and the disciple standing by, whom he loved, he saith unto his mother, **Woman, behold thy son!** 27 Then saith he to the disciple, Behold thy mother! And from that hour that disciple took her unto his own home.”*

2. The Lord’s response was to help Mary understand their relationship as it related to His person and office rather than her maternal authority.

Matthew Henry stated it this way, “A check to his mother for interposing in a matter which was the act of his Godhead, which had no dependence on her, and which she was not the mother of. Though, as man, he was David's Son and hers; yet, as God, he was David's Lord and hers, and he would have her know it.”

3. Lastly, this phrase, “mine hour yet come...” speaks to the specific and purposeful action of the God-man. Nothing was happenstance. Every detail and movement of the Lord’s life and ministry was according to God’s plan.

And so, as we close, having gone through these first few verses, the lesson for you and I is to wait on the Lord patiently. Sometimes we want the Lord to act upon our timetable, especially as it concerns the problems and trials of this life. And yet, as we see here, the Lord Jesus Christ, being God in the flesh, acted according to His perfect will and, as we will see, addressed the distressing situation.