



THE GOSPEL OF JOHN: LESSON 3 *"COME AND SEE"*

This week we will be discussing three important events, beginning with the first miracle performed by Jesus. We must remember that John doesn't call them miracles, but refers to them as signs (2:11). A sign is a miracle that has a much deeper meaning. In his Gospel, John seeks to point out the spiritual meaning and significance behind each miracle, with the purpose of illustrating and proving Jesus' claims about Himself. As you read, remember that the purpose of this book is to demonstrate that Jesus is the Son of God.

Let's trace Jesus' steps so far. We first find Jesus in Bethabara (Bethany) in 1:28. He then travels to Galilee in 1:43, then to Cana of Galilee in 2:1. From there He journeys to Capernaum (2:12), and on to Jerusalem (2:13, 23). Remember that Jesus and His disciples traveled by foot. John also develops the concept of "His hour," speaking of the fact that Jesus was on a Heavenly timetable, having a divine purpose and plan to His actions. We see John repeat this often, beginning in 2:4.

As you read, ask the Holy Spirit to show you how each event applies to the life of a believer, and specifically, how it applies to your life. Christ is revealing Himself to the world. How is He revealing Himself to you?

First Day

John begins this chapter with the phrase "on the third day." He is speaking of the third day after Jesus' conversation with Nathanael in 1:43-51.

1. Read John 2:1-25. Observe and list the facts you find. What interesting details are given? What is the tone of this chapter?

2. The purpose of this chapter is to demonstrate that Jesus is the Son of God. What verses support this statement?

3. What would you choose as the key verse in this chapter? Why?

4. Break the chapter into sections. Give each a title and briefly state the main thought of the section.

5. What spiritual applications do you see for yourself in this chapter at this point?

We'll end here for today. I pray that the Lord will speak to your heart this week as you study chapter 2. It's so exciting to walk through the pages of this Gospel with Jesus Himself. The next 20 weeks are going to be so awesome! Spend some time thanking Him for the miracles He does in your life every day.

Memory Verse of the Week: "His mother said to the servants, 'Whatever He says to you, do it.'" John 2:5

Second Day

Study your memory verse. Why is this verse significant?

1. Read John 2:1-12. What was the issue at the wedding in Cana?
2. Why do you think Mary was so concerned?

The Jewish wedding celebration was a huge event. It was usually a week long event, celebrating the new life of the married couple. Often the whole town was invited. In our culture, the bride is the prominent figure, but in the East, the groom is the featured attraction. He also pays for the entire event, and it could be big, long, and expensive. Kent Hughes describes it this way: "After the ceremony, the bride and groom were escorted to their home in a torchlight parade complete with a canopy over their heads. They took the longest route possible, so that everyone would have the opportunity to wish them well. Instead of a honeymoon, they held open house for a week. They were addressed as king and queen, wore crowns, and were dressed in their nuptial robes." A festive wedding banquet was held, lasting as long as a week. The hosts took great care to make sure there was enough food, drink, and provision for their guests. Hospitality was very important to that culture. So much so, that if the groom ran out, they could actually be fined! It would also be a social embarrassment to the family.

Wine was very important at Jewish wedding feasts. It was a symbol of exhilaration and celebration. To Jewish people, wine symbolized joy. The rabbis even had a saying: "Without wine, there is no joy." The wine was well diluted, two parts of wine to three parts of water. Drunkenness was a great disgrace and the Bible clearly warns against drunkenness. Wine was seen differently in that culture, and this miracle should not be used to support social drinking.

It is thought that Mary may have been related somehow to the family getting married or in some way helping with the preparations.

3. What did Mary do when she realized there was a problem?

4. Did she try to tell Jesus how to fix the problem?
5. What do you do first when things go wrong?
6. Do you ever try to tell the Lord how to fix the problem? Why is that so wrong? Read Proverbs 3:5-6.
7. Are you facing a trial right now? How does this story encourage and challenge you?

What is interesting about this event is that Jesus had not yet performed any miracles. This was the first public display of His power. Mary probably didn't understand how Jesus could fix the problem, but she knew He could. We're not sure if she thought He would perform a miracle or not, but she knew who to run to when things went wrong.

8. His first miracle was not a magnificent display of grandeur in front of masses of people. It was performed in a humble home, with only a small number of people realizing what He did. Why is this significant?
9. Do we always understand what God is doing in our lives? What does Romans 8:28 tell us? What other Scriptures speak about this?
10. Mary trusted Jesus. Read Psalm 73:28. Today ... will you put your trust in the Lord God?

See you tomorrow, ladies. When things go wrong ... run to Jesus.

Third Day

Work on your memory verse.

1. Read John 2:1-12 again. What was Jesus' reply to His mother?
(Was Jesus being rude?)

2. What does Mary's response in verse 5 reveal about her?

3. Do you have the same response when you seek the Lord on issues: "Lord, whatever you say, I will do?" Is there any area in your life that you're struggling with obedience to the Lord?

Although it sounds like Jesus is being rude in the way He deals with His mom, He's not. The phrase in English is translated "Dear Woman" and is used by Jesus when He asks John to watch over His mother as He hung on the cross (John 19:26). It was a common title of respect, kind of like when people in our culture say, "Yes, ma'am." The rest of His response was the Hebrew way of saying, "Why are you getting Me involved in this matter?" or "You don't really understand what you're asking." Most scholars don't believe He's saying that He won't act, but that when He does act, it will not be in a way that she expects. In verse 4, the phrase, "My hour has not yet come" refers to Jesus' death and exaltation.

Verse 6 tells us that there were 6 stone waterpots, containing 20 to 30 gallons each. That's a lot of water. At servings of one cup each, this would make 2,400 servings. For the Jewish reader, John makes sure they understand that there was water there for the purification process. For the Greek reader, John wants to explain why there was so much water there. Water was required for washing feet before they entered the house. It was also required for the ceremonial handwashing of the Jews. They had to wash before each meal and between each course. William Barclay explains

the process: "First the hand was held upright and the water was poured in such a way that it ran from the wrist to the finger-tips. This was done with each hand in turn; and then each palm was cleansed by rubbing it with the fist of the other hand."

4. How much water did Jesus say to fill the pots with? Why do you think John gives us this detail?

5. Was the wine any good?

6. John always tells us the purpose behind the miracles. What was the purpose, or purposes, of this one, from verse 11?

7. Name some things that Jesus revealed about Himself in this story.

When Jesus came into the world, He brought grace and truth (John 1:17). Moses' first miracle was a plague, changing water into blood, symbolizing judgement (Exodus 7:19). Jesus' first miracle shouted grace.

8. What does the fact that Jesus' first miracle was in a home mean to you? (Have you invited Him into your everyday life?)

9. It's also interesting to note that Jesus was invited to the wedding. He was a witness to the marriage. Ladies, have you invited Jesus into your marriage? Is He the center? Is He the foundation? If not, what changes can you make? Why is this so important?

Bible teachers offer many symbolic meanings to the miracle at Cana. Kent Hughes calls Jesus the "Wine of Life." He says that sooner or later, the time comes when the excitement of life wears out. The solution, therefore, is that Christ serves the wine of joy. By using the waterpots, Hughes states that Jesus was saying the old ritual was dead and that He was filling the urns with new life. F.F. Bruce writes that "Jesus was changing the water of Jewish purification into the wine of the new age." (Matthew 9:17) He concludes that Jesus saves the best for last. The more we mature as Christians, the more joy and peace in Christ we will experience. Ultimately, our greatest joy will be found as we spend our eternity with Him.

We look forward to another wedding, where Jesus will be the Bridegroom and we (the church) will be the bride (Revelation 19:9). We anxiously await that glorious day!

10. Do you find your joy in Jesus? Have you allowed Him to fill you to the brim, like these waterpots, or are you looking for joy somewhere other than Christ?

11. How can you specifically apply this miracle to your life?

See you tomorrow. Meditate on Psalm 16:11 and spend some quiet time in His presence.

Fourth Day

Can you share your memory verse with someone in your family?

Jesus traveled from Cana to Capernaum, which later became His home base during His ministry in Galilee. It was an important city because it was located on a major trading route. Jesus, His mother, brothers, and disciples stayed there a few days.

1. Read John 2:13-25 and explain the situation in your own words.
2. Read Exodus 12:1-14 to understand what was being commemorated during the Passover. What were they celebrating?

Jerusalem was crowded during the Passover celebration. Every Jewish male over 12 years old was required to make the journey (Deuteronomy 16:16) to the temple. Solomon first built the temple 1,000 years earlier (949 BC), but it had been destroyed by the Babylonians (2 Kings 25). It was rebuilt in 515 BC. This was a week-long festival; Passover was one day and the Feast of Unleavened bread lasted the rest of the week. It is estimated that more than two million people may have been crowding the streets of Jerusalem at that time. Remember, the purpose was to come and worship.

A temple tax was required for those over 19 years of age, but it had to be paid in local currency. An animal sacrifice was also required and many couldn't bring their own because of the distance they were traveling. These services were needed, but certainly didn't need to be set up in the Court of the Gentiles within the Temple. Those who were selling animals and changing money often would charge a large fee for personal gain. The merchants were dishonest and greedy, making a mockery of God's house of worship. Although they tried to say that they were making things convenient for the travelers, and needed money for the upkeep of the Temple, they were simply ripping the people off. It was so busy and crazy that it was almost impossible to worship.

3. So ... why did Jesus get so upset?
4. The atmosphere of the Temple was irreverent. Do you treat God's house with reverence? Do you see it as a holy place?

5. For what reason do you attend church? Is it to worship the Lord? Is it for personal contacts or to make business contacts? Why is that so wrong? Why is that similar to the merchants in this story?
6. Read 2 Corinthians 5:1 and 1 Corinthians 6:19-20. Jesus wants to cleanse our hearts in much the same way. Is there anything in your heart that is impeding your worship of Him? Are there areas of greed or dishonesty that need to be driven out? Ask the Lord to show you what needs to be cleansed. Be careful what you allow to enter your "temple."

This certainly is a different picture of Jesus, meek and mild (Matthew 11:29). It's almost a little unnerving. Jesus made it perfectly clear that He was the one with authority. The Temple was His Father's house. He would not stand for the hypocrisy by the religious leaders. There were other times that we see Jesus' anger directed at the religious leaders. In Matthew 23:27, He calls them hypocrites and whitewashed tombs which appear beautiful outwardly, but inside are full of dead men's bones. In verse 33, He calls them serpents, and a brood of vipers. His Father's house was being desecrated and He wouldn't stand for it. He had an incredible love for the Father. Jesus was "afame with zeal for God's glory and for His house." (Kent Hughes)

7. When the disciples heard Jesus' words, what did they remember, according to verse 17? Read Psalm 69:9.

Psalm 69 is considered a Messianic Psalm, and is quoted often in the New Testament. The Psalm is about David, but has its prophetic fulfillment in Christ. David felt that if someone defamed God, he also was defamed. Jesus obviously felt the same.

8. It has been said that you can tell a lot about a person by what they hate and what they love. Think about it? What kind of things made Christ angry? What kinds of things make you angry? What do you love?

9. Jesus hated hypocrisy. Spend some time searching your heart. Ask the Holy Spirit to show you any area of hypocrisy that is present in your life. Do your actions line up with what you say you believe?

10. "The degree of our reverence indicates what we think of God." What do you think about this quote?

I pray that our hearts will be angered by the things that Christ hates, stirred by what stirs Him, and delighted in what He takes pleasure in.

Fifth Day

Write your verse from memory.

In our chapter so far, we have seen wine multiplied at the wedding and the temple cleansed. Now we find the Jews looking for signs to prove Jesus' authority.

1. Read John 2:13-25 again. The Jews were looking for signs. What image did Jesus use to answer them?

2. What was Jesus predicting? Did they understand His words?
(Read Matthew 12:6-7)

3. What other picture did John use (so far) to illustrate the death of Christ? (John 1:29)

The Temple Jesus was speaking about was His own body. He was predicting His own death and resurrection. His disciples understood His words after He was raised from the dead.

4. How did His enemies use these words against Him? Read Matthew 26:59-61, 27:40.

5. Why is this good news for you and me? (Romans 6:4-11)

Warren Wiersbe makes this comment: "In this cryptic statement, our Lord actually predicted the end of the Jewish religious system. The legal system had ended, and "grace and truth" have come through Jesus Christ. He is the new sacrifice (John 1:29) and the new temple (John 2:19)."

According to verse 23, many believed in Him when they saw the things He did. He didn't "commit Himself to them" because He knew what was in their heart. He knew it was a shallow faith, based on signs and wonders. It's easy to respond to a miracle, but quite another to be committed to Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior. Jesus knew what was in man; He knew their character, their innermost feelings, the depth of sin in their heart. Nothing is hidden from God. Wiersbe said that the phrase "seeing is believing" is not the Christian approach (John 11:40, 20:29). First we believe, then we see. Miracles lead us to the Word (John 5:36-38), and the Word generates saving faith (Romans 10:17).

6. What approach do you take? Do you wait for God to "prove" Himself before you trust in His promises?

7. Are you constantly seeking "signs and wonders" to strengthen your faith?
(Give an example of believers doing that today.)
8. Is your faith deep or shallow? Give some practical ways to deepen one's faith.
9. What challenged you the most in this chapter?

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