

# Water, Wine, & Weddings: Jesus' First Miracle

John 2:1-11

The opening chapters of John's gospel demonstrate that Jesus is replacing something old with something new. New wine replaced old water. Later a clean temple replaced a dirty one, a new birth replaced an old birth, living water replaced well water, and new worship replaced old worship.

John uses the word "sign" in verse 11 because he was seeking to draw attention away from the miracle as such and point to their significance.

*Weddings and celebrations provide opportunities to focus on Jesus.  
We can celebrate his goodness, serve his purpose, and glorify his name.*

The first miracle that Jesus performed in his public ministry and in John's gospel, was semi-public. Only Jesus' disciples, the servants present, and Jesus' mother understood what had happened.

(1) "The third day" refers to the third day after the day Nathanael met Jesus.

(2) Jesus participated in the normal affairs of life, such as attending a wedding. He was not a recluse.

(3) Weddings in the ancient Near East typically lasted several days and often a whole week. Hospitality was essential and failure to provide sufficient food and drink would result in shame and social disgrace. Since the groom and his parents had a legal responsibility in that culture to provide a suitable feast for their guests, the family could be fined for running out of food and wine.

Wine was a staple drink in the ancient Near East. Due to the warm climate and the lack of any means of refrigeration or purification, fruit juice tended to ferment. To help avoid the risk of intoxication, wine was commonly diluted with water to one-third to one-tenth of its strength. While the Bible does not forbid drinking wine, it does condemn drunkenness.

Mary told Jesus about the situation of the lack of wine because she knew he was compassionate and would do something about it.

(4) While addressing his mother as "woman" sounds strange to our ears, it was an acceptable word to use in Jesus' culture. While it is a polite form of address, it is not an intimate one. It signals a change in relationship.

"What do I have to do with you?" sounds harsh and arrogant. However, it was only a gentle rebuke. "Your concern and mine are not the same." "We're not on the same page." Jesus was not dishonoring his mother. He was explaining that his obedience to his heavenly father was more important than his obedience to his earthly mother.

(5) Mary accepted Jesus' statement and instructed the servants to cooperate with him. She did not know what he would do or when, but she had confidence in his compassion and ability. She showed submission and faith to Jesus. Before, Mary approached Jesus as his mother. Now she approached him as her Lord.

(6) The Jews washed before eating to cleanse themselves from the defilement of contact with Gentiles and other ritually defiling things, more than from germs. They needed a great deal of water since they washed often. Each of the six water pots held between 20-30 gallons.

(7) Jesus instructed the servants to fill the water pots to the brim and they obeyed him.

(8-10) Normally, people did not drink the water from these pots, but the headwaiter did not know where the wine came from. The custom was to start with the best wine. As the guests got drunk, they would serve the lesser quality figuring the guests would not know the difference. But Jesus' wine was superior.

(11) This miracle was a sign. It showed that Jesus had the same power to create that God demonstrated in the Creation. It points out that Jesus can transform things from one condition into another. The sign set the early disciples on the road to faith.

### Application

God cares about the details of life.

God provides abundantly and excellently.

God meets needs and provides in order to demonstrate his glory and persuade people to believe.

Seven "Signs" of the Son of God				
Sign	Reference	Description	Sign	Significance
1	2:1-11	Turned water into wine	Power over shame	Jesus is the source of life
2	4:46-54	Healed royal official's son	Power over distance	Jesus is the giver of grace
3	5:1-17	Healed infirm man by the Pool of Bethesda	Power over disease	Jesus is the giver of grace
4	6:1-14	Fed a hungry multitude	Power over insufficiency	Jesus is the Word of God
5	6:15-21	Walked on the Sea of Galilee and calmed a storm	Power over nature	Jesus is the Creator
6	9:1-41	Gave sight to a man born blind	Power over sin	Jesus is the Truth
7	11:17-45	Raised Lazarus from the dead	Power over death	Jesus is the hope of resurrection

Charles R. Swindoll, *Swindoll's Living Insights New Testament Commentary: John*, p.57