

A summary of John 2:1-12 (Oct. 26, 2017)

1. Jesus attended a wedding in Cana of Galilee (2:1). It was probably a large wedding with many guests. How can we deduce this? By the size of the six stone water jars which people used to wash their hands, each one holding 20-30 gallons. One gallon equals almost 4 liters (3.78 to be exact). It probably took each person one liter on average to wash his or her hands. Therefore, we can calculate that there may have been close to 700 people present. Jesus was invited and He went. He did not say anything. He did not make any comments. He simply went and supplied life (changed the water into wine). Water here signifies death (we may refer to the death waters of the flood and the waters of the Red Sea through which the children of Israel passed through). If we are in a certain situation, do we criticize or complain that something is worldly, or do we simply supply life to swallow up any death?
2. The mother of Jesus (2:3-4) represents the natural man with the natural ability. She wanted to dictate to the Lord what to do and when to do it. God cannot use this.
3. Jesus' answer was strict but very tender (2:4). He addressed her with a term of endearment (in Greek, the word for "woman" is actually a word that is used for "wife." Yet He was strict to let her know that His hour or time had not yet come. In other words, no one can dictate to Him. He has His timing and He will operate according to His timing.
4. Jesus' mother listened to Him, became submissive to Him and followed Him (2:5). She told the servants to do whatever He said. This is salvation. We can be saved from our natural thoughts and ability, to become someone who listens and submits to the Lord.
5. The servants listened to Jesus and filled the water pots with water (2:7). It is doubtful if they understood why they had to fill them. This means that when we hear the Lord's speaking to us, either through His word or through the brothers and sisters, we may not be clear why we need to do something or make a certain decision. At that time, we need to still go ahead and obey the Lord. When we obey, as the servants did, we will see the testimony of Jesus, who Jesus is and how He operates. We need a pure, simple and submissive heart. Then we will see the Lord's doing.
6. The servants filled the water pots with water in 2:7. Why did Jesus ask them to do so? The Bible does not give the answer, but the fact is that the servants first had to fill the pots with water (death) before they could draw out the wine (divine life). Life comes out of death. First there is death, then resurrection. Jesus was the pattern. He lived a crucified life, went to the cross and resurrected. We follow the same way. To be able to supply life, we must know who we are. We are persons of death. We are filled with death. It is then that we can experience life that swallows up our death and is able to swallow up the death in others and supply life to them.
7. The first miracle that Jesus performed was at a wedding. This may suggest to us that marriage is something very precious to God. Indeed, marriage, the union of a man and a woman, reflects the union of the Trinity, the intimate relationship enjoyed between the Father, Son and Spirit, and also the relationship between Christ and the church. The miracle performed in Cana shows us that Jesus wants to come into our life to give us enjoyment. Marriage is already a joyful occasion with mankind, whether among believers or unbelievers, but when Jesus comes into the marriage life, marriage becomes even more enjoyable.
8. In 2:11, Jesus manifested His glory through the performing of the miracle in Cana, and His disciples believed into Him. "Glory" can be abstract. But people believing into Jesus is concrete. The disciples saw His glory and believed into Him. We need to evaluate from time to time the effectiveness of our operation. We may preach the gospel and minister the word. Are people believing in Christ? Are people getting saved? Are people growing? Are they functioning? How are they functioning? It is good to ask these questions. It is sometimes easy to do what we think is right to do, or because we are used to doing it a certain way, or because we think we are good at it. The disciples believed because of the servants' service. Do people believe because of our service?
9. Again, in 2:11, the Greek word for "beginning" or "first" is "principle" or "rule." In other words, the principle of changing water (death) into wine (divine life) is to supply life (preach the gospel) so people can believe. This should be the principle or rule that governs our service.
10. In 2:10, the master of the feast marveled that they were drinking the good wine at the end of the feast, contrary to the common practice of beginning with good wine and ending up with inferior wine once the superior wine ran out. Is this the way we serve? We like to serve Christ to others, and we may start out well, with fresh revelations and experiences. But if we do not grow, we may run the risk of serving something old, the same Christ that we experienced last year and the year before. We need to grow in the church life so our service will be something fresh today (that is, good wine at the end of the wedding feast) and not something stale or old (poor wine).
11. In 2:12, Jesus spent time with His family (His mother and His flesh brothers), as well as His disciples. As we serve, we do need to take time to be with our family members.
12. In 2:1, we see that Jesus was invited to a wedding, as well as His disciples. Do we invite Jesus and His disciples (the brothers and sisters) into our marriage life, our family, our school life and our work life? We should not be independent of the church life. We should never depart from the church life. We must preach the gospel to our family and friends.