

Introduction

- https://people.com/dog-pees-on-wedding-dress-during-ceremony-exclusive-12162404?utm_source=chatgpt.com - The most joy filled day of one's life - yet the dog stole the show and soiled a dress. Yet, the couple refused to let the moment ruin their celebration.
- You can make the plans for a joy-filled life, and then life happens. Sickness and disease happens. A relationship turns bad. You get bad news you weren't expecting. All of a sudden, life isn't going as planned, and it becomes a fight for joy.
- For the follower of Jesus, joy doesn't ultimately depend on our circumstances. Difficult circumstances affect us deeply, but when you walk with the Lord, you can have joy even in the most difficult circumstances because you are assured that your loving God is with you and at work in your life even in the hardest times.
- Some of us are fighting for joy this morning. I know that it's hard for you to see past the difficulties of life, but I also want you to know that Jesus is the joy-giver. In John's Gospel, John reminds us that Jesus came to give us joy.
- [John 15:11](#): "I have told you these things so that my joy may be in you and your joy may be complete."
- Jesus has come and saved us to make our joy complete.
- Jesus' first miracle takes place at a wedding, and at this wedding Jesus is reminding us that He has come for our joy. This story is showing us that Jesus is our glorious Messiah who delights in giving us joy.

- From this story, I want to show you three ways you can walk in joy.

Bring your needs to Jesus with complete trust.

- Gospel of John can be divided into two sections. The Book of Signs ([John 1-12](#)) and the Book of Exaltation ([John 13-20](#)). First half of book is seven signs (miracles) ([John 2:11](#)). A sign points to something beyond itself. The signs of Jesus are showing us something about Jesus.
- The first sign in water into wine. Not healing the sick, casting out a demon, or raising the dead. Seems like an odd sign to be the first sign. You might expect something more dramatic, but this sign is pointing to a glorious truth about Jesus.
- Jesus and his five disciples invited to wedding in Cana - Nathanael's hometown. Maybe it was a family member or a friend of the family getting married. Jesus' mother, Mary, present as well.
- First century wedding - elaborate and lengthy. The most important event in a person's life. The wedding celebration could last up to a week.
- Family and friends gathered, an elaborate feast, much money spent, and much planning to make sure there was plenty of food and drink for the duration of the celebration.
- The groom and his family hosted the celebration. Imagine the pressure to make sure every detail was planned out and executed.
- The problem - they ran out of wine. No wine threatened the celebration and brought serious embarrassment to the family.
- As aside, this passage not commending drunkenness, but often in the Bible wine is a symbol of gladness, abundance, and God's blessing.
- vs. 3 - Mary to Jesus: "They don't have any wine." Jesus has not performed any miracles up to this point. We don't know exactly what Mary expected, but she expected Jesus to help.

- vs. 4 - A gentle rebuke. “Woman” instead of mother. Mary may be Jesus’ mother, but she’s not calling the shots. Jesus is. Jesus came to do the will of His father; not to follow the directions of others, even His own mother. Further, Mary needs Jesus as her Messiah just like everyone else does.
- “My hour has not yet come...” This is more than “it isn’t time to perform a miracle.” Jesus’ hour refers to His death and glorification ([John 12:23-27](#); [13:1](#); [17:1](#)). Why does Jesus make a reference to His death? It’s not at a wedding where Jesus will reveal the fullness of His glory - it’s at His death and resurrection that Jesus will reveal the fullness of His glory. It’s at the resurrection of Jesus where there will be celebration of death being defeated.
- Yet... Jesus will perform a miracle at Cana to point us to a greater celebration.
- vs. 5 - R.C. Sproul called this verse the greatest message Mary ever preached. “Do whatever He tells you.” She had no guarantee that Jesus would do anything, but she trusted that He could. She left the problem in the hands of Jesus with complete trust in Him.
- We walk in joy by entrusting our burdens to Jesus. You can leave all of your problems, your anxieties, and burdens in the hands of Jesus.
- **What problems do you need to leave in the hands of Jesus?** Not, what instructions do you need to give Jesus about how to fix your life, but in what areas of your life do you need to surrender the outcome to Him?
- What nagging circumstances or problems keep you in a state of worry? In what area have you said, “I’ve done everything I know how to do and nothing is working.”

- How do I leave it in the hands of Jesus? 1. I pray. 2. I quit making demands of God. 3. I quit trying to control the situation. 4. I keep obeying the Lord. 5. I keep living.
- You may not know exactly how Jesus will work it out, but you trust that He is at work for His glory and your good.

Find your lasting joy in Jesus.

- These servants take Mary's word. They do what Jesus says. What else could they do? The wine was gone.
- vs. 6 -7 - At Jesus' request, they filled six stone water jars with water. John tells us that these water jars were for Jewish purification. They were religious jars used for ceremonial washing.
- If you were a religious Jew, you'd wash your hands before meals. You'd wash utensils. This wasn't about avoiding viruses, this was about being ritually clean.
- These six sizable jars demonstrate that ritual cleansing was a big deal. It would have been an ordeal to fill these jars. The servants would have had to fetch a substantial amount of water from a cistern or spring. Yet, they do what Jesus says.
- Jesus takes the water in these vessels that were used for religious purification, and he turns it into new wine.
- Wine represents abundance, blessing, celebration, and joy. There's joy because Jesus is the fulfillment of everything the OT law pointed to. The water in those jars symbolized purification, but Jesus actually makes us pure. He forgives your sins and makes you right before God. He gives us new life - eternal life.
- Jesus is doing something far more than supplying a wedding drink. He's showing us that He's the One who brings joy and gladness. He provides

in His death and resurrection what the Old Testament law and all of its purification rites never could: new life.

- Jesus has provided new life for you through His death and resurrection. You could not provide that for yourself. There's much joy when you finally realize that Jesus has given you the gift of life, and you didn't have to earn it.
- Three questions to ask on a regular basis that will help you know the joy of the Lord:
- **What earthly source of joy has never disappointed you?** John is showing us that Jesus is the joy-giver. He's the one who brings the ultimate celebration, yet we spend much of our lives looking for joy in places that from time to time will disappoint.
- Disappointment when there's conflict in your marriage, when your dream job gets hard, when that new car breaks down - all those things that are supposed to give you joy are limited. Nothing on this earth gives you unlimited joy.
- **Where have you said, "I cannot have joy unless this happens?"** Unless I meet the perfect person? Unless my kids are successful? Unless I get the job or house I've always dreamed of? Unless I'm respected and appreciated? Everything you look to to give you joy in this life will disappoint you from time to time.
- **Have you ever reached the end of Christ's goodness?** When has His grace and mercy run out? When has He not forgiven your sins. When have you ever served Him or spent time with Him and walked away saying, "That was a waste of time?" Even in those hard moments when you didn't understand God's plan, the hard times didn't change God's love for you or your eternal destiny.

- This week, when disappointment comes, a good question to ask yourself to remind you of Christ's goodness: "What has Jesus given me that this disappointment cannot take away?"

Let the promise of future joy strengthen you in present sorrow.

- The jars were filled. Jesus commands the servants to take some of the wine to the headwaiter.
- vs. 9 -10 - The headwaiter amazed. To the groom: "You have kept the finest wine until now..."
- What was a crisis that would have embarrassed the groom now restores the groom. People would leave the celebration talking about what a great host the groom was. Jesus restored the groom, and the groom wasn't even aware of what Jesus had done. The headwaiter was not aware of what Jesus had done.
- Only a handful of servants, the five disciples, and Mary knew what Jesus had done.
- vs. 11 - The first of His signs in Cana. Jesus revealed His glory, and the disciples believed. They had followed Him, and now Jesus had given them more evidence that He was indeed the Messiah who had come to bring joy.
- What a first miracle! Jesus keeps a party going! But, this miracle is a sign that points to something greater. It points to the eternal joy that we have in Christ. It points to a greater wedding - the day when the bridegroom returns for the bride and we will feast with him for all of eternity.
- [Isaiah 25:6-9](#) - Final salvation - a feast is coming. God will swallow up death once and for all. He will wipe away every tear. [Revelation 19:9](#) - Blessed are those invited to the marriage of the feast of the Lamb.

- That day when we are with Christ will be glorious. This first sign where Jesus through a miracle brings about a celebration points to an even greater celebration to come.
- In this life you will have tears. In this life you will have sorrow. In this life, there is grief.
- **When suffering, tell yourself the whole story.** Temptation to think that the suffering is your whole story. It's not. Today, you may have reason to seep. But, because of Jesus you also have much reason to hope. That's the whole story, and the whole story is full of joy.
- How do you tell yourself the whole story?
- This week, when life is hard, don't stop at "This is happening to me..." That's the temptation - to dwell on the suffering and hardships, to talk about them.
- Instead, keep going... "This is what Jesus has done for me, and this is what He's promised me." Constantly reminding yourself of Gospel truths over and over again helps you to think on the joy that is yours in Christ.
- This morning, real joy begins in a relationship with Jesus - the One who has come to make you right before the Father by going to the cross for you, dying the death you deserve, only to rise from the grave to forgive you of your sins and give you life. If you have never trusted Christ as Lord and Savior of your life, turn to Him today. Repent and believe.