

Introduction

On August 26, 1978, nearly forty-seven years ago, on a hot, sunny day, in Cincinnati, Ohio, there was a wedding held at St. Stephens Episcopal Church in Cincinnati, Ohio. Karen and I had dated for four years, and now that we were both out of college, we were ready to join together in marriage. My parents, sisters, and grandparents had traveled to Cincinnati from New Mexico, Tennessee, Missouri, and Texas to celebrate our marriage. Dick Mast, another professional golfer, and his wife, Roberta, also drove to Cincinnati to attend our wedding. Karen's family and friends were also there to witness this special event. As weddings go, this was a small wedding, but it was a very lovely ceremony. After saying our vows, we shared the Lord's Supper together for the first time as a married couple. At that time, I knew that I loved Karen and wanted to spend the rest of my life with her. What I did not know at that time was that this was going to be one of the two most significant days in my life. It was the beginning of a new life together, and we have enjoyed our forty-seven years of marriage. From that day forward, God was going to use this marriage relationship to change my life. It was no longer about me, but it was about us. God used our marriage to root out selfishness, improve my communication skills, and done many other things and to mold me into His image. I have been incredibly blessed and will never forget that momentous day in my life.

Our text today is about a wedding that took place in Cana at the very beginning of Jesus' public ministry. That wedding took place about AD 27 to AD 29, and John wrote this gospel account between AD 85 and AD 95. So, it had been about sixty years since that wedding took place, but John remembered it because it was one of the most significant days in his life and in the earthly ministry of Jesus. Matthew, Mark, and Luke were not there for this wedding, as Jesus only had six disciples at that time; so was not included in the three synoptic gospels. At this wedding, Jesus performed His first sign, and manifested His glory, and John and the disciples believed in Him. John's life would never be the same, and he never forgot that special day.

(Jn 2:11) "This beginning of *His* signs Jesus did in Cana of Galilee, and manifested His glory, and His disciples believed in Him."

In our message today, we will first look at the setting of the wedding. Second, we will look at the problem/opportunity that arose. Third, we will look at the sign that was performed. Fourth, we will look at the result of that first sign.

Jesus' First Sign

1. Setting
2. Problem/Opportunity
3. Sign
4. Results

(Jn 2:1-2) "On the third day there was a wedding in Cana of Galilee, and the mother of Jesus was there; {2} and both Jesus and His disciples were invited to the wedding."

(Jn 2:3-5) "When the wine ran out, the mother of Jesus said to Him, "They have no wine." {4} And Jesus said to her, "Woman, what does that have to do with us? My hour has not yet come." {5} His mother said to the servants, "Whatever He says to you, do it."

(Jn 2:6-10) "Now there were six stone waterpots set there for the Jewish custom of purification, containing twenty or thirty gallons each. {7} Jesus said to them, "Fill the

waterpots with water.” So they filled them up to the brim. {8} And He said to them, “Draw *some* out now and take it to the headwaiter.” So they took it *to him*. {9} When the headwaiter tasted the water which had become wine, and did not know where it came from (but the servants who had drawn the water knew), the headwaiter called the bridegroom, {10} and said to him, “Every man serves the good wine first, and when *the people* have drunk freely, *then he serves* the poorer wine; *but* you have kept the good wine until now.”

(Jn 2:11-12) “This beginning of *His* signs Jesus did in Cana of Galilee, and manifested His glory, and His disciples believed in Him. {12} After this He went down to Capernaum, He and His mother and *His* brothers and His disciples; and they stayed there a few days.”

1. **Setting** (Jn 2:1-2)

John begins by saying that on the third day there was a wedding in Cana of Galilee. That could mean that there was a wedding on Tuesday, the third day of the week. However, scholars say that it is not the third day of the week, but the third day from when Jesus found Philip on His way to Galilee. Let's take a quick look at the timeline of events in John.

(Jn 2:1) “On the third day there was a wedding in Cana of Galilee, and the mother of Jesus was there;

(Jn 1:43) “The next day He purposed to go into Galilee, and He found Philip. And Jesus said to him, “Follow Me.”

John identifies Jesus as the Lamb of God. In John 1:29, John said, “Behold, the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!” Then he testified that he recognized Jesus because the Holy Spirit had descended upon Jesus and remained, and he testified that Jesus is the Son of God. In verse thirty-five, John wrote, “Again, the next day John was standing with two of His disciples...”

(Jn 1:29–35) “The next day he saw Jesus coming to him and said, “Behold, the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world.... {32} John testified saying, “I have seen the Spirit descending as a dove out of heaven, and He remained upon Him.... {34} “I myself have seen, and have testified that this is the Son of God.” {35} Again the next day John was standing with two of his disciples,”

Then, the next day Jesus purposed to go into Galilee, and He found Philip. Jesus knew about the wedding in Cana, which is in Galilee, and it would take several days to get there. It is about 70-75 miles as the crow flies, but between 80-90 miles by road. It would take three or four days by foot, so Jesus and the disciples hoofed it to get there in three days. The third day cannot be the third day from John's declaration; it is the third day after Jesus had found Nathaniel on their way to Cana.

(Jn 1:43) “The next day He purposed to go into Galilee, and He found Philip. And Jesus said to him, “Follow Me.”

While talking about the timeline, let me give a synchronized timeline, one that takes into account the synoptic gospels. In Mark 1:9-13, Jesus was baptized by John in the Jordan. Immediately afterwards, the Spirit impelled Jesus to go out into the wilderness for forty days to be tempted. At first glance in John's account, it appears that Jesus was baptized and then went to the wedding

in Cana. There appears to be a discrepancy. In Answers in Genesis, Ron Dudek explains the discrepancy very clearly. John wrote about the baptism of Jesus in past tense, as it had already happened. After Jesus was baptized, He went into the wilderness and was tempted, per Mark's account. Then, He returned in John 1:35, and John again declared Him to be the Lamb of God and the Son of God. Ron concludes: "*we can conclude the wedding at Cana took place after Jesus had returned from His 40 days in the wilderness and three days after He called the disciples as described in John 1:35–51. There is no contradiction when we carefully examine the various accounts in the Gospels.*" (Jesus' baptism and time in the wilderness is also covered in Matthew 3:13-4:12, and Luke 3:21-4:14.)

(Mk 1:9–13) "In those days Jesus came from Nazareth in Galilee and was baptized by John in the Jordan. {10} Immediately coming up out of the water, He saw the heavens opening, and the Spirit like a dove descending upon Him; {11} and a voice came out of the heavens: "You are My beloved Son, in You I am well-pleased." {12} Immediately the Spirit impelled Him *to go* out into the wilderness. {13} And He was in the wilderness forty days being tempted by Satan; and He was with the wild beasts, and the angels were ministering to Him."

Below is a timeline chart that ties together the synoptic gospels with John's account.

Day	Event	Scripture	Location
T-41	Jesus is baptized by John	Mk 1:9	Bethany beyond the Jordan
T-40	Jesus spends forty days in the wilderness being tempted by the devil	Mk 1:10-13	Wilderness
Day 1	Jesus returns and John testifies that Jesus is the Lamb of God and the Son of God.	Jn 1:29	Bethany beyond the Jordan
Day 2	John points Jesus out again; two disciples follow Him (<i>Andrew, John</i>)	Jn 1:35–39	Bethany beyond the Jordan
Day 3	Andrew brings Peter to Jesus	Jn 1:40–42	Bethany beyond the Jordan
Day 4	Jesus decides to go to Galilee; finds Philip and Nathanael	Jn 1:43–51	Traveling toward Galilee
Days 5–6	Jesus and His disciples travel from Jordan Valley to Cana	<i>Implied</i>	Along the Jordan Valley, then west into Galilee
Day 7 (3 rd day)	Wedding at Cana – Jesus' first miracle (water to wine)	Jn 2:1–11	Cana in Galilee

This wedding was in Cana of Galilee. There were two Cana's and this one was Kefr Kenna, which was five miles northeast of Nazareth. (The other Cana was Khirbet Kana, which was further north.) Cana was a very small, agricultural town, and probably had less than a hundred people living in it. In a small town, people usually know one another, and events like a wedding would be a community event.

In John 21:2, we find that Nathanael was from Cana. Since it was such a small town, he would have known people at the wedding, and quite possibly, they could be relatives of his. In chapter one, when Jesus said to Nathanael, "Behold, an Israelite indeed, in whom there is no deceit!" Nathanael responded by saying, "How do you know me?" Even though Jesus grew up a few miles away in Nazareth, it does not appear like Jesus knew Nathanael.

(Jn 21:1–2) “After these things Jesus manifested *Himself* again to the disciples at the Sea of Tiberias, and He manifested Himself in this way. {2} Simon Peter, and Thomas called Didymus, and Nathanael of Cana in Galilee, and the *sons* of Zebedee, and two others of His disciples were together.”

It is very likely that people from all over Galilee came to this wedding. The mother of Jesus had come from Nazareth, and was there at the wedding. Jesus and His disciples were also invited to the wedding. At this point, Jesus had six disciples with Him. They were: Andrew, John, Peter, James, Nathaniel, and Philip. Because of Mary's involvement and interactions with the servants, many scholars believe it was a relative of Mary. Like my wedding, there were both family members and friends attending the wedding.

(Jn 2:1-2) “On the third day there was a wedding in Cana of Galilee, and the mother of Jesus was there; {2} and both Jesus and His disciples were invited to the wedding.”

Most Jewish weddings were not a one-day event. The Jewish betrothment period was a year, and a formal covenant was made. Once engaged, the couple was legally considered married, even though the marriage was yet to be consummated. To break the betrothal required a divorce. During the betrothal period, the groom would go and make preparations for his marriage, and prepare a place for them to live. Meanwhile, the bride would prepare herself for the wedding, and would await the groom to come for her. At the end of the betrothal period, the groom would come to pick up his bride, and would usually bring friends and would announce his arrival with shouts, lamps, and music. The wedding ceremony would typically last for a week. During that week, the marriage would be consummated. Some say that it was consummated on the first day and others say it was consummated on the seventh day. (In Genesis 29:21-30, Jacob consummated his marriage on the first night of the wedding week.)

In those days, the groom paid for the wedding, not the bride. I got a chuckle out of a comment by Ray Stedman, who said that he tried to bring back that custom today because he had four daughters and no sons, but his suggestion did not get very far. He ended up paying for all four of his daughters' weddings. We do not know the length of this wedding in Cana, or what day of the wedding it is.

2. **Problem/Opportunity** (Jn 2:3-5)

The problem/opportunity was that the wine ran out. I used the title, Problem/Opportunity, because most problems give an opportunity for God to do something special. Some people choose to see things as a problem, and look at the glass half-empty, and they are worried about the wine running out. Others are more optimistic and see the glass half-full, and they are looking at how to fill the glass back up.

(Jn 2:3) “When the wine ran out, the mother of Jesus said to Him, “They have no wine.”

When Pharaoh and his army closed in on the children of Israel, they were trapped. Pharaoh was behind them and the Red Sea was in front of them; there was nowhere to go. When Moses called out to God, He told the priests to step into the Red Sea and that the waters would part. This problem became an opportunity for God to show His power and glory to the sons of Israel. We see examples like this throughout the Old and New Testament. The problem was that the wine ran out, but this was also an opportunity for Jesus to perform His first sign and to manifest His glory to His disciples.

Running out of wine would have been a terrible embarrassment for the groom, something that Jesus' mother was aware and concerned about. Some scholars believe that the shortage of wine indicates that the family was poor, but I am not convinced of that. When the wine ran out, Mary said to the servants, "Whatever He says to you, do it." Generally, poor families did not have servants; this indicates to me that the family was fairly well off. After Jesus turned the water into wine, He told the servants to take some to the headwaiter, or governor of the ceremony. Having a headwaiter or governor for the wedding this does not indicate to me that they were a poor family. To me, I think that there was a miscalculation in the number of guests, the amount of wine, or a combination of other factors, and the result was a problem that would have been quite an embarrassment for the groom.

If the wine ran out, it was probably not the first day of the ceremony. Some scholars point to the fact that Jesus brought six additional men to the wedding, and this may have contributed to the shortage of wine, which may be another reason Mary went to Jesus about the problem.

When it ran out, Jesus' mother said to Him, "They have no wine." Mary's involvement leads to the idea that she was a close relative and was involved in the management of the ceremony. At the same time, she said, "They have no wine." If it was her family, she would have said, "We have no wine." Her next instructions to the servants, "Whatever He says to you, do it," also indicates she has some authority and involvement. You would not normally command someone else's servants to do something.

Jesus responded to Mary saying, "Woman, what does that have to do with us? My hour has not yet come." It may seem cold, distant, rude, and disrespectful to say this to your mother. However, scholars say that it was not disrespectful for Him to use that term. When Jesus was on the cross, He said to his mother, "Woman, behold, your son!" He was certainly not rebuking His mother, or being disrespectful to her while on the cross. It was just a more formal way of addressing a woman or mother.

(Jn 2:4-5) "And Jesus said to her, "Woman, what does that have to do with us? My hour has not yet come." {5} His mother said to the servants, "Whatever He says to you, do it."

(Jn 19:26-27) "When Jesus then saw His mother, and the disciple whom He loved standing nearby, He said to His mother, "Woman, behold, your son!" {27} Then He said to the disciple, "Behold, your mother!" From that hour the disciple took her into his own household."

In Albert Barnes commentary, he rephrased it this way. "*My mother, be not anxious. To you and to me this should not be a matter of solicitude. The proper time of my interfering has not yet come. When that is come I will furnish a supply, and in the meantime neither you nor I should be solicitous.*"¹

Another way to look at this is to recognize that there was a change in their relationship after Jesus was baptized and began His earthly ministry. He was now acting as the Son of God, the Messiah. It was no longer a mother/child relationship.

Jesus told His mother that His hour had not come yet. There are some different thoughts about His statement. It could mean that it was not time for Him to start doing signs and miracles. It

¹ Barnes Notes, Baker Books, Notes on the New Testament, The Gospels, page 192

could mean that the wine had not completely run out, and He wanted to make sure that it ran out before doing a miracle. It could be a reference to the time in which the wine of the New Covenant was going to be poured. Jesus spoke about the time and hour many times. In John 7:6, Jesus told His brothers, "My time is not yet here..." In John 8:20, John wrote that nobody at the temple seized Him, because His hour had not yet come. In John 12:23, Jesus changed the statement, saying, "The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified." In John 13:1, Jesus knew that His hour had come and that He would depart out of this world. In John 17:1, Jesus lifted His eyes to heaven and said, "Father, the hour has come; glorify Your Son, that the Son may glorify You." In most of these occurrences, the references all point to the hour or time that Jesus was going to die for our sins and be glorified.

- (Jn 2:4) "And Jesus said to her, "Woman, what does that have to do with us? My hour has not yet come."
- (Jn 7:6) "So Jesus said to them, "My time is not yet here, but your time is always opportune."
- (Jn 8:20) "These words He spoke in the treasury, as He taught in the temple; and no one seized Him, because His hour had not yet come."
- (Jn 12:23) "And Jesus answered them, saying, "The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified."
- (Jn 13:1) "Now before the Feast of the Passover, Jesus knowing that His hour had come that He would depart out of this world to the Father, having loved His own who were in the world, He loved them to the end."
- (Jn 17:1) "Jesus spoke these things; and lifting up His eyes to heaven, He said, "Father, the hour has come; glorify Your Son, that the Son may glorify You,""

After Mary had brought the problem to Jesus, she turned to the waiters and told them to do whatever Jesus told them to do. She fully expected Jesus to do something about the problem. She was a woman of faith, and her comments indicated that she believed Jesus would take care of the problem. She clearly saw that this was an opportunity for Jesus to show that He truly was the Messiah, the Son of God.

In Psalm 121, the psalmist wrote, "I will lift up my eyes to the mountains; from where shall my help come? My help *comes* from the Lord, who made heaven and earth." When we have a problem, we need to lift up our eyes to the Lord and seek His help. Our help comes from the Lord, who made heaven and earth. Nothing is impossible for Him. No matter what the problem or issue is, we need to turn to the Lord for help. Mary was full of faith when she went to Jesus, and her command to the servants indicates that she fully expected Him to do something. She saw the problem as an opportunity for the Son of God to manifest His glory.

(Ps 121:1–2) "I will lift up my eyes to the mountains; from where shall my help come? {2} My help *comes* from the Lord, who made heaven and earth."

3. Sign (Jn 2:6-10)

Let's look at what Jesus does for this wedding party. John records that there were six stone waterpots set there for the Jewish custom of purification. Each waterpot would hold twenty or thirty gallons each. The KJV translates this as two or three firkins apiece. The Greek word that is used is metretes (Strong's G3355). There were two or three metretes in each water pot. A metretes is 10.3 gallons, so this is why the NASB says twenty to thirty gallons.

(Jn 2:6) "Now there were six stone waterpots set there for the Jewish custom of purification, containing twenty or thirty gallons each."

(Jn 2:6, KJV) "And there were set there six waterpots of stone, after the manner of the purifying of the Jews, containing two or three firkins apiece."

Jesus told the servants to fill them to the brim, which they did. There may have been as much as 180 gallons of water turned into wine. We do not know how much wine they started with, but they now have between 150 and 180 gallons of new wine. Depending on how long this wedding celebration was going to last each day and the number of days of celebrating, there was enough wine to serve several hundred people at the wedding. It was not a tiny wedding.

(Jn 2:7) "Jesus said to them, "Fill the waterpots with water." So they filled them up to the brim."

The servants filled the waterpots to the brim. They probably had to go to a well and bring water to the waterpots. This may have taken a little time in order to do this. After the servants had filled the waterpots with water, He said to them to draw some out and take it to the headwaiter, or governor of the feast. When he tasted the water that had become wine, he said to the bridegroom, "Every man serves the good wine first, and when the people have drunk freely, then he serves the poorer wine; but you have kept the good wine until now." He did not know where the wine came from, and that a miracle had just taken place. The bridegroom probably did not know what had just happened. He probably smiled and said thank you, taking full credit, and then probably went to find out what had happened. At this point, the only ones that knew of this miracle were the servants, Mary, and Jesus' disciples.

(Jn 2:8-10) "And He said to them, "Draw *some* out now and take it to the headwaiter." So they took it *to him*. {9} When the headwaiter tasted the water which had become wine, and did not know where it came from (but the servants who had drawn the water knew), the headwaiter called the bridegroom, {10} and said to him, "Every man serves the good wine first, and when *the people* have drunk freely, *then he serves* the poorer wine; *but you have kept the good wine until now.*"

John wrote that this was the beginning of His signs. The Greek word that is used for sign is semeion, and it means a miracle, sign, or wonder. This was the first of many signs that He performed in His ministry. John recorded eight signs in this gospel presentation. In addition to turning the water into wine, Jesus healed the son of a royal official who was at the point of death, in John 2:46-54. That was

Jesus' Eight Signs in Gospel of John	
Water to wine	Jn 2:1-12
Healed royal official's son	Jn 2:46-54
Healing man by pool of Bethesda.	Jn 5:2-9
Fed the multitudes	Jn 6:1-14
Walked on water	Jn 6:15-25
Healed blind man	Jn 9:1-7
Raised Lazarus from the dead	Jn 11:1-45
Fed breakfast to disciples	Jn 21:1-14

the second sign that He performed. In John 5:2-9, Jesus performed His third sign by healing the man by the pool of Bethesda, which was by the sheep gate. In John 6:1-14, Jesus fed the multitude of five thousand. In John 6:15-25, Jesus performed another sign by walking on water. In John 9:1-7, Jesus healed the man who had been born blind. In John 11:1-45, Jesus raised Lazarus from the dead. In John 21:1-14, Jesus met the disciples after He had been raised from the dead and made breakfast for them.

At the end of the book, John wrote that there were many other things which Jesus did, which if they were written in detail, that the world could not contain the books that would be written. He did not include all the signs, but these signs were given for a specific purpose.

(Jn 21:25) “And there are also many other things which Jesus did, which if they were written in detail, I suppose that even the world itself would not contain the books that would be written.”

4. Results (Jn 2:11-12)

What was the purpose of these signs? In John 20:30-31, John wrote that the purpose of all these signs was to cause people to believe that Jesus is the Christ the Son of God, and that believing, they would have life in His name. He did many other signs, but those eight were the ones that John recorded in his gospel account.

(Jn 20:30–31) “Therefore many other signs Jesus also performed in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book; {31} but these have been written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing you may have life in His name.”

What was the result of this first sign that Jesus did? In verse eleven, John tells us the result of this beginning of signs: His disciples believed in Him. Jesus' first sign did exactly what a sign was to do; it caused the disciples to believe.

(Jn 2:11-12) “This beginning of *His* signs Jesus did in Cana of Galilee, and manifested His glory, and His disciples believed in Him. {12} After this He went down to Capernaum, He and His mother and *His* brothers and His disciples; and they stayed there a few days.”

After the wedding, Jesus went down to Capernaum, and He was accompanied by His mother, His brothers, and His disciples. At some point, Jesus moved to Capernaum and made it His new home base. Jesus' father, Joseph, had died, and Jesus, as the oldest son, was now head of the house. He had responsibility for taking care of His mother, His four brothers, and His sisters. After staying in Capernaum for a few days, Jesus went up to Jerusalem, and that will be our next message.

Conclusion and Applications

John recorded a story of a wedding that took place in a small town called Cana that Jesus, His family, and His disciples attended. We do not know the name of the groom or the bride, as the wedding was not the most important thing that happened. The wedding was part of the setting for what happened. They ran out of wine, which would have been embarrassing to the groom. Jesus' mother saw the problem and went to Jesus with it. After telling Him the problem, she told the servants to do whatever He tells them to do. She believed that Jesus would do something, and

she was right. She was full of faith, fully convinced that Jesus would take care of the problem. She saw it as an opportunity for Jesus to do something special. Jesus told them to fill the six stone waterpots with water, and then take some to the head waiter, which they did. The water had turned to wine, not just any wine, but the finest wine. He did not know where the wine had come from, only that it was the best wine served. Only the servants knew that Jesus had turned the water into wine. This was the beginning of signs that Jesus did. The result was what all signs are intended to do, cause people to believe in Jesus as the Son of God.

There are a number of applications that we can make. First, when we encounter a problem in our everyday life, do we take the problem to Jesus? Mary took the problem to Jesus, the Son of God. When your bank account runs out, do you take the problem to Jesus? I remember praying in the hotel parking lot in Fort Myers, Florida early one morning. I told Jesus that our family was out of money. I took my problem to Jesus. That day, which was the final round of the Fort Myers Open, I shot a 63 and God richly supplied our needs. Do you take your problems to Jesus?

We are encouraged throughout the Scriptures to lift our eyes up to the mountains, from whence our help comes. Our help comes from the Lord, who made heaven and earth. Do you lift your eyes up to the Lord when you have a problem? Do you go to God for your help?

(Ps 121:1–2) “I will lift up my eyes to the mountains; From where shall my help come? {2} My help *comes* from the Lord, Who made heaven and earth.”

In the song, What A Friend We Have In Jesus, the first verse says, “What a friend we have in Jesus, all our sins and griefs to bear. What a privilege to carry, everything to God in prayer...” In the second verse, we learn that Jesus takes care of much more than just our sins. It goes, “Have we trials and temptations? Is there trouble anywhere? We should never be discouraged. Take it to the Lord in prayer.” Jesus is at every event in our lives, and He is ready to come to our aid. We simply need to take it to the Lord in prayer. That’s what Mary did and Jesus took care of the need. We need to lift up our eyes to the Lord, who made heaven and earth.

One year in the finals of the PGA Tour Qualifying School, I was one of the first to tee off. It was 30 degrees outside and windy. I could not feel my fingers or hands; they were numb. It was miserable outside, and I shot four over par the first nine holes. I knew that it would take about ten under par to make it, and I was off to a very bad start. Between the ninth green and the tenth tee, I reminded the Lord of His promise in 2 Chronicles 16:9, that the “eyes of the Lord move to and fro throughout the earth that He may strongly support those whose heart is completely His.” The Lord and I had a long conversation in a matter of a short time, as I went to Him in my trouble. I shot three under the next nine holes in the same cold, windy conditions. I went on to finish 11th in the tournament and earned my PGA Tour card. Jesus had turned my water into wine. Whether our problems are big or small, we must go to the Lord with all!

(2 Ch 16:9) “For the eyes of the Lord move to and fro throughout the earth that He may strongly support those whose heart is completely His....”

Second, when we go to the Lord with our problems and cares, we need to do whatever He says. That is what Mary told the servants to do. The Holy Spirit may give us a scripture, or He may simply tell us to do something. I was praying one day about becoming debt free, and the Holy Spirit said to pray specifically that we would be debt free in three years, which I began doing. In exactly three years we received a check for the amount we needed to become debt free.

Another time, I was praying in my bedroom for a man with Stage 3 colon cancer. The Lord told me that I was His representative, and He wanted me to pray a certain way for the man. The next day, I saw the man at church and I prayed for him exactly how the Lord told me to pray for him. The next day he went in for a Petscan and they could not find a trace of cancer in him. God performed a miracle, and it was because I did what the Lord said to do. Do you do what God tells you to do when you go to Him with your cares, concerns, and problems?

There was another man in our church that was diagnosed with colon cancer. As I was praying at home for him, the Lord did not tell me that He was going to heal him, or how to pray for him. Instead, He told me the man was going to die, and I was to preach on faith out of Hebrews 6 at his funeral. So, I began to study and prepare for his funeral. He died three days later, and I preached at his funeral service the next week.

There was an elderly lady living in government housing that I would see in our outreach there. She was always slandering the pastor of her church. She was bitter, and her words reflected it. She said her pastor never came to visit her, and she was offended by that. I told her to forgive him. Second, I told her to begin to bless him. When she thought of him, instead of saying bad things about him, begin to bless him. I told her to bless his health, his marriage, his children, his ministry, and his finances. She did exactly what I told her to do. The following week she flagged me down and could not wait to tell me what happened. A miracle in her had happened. She was no longer filled with bitterness, but with joy. On top of that, when she stopped cursing her pastor, he came to visit her that week, and they had a great visit. She did what the Lord told her to do.

One couple that I was working with had some marital issues. It was very evident to me that they did not understand love, and were certainly not walking in love. I told them to memorize 1 Corinthians 13:4-7, meditate on it, and to discuss it daily with one another. A few weeks later I checked back with them and they were not doing it. Their problems had not improved, but had become worse. A month later I checked back with them again, and they had not done it. If we want to see God work in our lives, we must be willing to do the things that Jesus tells us to do. I am not Jesus, but I am a servant and representative of Jesus, and I try to share His word with people.

In the Old Testament, there was a captain in the army of the king of Aram, and his name was Naaman. He was highly respected but he was a leper. A servant girl from Israel told Naaman's wife about the prophet in Samaria, who could cure him of his leprosy. She told her husband and he told the king of Aram. The king sent him to see Elisha, and he instructed him to wash in the Jordan seven times. Naaman went away furious, but his servants came near and spoke to him about doing what the prophet had told him to do. So, he went and dipped seven times and his flesh was restored. He was healed when he did what the Lord told him to do through the prophet Elisha. When we go to God with our problem, do we do what God tells us to do, or do we get angry because He does not do something the way that we think He should do it. We have to do what God tells us to do.

(2 Ki 5:10–14) “Elisha sent a messenger to him, saying, “Go and wash in the Jordan seven times, and your flesh will be restored to you and *you will* be clean.” {11} But Naaman was furious and went away and said, “Behold, I thought, ‘He will surely come out to me and stand and call on the name of the Lord his God, and wave his hand over the place and cure the leper.’ {12} “Are not Abanah and Pharpar, the rivers of Damascus, better than all the waters of Israel? Could I not wash in them and be clean?” So he turned and went away in a rage. {13} Then his servants came near and spoke to him and said, “My father, had the

prophet told you *to do some* great thing, would you not have done *it*? How much more *then*, when he says to you, ‘Wash, and be clean?’” {14} So he went down and dipped *himself* seven times in the Jordan, according to the word of the man of God; and his flesh was restored like the flesh of a little child and he was clean.”

One time, Joe Warner came to our church, and he ministered to a family that was struggling with God’s will. The husband and wife were not on the same page, and they wanted to know God’s will. Joe told them to journal for thirty days, and then look back. He said that God would clearly show them His will. The lady refused to do it. She wanted her will. They did not do what the prophet told them to do. If Naaman had continued to disregard what the prophet had told him to do, he would not have been cleansed from his leprosy.

Many of God’s promises have conditions that must be met. In order to receive the answers to those promises, we have to do the things that God tells us to do. When you go to Jesus with your needs, do you do what Jesus tells you to do. Many of us want God to do His part, but we do not want to do what He tells us to do. We have to do what God tells us to do.

Our third application from this text is about believing. Jesus did a sign and the result was that His disciples believed. The purpose of all signs were for people to believe. It is God’s will for you to believe and to have a relationship with God. Do you believe in Jesus? Do you have a relationship with God? If not, ask God to reveal Himself to you. He would like nothing better than for you to believe and receive eternal life. You don’t have to have a sign to believe and receive; you can ask Jesus right now to come into your life and forgive you of your sins. One of the signs that Jesus gave all of us is His resurrection. He died for our sins and was raised from the dead after three days. His resurrection from the dead was witnessed by hundreds and hundreds of people, and these witnesses were willing to die testifying about what they saw. If you believe that Jesus is the Son of God and that He was raised from the dead, I invite you to receive Him right now. Pray, asking Jesus to forgive you of your sins, and to come into Your life. Confess Him to be the Lord and Master of your life. Your prayer might be something like this:

Jesus, I believe that You are the Son of God and that You died on the cross to pay for our sins. I believe that You were raised from the dead. I ask You to come into my life and forgive me of my sins. I yield my life to You, and confess You now to be my Lord and Savior. In Jesus’ name I pray. Amen.

Closing Prayer

Father God, thank You for this passage in John 2 about the wedding in Cana. Help us to be like Mary and go to You when we are running out of wine, or when our friends are running out of wine. You are there to meet all of our needs according to Your riches in glory in Christ Jesus. Help us to always go to You in our time of need. Help us to be willing to do whatever You tell us to do, even if it doesn’t make sense to us. Lord, help us to look at difficulties as opportunities for You to do great things and manifest Your glory. We ask these things in Jesus’ name. Amen.

Discussion Questions

- In John 1:43, Jesus “purposed to go into Galilee.” Do you think that He knew what He was getting ready to do His first sign?

- Why do you think Jesus went ahead and performed this miracle if His hour had not yet come?
- What do you think Mary had in mind when she instructed the servants to do whatever He said?
- Do you think that the other guests found out about the wine, or do you believe the servants kept it a secret to keep from embarrassing the groom?
- To put anything besides water into the waterpots would violate the cleansing and purification laws of the Pharisees. What does this say about Jesus' attitude about the teachings of men?
- Since Jesus' hour had not yet come, was this miracle mainly for His disciples, or was it for all men?
- If you were running out of wine at a wedding, what would be your first action? Do we look to God to continue doing these things today?

Jesus' First Sign (John 2:1-12)

Introduction (Jn 2:1-12)

1. **Setting** (Jn 2:1-2, Jn 1:29–35, 1:43) Mk 1:9–13, Jn 21:1–2, Ge 29:21-30

2. **Problem/Opportunity** (Jn 2:3-5, 19:26–27, 7:6, 8:20, 12:23, 13:1, 17:1, Ps 121:1–2)

3. **Sign** (Jn 2:6-10, 2:1-12, 46-54, 5:2-9, 6:1-14, 15-25, 9:1-7, 11:1-45, 21:1-14, 21:25)

4. **Results** (Jn 2:11-12, 20:30–31)

Conclusion and Applications (Ps 121:1-2, 2 Ch 16:9, 2 Ki 5:10–14)