

Sonoraville Baptist Church
Sunday, January 29, 2012 – 11:00 AM
Rev. Steve Skates, Pastor

Series: Knowing Jesus
The Transformer - John 2:1-11

Introduction: A couple of weeks ago, we began looking in the Gospel of John at the Jesus whom John knew. If you recall, we said that John is able to describe Jesus like no other gospel writer because he was one who was privileged to be with Him during some of His most private moments. John's relationship with the Savior was unlike any other disciple, and we saw in chapter 1 some of the insight John gained about Jesus as he described Him as the very Word or the divine expression of God. In John's description, we saw that Jesus was God in the flesh and "*took up residence among us*" (1:14) as one who was fully God and fully Man at the same time. John also told us that he was one who had "*observed His glory, the glory as the One and Only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth.*" (1:15).

This morning, John is going to tell us about one of those times he observed the glory of God through Jesus. Today, we'll be looking in chapter 2, where John gives us a snapshot from the life of Jesus as He was beginning His earthly ministry. In verses 1-11, He is shown at a wedding. At this event, John portrays Jesus in all of His humanity. He pictures Jesus as one who is concerned with and caring for the everyday problems and situations of life. But also, John exhibits a Christ who is able to meet the needs of others by way of miraculous feats that bring Him honor and glory. So this morning, let's drop in on this scene in Cana of Galilee and witness Jesus: The Transformer. First, we notice:

1. Jesus' Participation in Life (1-2)

John 2:1-2 (HCSB) *1 On the third day a wedding took place in Cana of Galilee. Jesus' mother was there, and 2 Jesus and His disciples were invited to the wedding as well.*

As we begin chapter 2, we see that a wedding is taking place. Weddings were huge social events those days, often lasting a week. We are not told who is getting married, but we do know that Mary, Jesus' own mother, is involved in this one, so perhaps it was one of Jesus' relatives.

But notice in "*...Jesus and His disciples were invited to the wedding as well*" And they went to it. So we see that Jesus chose to participate in this social event. Now, it was something outside of the normal synagogue activity, but it shows us that Jesus isn't just for Sunday! He deserves to be included in all areas of life - especially marriage!

Jesus was at the wedding because someone invited Him. And He is here this morning because we invited Him. This ought to serve to remind us to be careful to invite Jesus into every area of our life. In fact, if we are truly His, then He should have access to everything in our lives!

Sadly though, even some Christians have not opened up every area of their life to God. They've held back a part of their lives. They've tried to maintain control of other areas and not made Christ the Lord of all. That's a big reason why people sometimes run into problems, and find them hard to handle. Jesus stands ready with the solution to our problem, but instead of butting in, He's waiting patiently for our invitation to come in and help.

Even churches can shut Christ out. That's why Jesus had John write the letter to the church at Laodicia in Rev. 3 where He said, "*Listen! I stand at the door and knock...*" (vs. 20). Even churches can leave Jesus standing on the outside looking in!

But the good news is, when we do call upon Jesus, He'll come! Just like He faithfully answered this wedding invitation, He'll come at your invitation because He cares. He cares about the everyday things of your life. He knows there's a need, or else we wouldn't be calling, so He comes. Just as the old song says: "*Oh what peace we often forfeit, Oh what needless pain we bear, All because we do not carry, everything to God in prayer.*"

Secondly, we notice:

2. Jesus' Power Over Problems (3-9)

3 *When the wine ran out, Jesus' mother told Him, "They don't have any wine."*

4 *"What has this concern of yours to do with Me, woman?" Jesus asked. "My hour has not yet come."*

5 *“Do whatever He tells you,” His mother told the servants.*

6 *Now six stone water jars had been set there for Jewish purification. Each contained 20 or 30 gallons.*

7 *“Fill the jars with water,” Jesus told them. So they filled them to the brim.*

8 *Then He said to them, “Now draw some out and take it to the chief servant.” And they did.*

9 *When the chief servant tasted the water (after it had become wine), he did not know where it came from—though the servants who had drawn the water knew... **John 2:3-9 (HCSB).***

As we read, at some point during the wedding festivities the wine ran out. Now this wouldn't be much of a problem today would it? If you run out of some food or some other essential part of a party, someone could just run down to a store and get what is needed. But back then, this sort of thing could be disastrous! First, there was a matter of honor. The bridegroom was responsible for providing adequate supplies. If something ran out before the party was over, it meant that he hadn't planned well and hadn't provided for all of his guests. Secondly, to run out of wine would cause public embarrassment for the groom and his family. You couldn't just go and get more because it wasn't as readily available as it is today. Therefore, this was a problem of considerable size to these people.

You know, life doesn't always go as we plan, does it? There are times when we least expect it when problems arise and troubles come our way. Sometimes it's not even our own fault. This is a common thing, but it's good to know that when our problems do come that we can take them to Jesus. Even if nobody else can help us or even understand them, Jesus understands every one of them.

The writer of **Hebrews 4:15 (HCSB)** says, *“For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but One who has been tested in every way, just as we are--yet without sin.”* So don't think it's silly to call upon Jesus even when your problems seem small. He cares about things even in your everyday life. He's not too big to care, or too busy to come to your rescue.

In vs. 3-5 we see what Jesus' mother did when this problem came up. Her actions show us just what we need to do when trouble shows up in our lives. The first thing Mary did when confronted with this problem was to:

A. Find Jesus – She sought out Jesus to tell Him about the problem. What a great example for us to follow! **Philippians 4:6 (HCSB)** says, *“Don't worry about anything, but in everything through prayer and petition with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God.”*

Mary did this, but at first glance, Jesus' response in vs. 3 sounds a little brash, but it's really not. He said, *“What has this concern of yours to do with me woman? My hour has not yet come.”* In today's terminology, it would be like a grown son saying to his mother, *“Mom, you and I see things from a different perspective. I've got a greater agenda to fulfill than this.”* Of course, Jesus' greater agenda included His sacrificial death and His exultation that would follow.

Jesus understood things from both the human point of view and the spiritual point of view, and to Him, the spiritual always trumped the physical. This is the reason Jesus responded the way He did to His parents at the age of 12 when He stayed behind in Jerusalem and they didn't know why. He told them, *“Didn't you know I had to be about my Father's business?”*

Well, it was now time for Jesus to begin to fulfill His Father's will. He knew that the time of His death was coming, but until then, it was time for Him to get down to the business He came for.

The second thing Mary did was to:

B. Follow His Commands - Mary understood what Jesus meant, so quickly she told the servants, *“Do whatever He tells you.”* (5). Good advice! Just do as Jesus says! When problems and troubles come, the best thing we can do is simply to do whatever Jesus says to do. And Jesus has already told us a lot to do that is recorded in Scripture. For example:

- When we're tired and frustrated in life, He's told us to: *“Come to Me...and I will give you rest.”* - Mt. 11:28.
- When we're overloaded with stress, He's told us to *“(Cast) all your care upon Him, because He cares about you.”* 1 Pet. 5:7.
- When we think that things are not going to work out, He's told us to remember that *“...all things work together for the good of those who love God; those who are called according to His purpose.”* Rom. 8:28.
- When we need to know how to be saved, He's told us to *“believe on the Lord Jesus and you will be saved.”*

Acts 16:31. So, Find Jesus, Follow His Commands and watch Jesus go to work on your troubles.

Vs. 6-9 describe Jesus' method of handling the problem. And what seemed like an unconventional fix became an unbelievable demonstration of the transforming power of Christ. This should serve to remind us that Jesus can change any situation if He is given the opportunity.

Here, Jesus transformed the water into wine! Now listen, the principle we need to learn here is that Jesus won't always run on your track! Yes, He will respond to our situation, but He may not provide the answers exactly the way we expect.

For example, in the story of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego... Why didn't God just send an angel to keep them from the fire? Well, He could have, but He chose to deliver them another way to reveal His power and glory.

We must remember that God's ways are not the same as ours. **Isaiah 55:8-9 (HCSB)** says, **8** *"For My thoughts are not your thoughts, and your ways are not My ways....* **9** *"For as heaven is higher than earth, so My ways are higher than your ways, and My thoughts than your thoughts."*

Notice, when the common water had been changed into exquisite wine, it was unbelievable. The headwaiter even questioned the bridegroom as to why he had kept the good stuff until now. He couldn't believe what he was seeing. But the servants knew where it came from. They were the ones who had carried the water. They experienced the transformation.

The lesson is clear. Anyone who's carried problems around for any length of time knows how heavy they can be. But when we turn our problems over to God, He moves in and transforms them from burdens to blessings, and you never get over it.

Nobody else may understand what you are going through. But Jesus does! And, when He moves in your time of need and turns your darkness to light, when He lifts your burden, you know it and you'll never forget it! To everyone else it was just wine, but to those who knew the truth, it was a miracle! But finally, we notice:

3. Jesus' Provision for Your Needs (9-11)

9 When the chief servant tasted the water (after it had become wine), he did not know where it came from—though the servants who had drawn the water knew. He called the groom

10 and told him, "Everybody sets out the fine wine first, then, after people have drunk freely, the inferior. But you have kept the fine wine until now."

11 Jesus performed this first sign in Cana of Galilee. He displayed His glory, and His disciples believed in Him. **John 2:9-11 (HCSB)**

Jesus came through for the guests at the wedding. His provision was exactly what they needed to take care of the immediate needs. And He will do the same for you - **Philippians 4:19 (HCSB)** says, *"And my God will supply all your needs according to His riches in glory in Christ Jesus."* The key word is "all." He will meet all your needs!

Just ask the mother of Moses who hid her baby in the bulrushes to protect him from an evil Pharaoh. Ask her how God provided for her needs when He sent Pharaoh's own daughter to find him and give him back to his own mother to care for him. She can testify to the miraculous provision of God.

But not only did Jesus provide for the immediate physical need of the wedding guests, He also provided a needed example of faith for the disciples. Notice in v. 11 - *"...and His disciples believed in Him."* This was the first of many miracles Jesus did to show His disciples just who He was. Up to this time, the disciples were simply following Christ at a distance. They knew enough to follow Jesus, but they weren't quite sure who Jesus was. They knew there was something different about Him, but they couldn't quite put their finger on what it was. They needed a sign to let them know if they were on the right track with Jesus and they got one. And from this point on, they began to see Jesus and His ministry more clearly.

You see, your faith in Jesus is never misplaced! If you'll just have a "mustard seed" faith in your hour of trial, Jesus will meet that need and will move your mountain. He will never fail you!

But notice in vs. 11; John said this was Jesus' *"first sign (of) His glory."* Before this time, the disciples had never seen this kind of miraculous display from Jesus. They only knew Him as a charming, charismatic teacher who persuaded them to drop their careers and follow Him. For them, they needed to see something more, or perhaps it would be time to pack up and go home.

But Jesus came through for them by showing them a Jesus they'd never seen before. He came through for

them in their hour of need. Now this was just the start because all throughout the gospels, we see Jesus performing more miracles. And each time, the faith of the disciples would continue to grow. Their understanding of Him as Messiah would increase until there came a time when their questions and doubts just disappeared.

What I'm saying is that when Jesus comes through for you, it will deepen and strengthen your faith in Him too. And if you'll keep on believing and keep on following He will keep on coming through for you, and the more He does, the stronger your faith in Him will come. Your hope for tomorrow is based on the fact that Jesus can move mountains today!

Conclusion: If there is one thing we can take home with us today, it's the fact that Jesus is intricately tied to the events of our lives. He cares about even the smallest details of our lives, and He wants us to call on Him and depend on Him in every one of them.

What is your need today? If you need to be saved, I know He can meet that need because that is why He came. Jesus said He came *"to seek and to save the lost."* **Luke 19:10 (HCSB).**

Do you need forgiveness? He can take care of that too. **1 John 1:9 (HCSB)** says, *"But if we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."*

Do you have a burden that's weighing you down? Is there some bad situation you're in? Is there some circumstance beyond your control and your worried about how to handle it? Jesus can handle them all. Just give them to Him and watch Him go to work. Watch for ways that He's working in your life. They may not make sense and seem unconventional, but just know that He's working on your behalf because He cares about what happens to you. I'm telling you today to just do what Mary did. Bring your needs to Jesus. Bring them to the Lord and leave them there!