**John 2:1-11**

Introduction

I. John calls Jesus’ miracles “signs”

A. The “signs” are intended to point us beyond the miracle itself to the significance of a the person performing the miracle.

B. Ultimately, the sign reveals Jesus’ glory (v. 11)

II. Why does Jesus choose this miracle as his first sign?

A. At first glance it doesn’t seem to be a very important miracle (not meeting any deep human need or issue)

B. But it is a sign that reveals a lot regarding who Jesus is and what he came to do

The Passage

I. This miracle is a sign of Jesus’ compassion for ordinary human beings

A. In first century Jewish culture where hospitality is of first importance and where the wedding ceremony lasted a week, to run out of wine would be a huge faux pas that would result in significant public shame and embarrassment

B. Jesus steps in and saves this couple from disgrace on their special day

 C. Notice how behind the scenes this miracle is

 1. The only people who know about it are the servants, the disciples, and Mary.

2. Jesus is protecting this couple and leaving them their dignity

D. Jesus is not just a divine super-spiritual savior who only cares about heavenly, spiritual realities. He is also a human savior who has compassion on ordinary human beings in their ordinary human lives

II. This miracle is a sign of the joy Jesus comes to bring

A. In first century Jewish culture, wine was a symbol of joy (see Ps 104:15, Nehemiah 8, Amos 9:11-14)
B. In a celebration that was in danger of running out of joy (symbolically speaking), Jesus steps in to supply the joy

C. And Jesus’ wine was the best quality wine (v. 10)

D. “The joy I have to offer is better than anything this world has to offer”

E. Do we believer this about Jesus?

1. Do we believe he desires to bring us a deep joy, or do we suspect that if we truly followed him he would rob us of our joy?

2. Do we believe that Jesus himself is a very joyful person? (See John 15:11)

III. The miracle is a sign of the extravagant grace he brings

A. Notice the jars used by the Jews for ceremonial washing (v. 6)

1. Those jars are a perfect symbol of the Pharisaical life of constantly having to wash yourself to be clean before a holy God (see Mark 7:3-4).

2. Many people today try to clean themselves up for God through moral behavior, religious behavior, etc, but none of that self-washing can ever bring true grace and freedom in our lives

 B. Jesus takes those jars and transforms their water into wine

 1. It’s a sign of the new covenant of grace he brings

2. This new covenant is inaugurated by the shedding of his blood for the forgiveness of all our sins, past, present, future

3. He brings a grace and freedom that none of our self-washing can ever bring

 C. Notice the amount of wine in these jars

1. 6 jars of about 30 gallons a piece = 180 gallons (= about 900 bottles of wine)

2. This is a great sign of the overflowing, extravagant grace Jesus brings

3. See John 1:16

D. Are we living in light of this extravagant grace, or are we falling back into a life of constantly trying to clean ourselves up in order to be accepted by God?

IV. This miracle is a sign that Jesus comes as the groom for his bride

A. He intentionally performs his first miracle at a wedding and plays the role of the groom by supplying the wine at the reception (that is traditionally the groom’s role)

B. Jesus is portrayed as a groom throughout the New Testament (see especially Mark 2:18-22 and Revelation 19:6-9)

C. Jesus didn’t just come as a moral teacher wanting our good behavior; he didn’t just come as a king wanting your allegiance; he came as a husband wanting our hearts, passion, and intimate fellowship.

D. Do we believe that he actually desires in his heart to be with us?

**Discussion Questions**

1. John tells us that Jesus revealed his glory through this first sign (v. 11). How did you see Jesus’ glory in a fresh or deeper way through this passage? How did you gain a new appreciation for this miracle?

2. In this passage, we a see a Jesus who is not just a spiritual savior who only cares about heavenly, spiritual realities. We see a Jesus who is a human savior who cares about ordinary, earthy, human needs. What are the implications of this for how we portray Jesus to others and how we follow him in our daily lives?

3. Consider the idea that Jesus providing wine is a sign of the joy that he comes to bring. Discuss these two questions: 1) What are some obstacles that get in the way of you seeing Jesus as a very joyful person, if any? 2) What obstacles prevent you from believing that if you truly follow Jesus, he desires to bring more joy into your life rather than rob you of the joy you currently have?

4. The following statement was made on Sunday: “Jesus didn’t just come as a moral teacher wanting our good behavior; he didn’t just come as a king wanting our allegiance; he came as a husband wanting our hearts, our passion, and our deepest fellowship.” How does considering Jesus as your groom affect the way you want to approach your life and your faith?

5. On Sunday we celebrated communion. When you notice that communion is laid out in the sanctuary, how do you normally feel?  Has communion been a meaningful experience for you historically, and if so, in what ways specifically?