

# The Miracles Of Jesus Christ: Water Into Wine (Part Two)

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Sometimes, God's commands are puzzling to the human mind. He tells us, "'For My thoughts are not your thoughts, nor are your ways My ways,' says the Lord. 'For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways, and My thoughts than your thoughts'" (Isaiah 55:8-9). We may not understand why He gives them, or we may feel they are out of touch with our circumstances, but we are to obey His every command, for His wisdom is greater than ours. In fact, as Paul writes, "The foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men" (I Corinthians 1:25). We can see this factor at work in Jesus' miracle at Cana.

In the ancient Near East, with its scarcity of water, wine was a necessity rather than a luxury, so it came to symbolize sustenance and life. Due to its close relationship to the ongoing life of the community, in association with grain and oil, wine is also representative of the covenant blessings God promised to Israel for obedience, and which He would withhold for disobedience. Finally, wine also represents joy, celebration, and festivity, expressing the abundant blessings of God.

1. What is the quality of Christ's miracles? John 2:6-7.

**Comment:** Normally, the water pots supplied water for the ceremonial washings in accordance with Jewish tradition (Mark 7: 3-4). Each water pot could hold two to three firkins of water, equivalent to 17 to 25 gallons. This means that the six water pots could hold a total of about 150 gallons of water! When Christ blesses, He does it abundantly! On other occasions, Jesus miraculously provided more than enough food (Mark 8:8; John 6: 13). His generous abundance in giving coincides with the wealth of His lovingkindness.

2. Could a person abuse the abundance of a miracle?

**Comment:** Potentially, wine can generate either positive or negative results. Negatively, wine can be abused, causing a person to lose self-control. "Wine is a mocker, strong drink is a brawler, and whoever is led astray by it is not wise" (Proverbs 20:1); and "do not be drunk with wine, in which is dissipation" (Ephesians 5:18). When Jesus made the water into wine, He did not intend for the wedding guests to get drunk. He provided the right amount for the number of people in attendance to enjoy themselves but not lose control.

3. Is Christ running a welfare program with His miracles? John 2:7-8.

**Comment:** Jesus shows us that God is pleased to use human instruments in performing the wonders of His grace. He did nothing in changing water to wine that was unnecessary for Him to do. The servants filled the vessels and took the wine to the master of the marriage feast. There was no reason for Christ to do this kind of work for them. Instead, He did what no one else could do. This principle applies to His work in us: He does not do things for us that we can do ourselves. Further, He will not perform miracles if they would destroy industriousness or encourage laziness and irresponsibility. Miracles do not excuse us from carrying out our responsibilities.

Likewise, faith without works is dead (James 2:14-19). It is an honor to work with God in faith to accomplish His will, and if done with the right attitude, no one ever regrets his involvement in that service. God's commands are usually not easy to do, but they are possible—and necessary to do—if we want His blessing. In light of this principle, Paul states, "If anyone will not work, neither shall he eat" (II Thessalonians 3:10). This miracle prods all who follow Christ to grow in faith.

4. What part does obedience play in the receipt of blessings?

**Comment:** When Christ desires to bestow a blessing, He often first gives a command, but since the carnal mind is enmity against God (Romans 8:7), humans often do not like God or His servants "telling them what to do." People want to have privileges without responsibilities and blessings without faithful obedience. Some of Christ's miracles are associated with commands, which must be obeyed for the miracle to occur. Thus, a person who lacks spiritual blessings may be lacking obedience, so an improvement in obedience to God often increases blessings. Obedience is a key to great blessings.

Similarly, James reveals God's command regarding sicknesses and injuries that interfere with our normal activities: "Is anyone among you sick? Let him call for the elders of the church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord" (James 5:14-16). God does not always tell us why we should do something, and frankly, we do not need explanations in order to obey. Puzzlement only shows our lack of wisdom, not God's.

Running out of wine at the wedding feast could potentially have resulted in serious legal consequences for the wedding couple. Christ made up the deficiency, just as He does regarding our salvation (Acts 4:12). Wine is a symbol of joy. When the wine ran out, the wedding feast began to lose its joy, but Christ's miracle brought it back to the wedding. This parallels the sinner's need for salvation. When we accept Christ as our Savior, repent, and are baptized, we become a new creation just as the water was changed to the finest new wine. Great joy is the result.

John 2:11 says that this miracle manifested Jesus' glory. Making water into wine glorified Him, as does bringing sinners to salvation. Sin makes us fall short of the glory of God (Romans 3:23), but salvation brings glory to God (Ephesians 1:12) and eventually to us (Romans 8:17, 30).