

John 2:1-11  
Filled to the Brim  
WRCoB 1.9.22

There's this story about a Lutheran pastor  
(I don't why he's Lutheran . . . but he is).

He's pulled over for driving erratically.

The police officer smells alcohol on Pastor Olson's breath  
And asks him what he's been drinking

He responds by saying  
*I've only been drinking from this bottle of water.*

The officer examines the bottle and says  
*That's not water that's wine!*

*Praise the Lord, says Pastor Olson  
Jesus has gone and done it again.*

Our lesson today takes us to Cana  
Where Jesus turns water in wine  
The first of his miraculous signs.

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Interestingly, Americans may be less religious than before  
Their belief in miracles has increased.

David Briggs, in an article entitled,  
"Belief in Miracles Climbs in the Age of Oprah"  
Noted these statistics.

- 55 percent of Americans are "certain" that miracles happen (a 20 percent increase from 1991)
- 80 percent believe that miracles "certainly" or "probably" occur.
- 42 percent of Americans with no religious affiliation believe in miracles (compared to 32 percent from 20 years ago).
- 23 percent of respondents said they had witnessed a miraculous physical healing and 16 percent said they had received a miraculous healing.
- 75 percent of respondents said they had prayed to God to receive healing from an illness or injury; nearly 85 percent had prayed for someone else's healing.

Despite the fact, that Voltaire,  
 The father of the enlightenment period  
 And critic of Christianity said

1

*A miracle is the violation of mathematical,  
 Divine, immutable, and eternal laws (Voltaire).*

More than half of all Americans believe in miracles.

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I went to a Sunday school class once  
 Attended by several retired professors and pastors.

It was an elite group of scholarly people.

The subject of miracles was brought up.

Opinions varied considerably on whether miracles happen

One person strongly stated that God only works  
Within the laws of physics that God himself created.

It got me to thinking about the sand box I used to play in.

It'd be pretty difficult for me  
To play with my toys in the sand box

If I was confined to maneuver  
Only from within the limits of what I created.

Just saying!

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Today we are presented with a story  
That challenges us to consider

That God may well indeed decide to work outside  
The mathematical, divine, immutable, eternal laws  
That God himself created.

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As the crow flies, Cana is 8 miles north of Nazareth  
In the region of Galilee.

A wedding was taking place there  
And folks had been invited from Nazareth to attend.

Now weddings were as big deal then as they are now  
Maybe even bigger.

The whole town would have been invited.

Tents would have been set up

    Musicians hired

        A Master of Ceremony selected

And enough food and drink prepared for everyone.

The author John states Jesus' mother was there.

You will note throughout John's Gospel

    John refers to Mary only as the mother of Jesus.

John says Jesus and his disciples were also invited.

It seems Mary arrived from Nazareth

    While Jesus and the disciples arrived

        From Bethsaida and the River Jordan.

The party was going as planned

    And everyone was having a fantastic time

        Until something dreadful happened.

There was nothing more to drink.

This is a sobering situation, for sure!

But instead of suggesting to the MC

    He gets back on his microphone

        And take up a quick offering

            And send someone down to 7/11

Mary turns to Jesus with a not-so-subtle hint

    "They're out of wine."

And Jesus, if you hadn't noticed  
With a bit of an attitude, responds  
*"Woman, and how does that concern me?"*

Now imagine calling your mother, "woman"?

I've not read a good reason from the scholars  
Why Jesus would call his mom, woman.

It was rude then as it is rude now.

But in a later story, he does it again.

This time Jesus is dying on the cross  
And he looks down and sees his mother  
With the disciple John beside her and says

*Woman, here is your son.*

And then to the disciple.

*Here is your mother.*

So, we don't know why he would call his mother, woman  
But he does . . .  
*Woman, and how does that concern me?*

Gentle Mary ignores the snarky comment  
And turns and addresses the servants  
*"Do as he tells you."*

Now isn't that just like a mother for you?

No way around it! Jesus must do as his mother requested!

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There stood six stone jars each capable of holding  
Twenty to thirty gallons of water.

And so quietly without a lot of fanfare  
Jesus instructs the attendants  
To fill the jars to the brim with water

Not one jar, all six of them.

We're talking 120 to 180 gallons.

Jesus then instructs one of the servants  
To take a dipper full  
And give it to the Master of Ceremonies.

The MC takes a sip and turns to the bridegroom,  
Who doesn't have a clue to what's going on  
And speaks loud enough for all to hear

Most people serve their best wine at the beginning  
And later when everyone is inebriated  
They bring out the Boones Farm.

But you, you have saved the best for last.

And with that, the bridegroom  
Nodded his head, looking rather pleased  
And wondered what the MC was talking about!

The wedding in Cana could've ended in a complete disaster.

Instead, it turned out to be a party talked about for years.

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This is the God we serve!

Once he starts a blessing

He doesn't know when to stop!

I'm not sure how many people attended the wedding

But 180 gallons of wine is a lot of wine

And instead of the families of the bride and groom

To be forever remembered

As the ones who hosted a wedding party

That ran out of wine, for goodness sake

They now will be forever remembered as the families

Who hosted the very best wedding party ever!

When deep shame and dishonor was about to befall them

Jesus comes to the rescue.

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It was only Mary, the mother of Jesus

The disciples and the servants

Who knew of the miracle he had just performed

He performed it in a very inconspicuous way.

But isn't that just the way of miracles?

Miracles happen every day around us

And we scarcely pay any attention.

I remember sharing with someone  
That my mother was diagnosed  
With terminal colon cancer in October 2019

And that she was still alive and enjoying her life today.

She looked at me a bit befuddled  
And asked if I didn't think THAT was a miracle.

That I should be at church giving testimony  
And praising God for what God has done!

I also think about the 12 Anabaptist missionaries  
With children in hand  
Walking past their sleeping captors into freedom.

Miracle? Maybe. Maybe not!

Ask their loved ones and families who prayed unceasingly  
And they'll tell you what they think.

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And not only . . .

When you think about the human body  
Or life itself on planet earth  
The intricacies found in nature

You might say along with Walt Whitman

2

*Why, who makes much of a miracle? As to me I know of  
nothing else but miracles.*



The founder of the Lutheran Church, Martin Luther,  
Said this of miracles:

3

*God's wonderful works which happen daily are lightly esteemed not because they are of no import but because they happen so constantly and without interruption.*

4

*[Humankind] is used to the miracle that God rules the world and upholds all creation and because things daily run their appointed course it seems insignificant.*

5

*And no one thinks it worth his while to meditate upon it and to regard it as God's wonderful work. And yet is it a greater wonder that Christ fed the five thousand with five loaves, or turned water into wine?*

C. S. Lewis said

6

*Miracles are a retelling in small letters of the very same story which is written across the whole world in letters too large for some of us to see.*

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My contention is that

What Jesus did in a small way in little ole Cana  
God does in a big way in the whole wide world!

Every day of our lives God performs miracles.

And we don't see them

Because we have become dulled to it all.

Every day signs and wonders occurs!

G. K. Chesterton wrote,

7

*The world is not lacking in wonders  
But in a sense of wonder.*

Albert Einstein is widely acknowledged  
As one of the greatest scientists of all time.

And yet, he looked at life with wonder.

He writes

8

*There are only two ways to live your life. One is as though  
nothing is a miracle. The other is as though everything is a  
miracle.*

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Inviting Jesus to a wedding in Cana  
Turned a potential calamity  
Into the best wedding this side of Galilee!

Consider what inviting Jesus into your life can do for you?

The wedding in Cana exemplifies the God we love

Jesus will fill your jar to the brim  
Your cup to overflowing  
He will turn your water into wine

And the greatest miracle of it all is that he offers it freely!

What kind of miracle is that?!