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John 2:1 - 2:12



Gospel of John - Steve Gregg

In this talk by Steve Gregg, he delves into the second chapter of the Gospel of John. He begins by giving some background on the characters mentioned in the story, including Simon Cephas, also known as Peter, and Mary, who seems to be in charge of the household. Gregg notes the veiled references to Jesus' resurrection on the third day, but he doesn't see any hints of it in this passage. He also comments on Jesus' provision of wine at the wedding feast, noting that it was likely grape juice and not alcoholic, as the early church had scruples about avoiding alcohol.

Transcript

Let's turn to the second chapter of the Gospel of John. After the first 18 verses, which were a prologue, not part, really, of the historical narrative, but rather a theological interpretation of the life of Christ, telling us that he was the Word, and the Word was with God, the Word was God, and that he was manifested in the flesh, and tabernacled with us, and not so much giving details of his life in the first 18 verses as giving, I guess we could say, the theological back story to the life of Christ. Then, verses 19 through 51, the rest of chapter 1, really reported the events of a series of four consecutive days.

And when we looked at those, I pointed out that in some ways, it's a little hard to harmonize them initially with the stories in the Gospels, because on the first of those days, or actually the first and the second of those days, John the Baptist points Jesus out in the crowd, and tells the people that there's one among them who's greater than he is, and retells a story of how he had baptized Jesus, and seen the Holy Spirit come upon him in the form of a dove. And therefore, in verse 34, John says, I have seen and testified this is the Son of God. Now, the baptism of Jesus, therefore, is only mentioned in this Gospel as a retrospect, as a memory of John the Baptist.

The Gospels of Matthew, Mark, and Luke record the baptism of Jesus in the course of narrative events. It tells of how Jesus came to John and was baptized, and then went into the wilderness, was tempted for 40 days, and then came back, although the other Gospels skip immediately from the end of the temptation in the wilderness to the time when Jesus went to Galilee because John was put in prison. Now, that's important,

because John was not yet put in prison in the time we're reading about.

In fact, even into chapter 3, we are given notice that John was not yet put into prison. In chapter 3, verse 24, it says, For John had not yet been thrown in prison. And yet, all of the other Gospels resume the narrative from the temptation of Jesus.

They skip over everything we're looking at at this point in John and begin the story when John was put in prison. So, the Gospel here, the fourth Gospel, is filling in details that the others have left out of the early days between the temptation of Jesus in the wilderness, on the one hand, and the beginning of his Galilean crusade when John was put in prison. Because, like I said, the other Gospels simply go from the temptation to the Galilean ministry when John was in prison.

But here, it is clearly after the baptism and after the temptation. And John now sees Jesus returning from the wilderness, apparently hanging out around the place where John was baptizing and pointing him out to people. This is the Son of God, this is the Lamb of God that takes away the sins of the world, he says.

And on the third of these consecutive days, he said it again, in verse 35. The next day, and this is the third one in sequence, John stood with two of his disciples and said, Behold the Lamb of God. And those two disciples, we are told one of them was Andrew, and he went and sought his brother Simon and brought him to Jesus.

Simon then met Jesus and Jesus said, I'm going to call you Cephas, or a rock, now. Your name will be not Simon, but Cephas, or Cephas. And this is the same word as Peter, or Petras.

Petras is the Greek word for a rock. Cephas, or Cephas, is the Aramaic word for a rock. Same word in a different language.

But then there's a fourth day mentioned. In verse 43 of chapter 1, and that is the day that Jesus called Philip. Now, the men who met Jesus the previous day to this were Andrew and Simon, and an unnamed disciple, but since it is the pattern of the writer of this gospel to mention himself without giving his name.

Sometimes just calling himself another disciple, or the other disciple, or a number of times, the beloved disciple, or more properly, the disciple whom Jesus loved. This is the way the author speaks of himself. And therefore, it is most likely that the unnamed disciple of the two who first heard John speak and followed Jesus on the third of these four days, the unnamed one was John.

And therefore, we could say that John and Simon Peter and Andrew all met Jesus on that day, but there is no record that they followed him in any permanent sense, or that he expected them to. He saw them walking behind him, he said, what do you want? They said, where are you lodging? He said, follow me, I'll show you. He said, come, I'll show

you.

And it says they spent the rest of the day with him. It doesn't say they went beyond that. They spent the day with him, and then whatever they did after that is not recorded.

But we found in the other gospels that these same men and one other, John's brother James, were fishing in Galilee. And all the other gospels record how that Jesus came alongside the Sea of Galilee, a very different location than this story took place in, much further north. And he sees these men fishing and he calls them and says, follow me.

And then they come after him permanently. They become disciples. They become his followers.

Since they did not apparently do so until he called them from their fishing nets. And that may have been almost a year after this. No one knows how long it was, but it was at least, no doubt, months after this.

That means that these men had met Jesus around the place where John was baptizing, had spent an afternoon with him, and then no doubt had spent a lot of time contemplating who he was, the significance of that meeting, of John's words about him being the Lamb of God, while they fished. And apparently, I would guess that they probably had conversations among themselves about him and maybe kind of wishing they had not let him get away, whoever he was. And then he shows up while they're fishing and says, follow me.

And they're quick to comply because they're primed. They've been probably thinking about him for months and no doubt very happy to be called. So they leave their fishing nets and go with him.

But that was a sequel to the third of these four days in chapter 1. The fourth of these days, he meets Philip, and Philip goes and gets a friend of his named Nathaniel, who is almost certainly the same man in the apostolic lists whose name is given as Bartholomew. The name Nathaniel is not found in any of the synoptic gospels, but he is mentioned a number of times in this gospel. But he's a friend of Philip's.

In the synoptic gospels, Matthew, Mark, and Luke, when the apostolic lists are given of the twelve, associated with Philip is one named Bartholomew. And most evangelical scholars would say that Bartholomew is another name for Nathaniel. After all, the word Bartholomew means son of Tholomew.

Bar means son of in Hebrew. So the man's name was probably Nathaniel Bar Tholomew. His dad's name was Tholomew, or a Hebrew form of the name Ptolemy.

So Nathaniel, though he's not mentioned by that name in the other gospels or in any of the apostolic lists, is probably the man Bartholomew who is in the apostolic lists. So

Philip and Nathaniel become followers of Christ at this point, and may have been the only two at this point who were actually traveling with him. Eventually, many disciples were traveling with them, and then he picked out twelve of them.

That singling out of the twelve is never mentioned in John's gospel, because it's mentioned in the others, and John's gospel almost studies to not duplicate what the other gospels have said. So many important things in the other gospels are left out of John, simply because they are in the other gospels, and John is no doubt writing a supplementary account to them. So we never read in John of these men being called to be apostles or selected to be apostles, but we do read what we did not read in the synoptics, that Philip and Nathaniel are called to follow Jesus at least, as many, many people were.

Many people followed Jesus, and some even were called specifically who didn't. As when Jesus called one man, and the man said, let me first go bury my father. Or Jesus called another man, and he said, you know, let me go say goodbye to those in my household, and apparently begged off, and begged out of going with Jesus.

But there were a lot of people who followed Jesus, but the only two we know about at this stage that we're reading in, and when we come to chapter two, are Philip and Nathaniel. But there could have been many more whose call has not been mentioned specifically. And it says in chapter two, on the third day.

Now, in chapter one, we've been accustomed to reading the phrase, the next day, the next day, the following day, and now we read the third day. Some people think the third day means the third day of the week, which on the Jewish calendar would be Tuesday, because Sunday is even on our calendar, the first day of the week, and so the third day would be Tuesday. And they think it's talking about that.

Seems more likely to me that since we've been reading about the next day, the next day, the following day, that this is saying the third day from the previous one mentioned. That, you know, three days later, in other words. It doesn't matter too much what it means, but it is a chronological notice.

Now, we're going to see that on this occasion, on the third day, we're going to be told that he manifested his glory. If you look down at verse 11, which is the end of this little section, it says, this beginning of signs Jesus did in Cana of Galilee and manifested his glory. It's possible that John, being the mystical fellow that he tended to be more than the other gospel writers, might have intended the third day and Jesus manifesting his glory on the third day to be something of a hint of his eventual resurrection on the third day and manifesting his glory.

I say that partly because the second part of this chapter, this chapter has two significant stories. The one we're about to read is when Jesus turns water into wine. Then there's

also the cleansing of the temple.

In the second of these stories in this chapter, Jesus says, destroy this temple. And in three days, I will raise it up. And John tells us he was speaking about his body.

So there are veiled references to Jesus' resurrection on the third day, at least in the latter part of the chapter. And John may have done so here also. It's not too important for us to know whether he did, but it's a suggestion that might repay some consideration.

So the third day, there was a wedding in Cana of Galilee. Now, I want to say that I've heard people use this verse as a means of suggesting that the second coming of Christ should come about now. Of course, there's all kinds of ways people try to calculate that and make it seem like this is the time, and some of them more credible than others.

But they suggest that a day to the Lord is like a thousand years. And therefore, after the year 2000, we are now in the third day. And there's a wedding in Cana.

They say, see, the wedding feast of the Lamb is on the third day. So after the year 2000, of course, all that's extremely speculative, and I don't think there's anything hinted at about that here. For one thing, it's not Jesus getting married here, although the Mormons say it is.

The Mormons say that this wedding feast was Jesus' own wedding and that he was marrying Mary and Martha, the two sisters, although the law of Moses forbids a man to marry two sisters. Jacob did, but that was before the law. The law of Moses eventually made it illegal for a man, even if he could have two wives, he couldn't have two wives that were each other's sisters.

And the Mormons believe that here Jesus was marrying Mary and Martha and Mary Magdalene so that he was taking three wives. Of course, this doctrine arose back when Mormons still believed in polygamy. They eventually had to abandon that practice under pressure from the U.S. government.

But they still have said this about this passage. However, it seems strange to me to suggest that in view of verse 2, it says now both Jesus and his disciples were invited to the wedding. It strongly suggests it was not Jesus' own wedding because it should go without saying that the groom would be invited to his own wedding.

But it says in verse 1, there is a wedding in Cana of Galilee and the mother of Jesus was there. You know, she is mentioned two other times, but she is never named in this gospel. This gospel never mentions her name.

She is just referred to as the mother of Jesus. She is mentioned in chapter 6 verse 42 and she is mentioned in 19.25 and following too. But Mary is with Jesus in some of these

stories and not Joseph.

Joseph is not there. And we actually get the impression that Mary may have traveled with Jesus after this point because in verse 12 it says, after this he went down to Capernaum. He, his mother, his brothers, and his disciples.

And they did not stay there many days, but they did stay there at least some days. And Mary stayed with them, but not with her husband. The fact that John tells us in chapter 19 that Jesus from the cross, looking down and seeing his mother at the foot of the cross, standing next to the apostle whom Jesus loved, John, Jesus said to John, behold your mother, and to his mother, behold your son.

And thus it says John took Mary under his charge from that point on, under his care. And so he took care of Mary from that time on. Hardly would seem necessary if she was still married, so she must have been widowed by this time.

And that seems possibly to be the case as early as in this story, which is more than two years prior to the crucifixion. But it would appear that Joseph died sometime in the interim after Jesus was 12. We know Joseph was in that story in Luke chapter 2 when Jesus was 12 at the temple.

But we never hear of Joseph again chronologically after that point. So sometime between Jesus age 12 and Jesus age 30, it would appear that Joseph had died, having served the purpose for which he was born. And that is to rear the minor child, Jesus, and to care for him.

A very privileged position, but having fulfilled it after Jesus was 12, really a boy at that age was bar mitzvahed and was not considered to be that dependent anymore. Jesus still lived at home and served as a carpenter, but apparently God took Joseph home sometime after that. And now in Jesus' adult life, he's traveling at times with his mother, who is among the disciples.

But she was not always traveling with him, because in the synoptics we read of a story where Jesus was surrounded by a great crowd, and Mary came from Galilee, from their hometown, to where Jesus was, wishing to take him aside and speak to him, and he wouldn't grant her an audience. But it's clear she was not a disciple at that moment. But in the early days, he and she were still hanging out together, pretty much, it looks like.

So the mother of Jesus was at the wedding. In fact, the way she kind of takes charge of things, one might get the impression that it was at least a relative of the family who was being married, and that's not a bad assumption, we couldn't be sure, but she was at least very familiar to the household and could give orders to the servants. And she might have been, in some way, the sister of the mother of the bride or the groom or something, and so this was a family wedding, in all likelihood.

It's not important for us to know for sure. And it says in verse 2, Now Jesus and his disciples were invited to the wedding, and when they ran out of wine, the mother of Jesus said to him, They have no wine. And Jesus said to her, Woman, what does your concern have to do with me? My hour has not yet come.

Now, Jesus was approached by the running out of wine. And you might wonder how it is that a wedding would run out of wine. Did they have more guests than they expected or something like that? But really, it was hard to calculate how much wine you'd need, because a wedding feast would go sometimes two weeks long, and you can't easily calculate how many people are coming and going and how much wine you'll need, so it must have not been very unusual for a family to run out of wine, especially if they were not upper class.

Jesus and his family were of a peasant class, and very possibly whoever was putting on the wedding had limits to how much they could afford to serve wine. Now, wine was absolutely necessary at any festive occasion, or frankly at any meal. There are many people who, because it is their view that Christians should never touch alcohol, have said that Jesus on this occasion did not turn water into wine, but he turned water into grape juice, because there's a strong aversion to giving permission to Christians to drink any alcohol on the part of some people.

Many Pentecostals take this view. I was raised in a Baptist church. They took the view that a Christian should not ever drink any alcohol.

And people like that really kind of get uncomfortable with a story like this, because Jesus made a lot of wine. And so many times people who are against drinking altogether say, well, Jesus couldn't have made alcoholic wine, because with that volume of wine, certainly some people would have drunk too much and gotten drunk, and then Jesus would have become responsible for them sinning by becoming drunk. Well, you might as well say that God is responsible for people getting drunk because he made wine in the first place, or that God is responsible for people being gluttons because he made food.

Just because God provides something good, it doesn't mean that the abuse of it falls on his shoulders. It's his responsibility. There are proper and improper uses of food and drink.

And in the Bible, actually, in Proverbs chapter 31, the advice is given to give wine to someone who is in agony and perishing, apparently as an anesthesia for someone who's suffering in a day when they didn't have many other options. Remember the old westerns where a guy had gangrene in his leg, and they had to saw it off with a wood saw? And so they just gave him a pint of vodka to numb the pain? From watching it, it didn't sound like it numbed it completely, but it was apparently the best they had. And for probably many centuries, the best you could do to anesthetize someone who's in excruciating pain was to do them the favor of giving them alcohol.

God made it for something. I mean, it was not alcohol. I don't think we should say alcohol is the result of the fall.

But drunkenness is. And anyone who's got a problem holding their alcohol or drinking it in moderation should certainly stay away from it. And it's probably a good idea for people who don't have a problem to stay away from it when they're around people who do have a problem with it.

But the point is to make a law that because some people abuse a substance, that substance just is evil or Christians shouldn't be near it or touch it is a little bit like, it reminds me of Eve. When the devil said, has God said you should not eat of every tree of the garden? And she said, well, we can eat of all the trees of the garden except the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. God has said we should not eat of that one lest we die, nor shall we touch it.

Now, obviously, God didn't say they shouldn't touch it. He said they shouldn't eat it. If you're not supposed to eat something, it's probably a good idea not to touch it because if you start handling it, you might just tempt yourself.

And so it's not bad advice. If you're not supposed to eat it, it's a good idea not to touch it either. But that's not what God said.

And when you start adding, putting it, building a hedge around the law and God said this, but we'll go further and say more than he did, then you're, that's the origin of legalism. The Bible does say that we should not get drunk. It's a work of the flesh.

Drunkards are mentioned twice in lists of people who will not inherit the kingdom of God. So obviously drunkenness is not okay. But that's not the same thing as saying all consumption of alcohol is not okay because not all consumption of alcohol leads to drunkenness.

And since there are people who are weak toward drink and can't handle it, then obviously, like I said, they should stay away from it. Just like Paul said, all things are lawful to me, but I will not be brought into bondage to anything. He was talking about food in that case, but that would be true of anything that is itself lawful, but which you don't want to have it run away with you.

Now, did Jesus make alcoholic wine? Why not? He didn't drink over much of it. He didn't get drunk. His disciples, I'm sure, didn't.

Did anyone get drunk there? Maybe. We don't know. Is it his responsibility if they did? No.

God made everything. And everything that's abused by people, God made. But he's not responsible for the way they abuse it.

He made good things only. We know that the early church did not have these scruples about avoiding alcohol because at communion they had alcoholic wine. We know.

Paul said, when it was abused at the communion table in Corinth, some went away drunk. Can't get drunk on grape juice no matter how much you drink. It was alcohol.

And I say this not as one who's interested in encouraging alcohol consumption. I'm not much of a drinker of alcohol myself. The truth is I don't care for alcohol enough to walk across the street to get a drink.

I just have never been attracted to the stuff, but I'm not attracted to legalism either. And I just don't like people abusing scripture because they have a weakness themselves. I think it's good to say that anything that will lead a person into sin is something they should avoid.

Just like Jesus said, if your right hand causes you to sin, cut it off. If your right eye causes you to sin, pluck it out. Cast it from you.

If you've got a problem with something, then keep it out of your life. But don't tell other people that they have to if they don't have that problem. When people begin to twist the scripture to make it wrong for everybody to do the thing that they themselves don't feel right doing, that's legalism.

It's interesting that when Jesus turned water to wine on this occasion, that the master of ceremonies at the feast did not know where it came from. And he went to the host and he says, Most people, they wait for everyone to be drunk on the better wine, and then they bring out the cheap wine when no one can tell the difference. But you've kept the best wine until now.

Now, if what they're accustomed to is wine that has alcohol in it, enough to get them drunk enough that they can't tell the difference between good and bad wine afterwards, then it would seem strange if Jesus provided grape juice and the man said, Wow, this is the best wine of the whole feast. Seems like he'd notice it was grape juice. They ran out of wine because wine had to be used in the Middle East in ancient times to purify the water.

Everybody drank wine, but they usually diluted it with water, or more properly, they purified the water with a bit of wine. They had a jug of water and a jug of wine at the table. We know this from the writings of the Latin writers of the period, and from the Talmud of the Jews, and also the Greek writers.

It's a universal, well-known custom that when you live in a land where the water is not guaranteed safe, you do something to fix it. And what they did, generally, was put wine in it. Usually, one part wine to two parts water, or sometimes one part wine to three parts water.

That's the formula that you read about in the ancient Roman and Greek historians. So, that was enough alcohol to kill whatever little nasty living things were in the water, and make it potable and safe to drink without getting amoebic dysentery. But, you can hardly drink enough of it to get drunk, unless you drink wine unmixed.

From time to time, the Bible makes reference to wine unmixed. As, for example, in Revelation 14, when it says, those who worship the beast and take the number of his name, shall drink of the wrath of God which is poured unmixed into the cup of his indignation. It specifically refers to wine being unmixed, meaning full strength.

Why mention that? Because usually they did mix it. Unmixed wine was an unusual thing. If a person wanted to get drunk, of course he could drink unmixed wine.

But, everybody drank wine in their water. It was the only way to be safe. And so, they always had wine at every table.

And, it was alcoholic wine. It wouldn't do any good if it wasn't. So, they needed more wine.

And, Mary somehow was privy to the fact that they had run out. Again, making me think it's likely that she might have been a relative of the person putting on the wedding. We don't know what kind of relative.

But, how would she come into knowledge of this embarrassing little factoid? Which, I mean, she came to Jesus privately about it. I'm sure it wasn't being spoken broadly. I'm sure no one got up to maybe enough.

We've run out of wine, folks. It would actually be extremely embarrassing to have invited your guests and have it come out that you had not prepared properly for them or anticipated every need. And, especially for a poor family.

It would be especially embarrassing to have to admit we couldn't afford enough wine for all the people we invited. And so, Mary, who feels the embarrassment for the hosts, comes to Jesus and just tells him about the problem. Now, because Jesus actually went and did something about it, we might assume that she was asking Jesus to do something.

And if so, we might ask, what did she expect him to do? We know that Jesus ended up doing a miracle, but we're actually told it was his first miracle, which means she had never seen him do a miracle before and probably wasn't of the mind to expect that. Eventually, after Jesus was known for his miracles, people came to expect miracles. But, when Jesus had never done one, and Mary had raised him in her home for 30 years and never seen a miracle done by him, it's not likely that she thought the first miracle he would do would be make wine for a wedding.

She might not have even known at this point that he would have the power to do miracles, since he had never done any. So, why did she even come to him about it? I think this is just a very true-to-life little glimpse into the normal family life of Jesus and his mother and his brothers and so forth. That Jesus, we know, was the oldest child of a relatively large family, perhaps not very large by the standards of the time, but Jesus had four brothers, so he was the oldest of five boys, and he had some sisters.

The number of sisters is not given, but it's in the plural, so there were at least two sisters, there could have been ten. But, we know there were at least seven children in that family, Jesus being the oldest. He was Mary's firstborn, we're told in Scripture.

Now, Joseph being dead, and Jesus being probably the most responsible as well as the oldest child, certainly the most reliable. Jesus was your child, I think you'd find very soon that he was very reliable and very conscientious. I'm sure that with her husband dead, she had become accustomed in the household to approach Jesus, especially since he's almost 30 years old, probably the oldest child, she came to him about all the issues of concern in her household, and probably just habitually did that, so that now that they're in somebody else's household, she learns the problem, what to do, I'll tell Jesus about it, maybe he can figure something out.

Maybe he and his disciples can take up a collection among themselves and run out and buy some wine somewhere, or whatever. We don't know what she expected him to do, or even if she expected him to do anything at all, maybe she was just unloading on him, she's embarrassed for the host and wants to share her, thinks Jesus would be sympathetic, though she may or may not have thought he would do anything. And he then responded, strangely it would seem, he said to her, woman, what does your concern have to do with me? My hour has not yet come.

Now that actually has a rather rude sound to it, to our ears, but not so much to hers. To address a woman as woman was very commonplace. There are others that Jesus spoke of as woman, with great compassion, like the Syrophenician woman whose daughter had a demon and she was begging Jesus to come and heal him, and finally he said, oh woman, great is your faith, be it done to you even as you have desired.

To address a woman as woman was normal, and to address a man as man. Jesus sometimes would address a man as man. So while we don't do that, and if you speak to a woman and call her woman, usually there's a note of severity or a note of maybe rebuke or something, and that wasn't necessarily the case.

It would be similar to saying, madam, or my good lady, or something like that. Of course men don't speak that way to their mothers generally, but it was not a rude way of speaking. But he said, what does your concern have to do with me? Now again, this almost sounds like, what do I care about your issues? But in all likelihood he's saying, this is a concern of yours, what is it you think I'm supposed to do about it? How does this

become my problem? And he says, my hour has not yet come.

Now there's many references in the Gospel of John to Jesus' hour. Usually it says his hour had not yet come, or his time had not yet come. Most of the time when Jesus said, or when the author, John, says that Jesus' hour had not yet come, it's referring to the hour of his death.

But that doesn't make a lot of sense here, because nothing Mary had said had made reference to his death. I'm of the opinion that what he means here is simply, I'm on a different schedule than yours. If you could do something right now, you'd do it.

But that doesn't mean it's my time to do anything. I'm not taking my orders from you. I'm on another person's agenda, which would be namely my father's agenda.

One reason I think that it means that is because he said something kind of similar to his brothers. In chapter 7. In chapter 7, verse 2, it says, Now the Jews' feast of tabernacles was at hand. His brothers therefore said to him, Depart from here and go to Judea, that your disciples also may see the works that you are doing.

For no one does anything in secret, while he himself seeks to be known openly. If you do these things, show yourself to the world. And apparently they said this with a note of sarcasm, not sincerity, because it says in verse 5, For even his brothers did not believe in him.

But Jesus said to them, My time, this time it's my time, not my hour, but same idea. My time has not yet come. But your time is always ready.

That is, you're not on anyone else's schedule. You can do whatever you want whenever you want to. I have to do things on my father's program.

My father's schedule. My time isn't yet. But your time is any time.

So what he's saying is, I'm not at my own liberty to do just whatever I want or whatever you want me to do. I have a schedule that is set up by somebody higher than you and higher than me, my father. What he wants is what I have to do.

And so when he said that to his brothers, it reminds me of what he said to his mother here. My hour has not yet come, or my time by implication. And so it sounds like he's taking her comment as an implicit request to do something.

And he's trying to say to her in a maybe gentle or maybe not so gentle way, Mom, I have been at your beck and call for these 30 years I've been in your household, but I've left home now. I'm on someone else's schedule. You can't just assume it's going to be like it was all those years, that you just come to me whenever the toilet's clogged and I jump and get a plumber.

Every time there was something wrong, probably Mary had come to him and she was used to him just being available whenever she asked for something. Because it says in Luke chapter 2 that after that event when Jesus was 12 years old, it says he went down to Nazareth with them and was subject to them, meaning to Mary and Joseph. So the whole time Jesus lived at home until he was about 30, he was subject to his mother.

And what she said was, he's a good son, honor your father and mother. He was subject to her. He'd do what she said.

She was accustomed to that. No doubt he saw her comment as implying, son, do something about this. They're out of wine.

Is there anything you can do? And Jesus is just trying to put her essentially in her place, not in a negative sense, but in the sense that let her know that there's a change of his itinerary now he's not going to follow what she or any other human being wants him to do. His hour is going to be determined by a higher authority. And I think that's what it means.

What does your concern have to do with me is a rhetorical question. It means that I can't let your concerns dominate my agenda. I have to really go by somebody else's agenda right now.

And this is not my time to do anything. Now we do read that, you know, almost the next thing we read is that he did something. But we don't know how much time elapsed before he did.

And he may have just let enough time elapse to make sure he wasn't doing it just at her request. I mean, God may have said, okay, now do something. And it's the same thing over in John 7 when we're talking about that other case with his brothers, because his brother said, go to Jerusalem and show yourself.

He said, well, you can do it whenever you want to. My time is not ready. But he then said in verse 8, John 7, 8, you, he says to his brothers, you go up to this feast.

I'm not yet going up to this feast, for my time is not yet fully come. But it says when he had said these things to them, he remained in Galilee. But when his brothers had gone up, he also went up to the feast.

How much later than that, we don't know. It makes it sound like he just waited for them to get out of sight around the next minute, then he snuck off. But actually, he was mindful of when the right time was.

And he says, I'll go when it's the right time for me. And he did. And the way the story is told, we don't have any gap told between the time he says, I'm not going yet, and then the time he actually goes.

It sounds like it's immediately after. Same thing here. He says to his mother, I can't just do things because you want me to.

I'll do it on my father's schedule. It's essentially what he has in mind. And that might have been an hour later, two hours later.

We don't know. But the story jumps, of course, to the sequel where he does step in and do something. But when Jesus said this to his mother, she didn't seem to be taken aback.

She just rolls with it. And verse 5, John 2, 5. His mother said to the servants, whatever he says to you, do it. Now, just because she could order the servants doesn't mean it was her household.

Servants were sort of not free people, sort of like slaves in a household. And they probably were accustomed to, you know, fulfilling the request of any notable person or any person who was not a slave who asked them to do something. So she commissioned the slaves to keep track of Jesus and do whatever he might instruct them to do.

Now, there were set there six water pots of stone according to the manner of the purification of the Jews, containing 20 or 30 gallons apiece. So six of them, if they were 20 gallons, he says 120 gallons. If they were 30 gallons, he says 180 gallons.

That's a fair quantity of water to turn into wine. And Jesus said to them, fill the water pots with water, and they filled them up to the brim. And he said to them, draw some out now and take it to the master of the feast.

And they took it. Then the master of the feast, who was like the head waiter, really, the master of the feast had tasted the water that was now made wine and did not know where it came from, but the servants who had drawn the water knew. The master of the feast called the bridegroom, and he said to him, every man at the beginning sets out the good wine, and when the guests have well drunk, then that which is inferior.

But you have kept the good wine until now. And we're told in verse 11, this beginning of signs Jesus did in Cana of Galilee and manifested, apparently in this manner, he manifested his glory. And his disciples believed in him.

After this, he went down to Capernaum, he, his mother, his brothers, and his disciples, and they did not stay there many days. So that ends this particular story. There's another one that follows.

In our introduction to the book of John, I mentioned that the gospel of John, apparently by design, has limited the number of miracles that it records to seven. John wrote the book of Revelation, and there's a lot of sevens in that too. It would appear that seven is an important number to John, and it's woven into the structure of the book of Revelation in a big way, and maybe into this gospel in a certain way too, because there are seven

miracles of Jesus recorded, and there are also in this gospel seven sayings of Jesus that begin with the words, I am, as in, I am the bread of life, or I am the door of the sheepfold, or I am the good shepherd, or I am the resurrection of the life, or I am the way and the truth and the life, or I am, I am, I am.

There's seven I am sayings of Jesus recorded in John, and seven miracles. And in our introduction, I said, it's very natural to attach some of those I am sayings to some of the miracles, because when Jesus said, I am the light of the world, it's in proximity to the time he opened the eyes of the blind man. One of the miracles illustrates Jesus being the light giver to a man who was born blind.

Or when he said, I am the bread of life, it's in immediate proximity with his having fed the multitudes with the bread and the fishes. And he says, I am the bread of life. Obviously, connecting the miracle illustrates the point about Jesus.

Or when he said, I am the resurrection of the life, it's immediately before he raised Lazarus from the dead. So there's a number of cases where these miracles are quite integrally and unmistakably connected with the sayings, I am this or I am that. Now, that isn't true with all of them.

Not all of them are so easily connectable. But my theory is that all of them are in one way or another connected. Some of them less obviously.

And this is a case of that. This is the first of the seven miracles that John records. And it's also said to be the first miracle that Jesus did.

That's what verse 11, this beginning of signs. The word signs here, *simion* in the Greek, means miraculous signs. And actually the word has the idea like our word signs, a sign carries information.

A sign tells you something. And these miracles carry information about Jesus. They tell you something.

These are miracles that communicate something about Jesus. And this is the first of them in Jesus' life and the first one that John records. And does it correspond in any way with any of the I am sayings of Jesus? Well, it does, although it's not in proximity in the book.

This is the first miracle, but it corresponds, I believe, with the last of the I am sayings, which is I am the true vine. Now, it seems hard to miss that turning water into wine is what vines do. That's why people have vines.

That's why there are vineyards. Because you can put water on one of those things, and later in the season, you'll have wine coming out the other end. That's what vines are for.

Now, we might think, I just like to eat the grapes. Well, maybe you do, but in the Middle East, vineyards, and even here, vineyards are primarily seen as for wine production. Jesus said, I am the true vine in John chapter 15.

And here, in his first miracle, he does exactly what vines do as an emblem of this claim that he makes. Now, turning water into wine is thus the work of a vine. But what did Jesus mean? And what was the significance of Jesus saying, I am the true vine? He certainly wasn't saying that in order to say, and therefore, I go around turning water into wine.

Because he only did that once, as far as we know. And so, it's not so much that the saying is informing us of what Jesus is going to do in the way of making water into wine. It's rather that the turning of the water into wine illustrated that he is the true vine.

But what is the meaning of turning water into wine? And what is the sense in which Jesus takes water and turns it into wine? Now, there's a lot of ways that you can kind of research the Old Testament background of wine or vineyards or vines or grapes or whatever and come up with any number of connections. One thing, however, that is very plain is that in the Old Testament, Israel was God's vineyard or, to change the imagery in some cases, his vine. For example, in a very famous parable told by Isaiah in Isaiah chapter 5, he talks about God having a vineyard and digging a winepress in it and putting a hedge around it to protect it and planting it with the choicest vine and looking for good grapes from it because he wanted to make good wine.

And he said, when I came at vintage time, I didn't find good grapes. I found wild grapes. It was as if they'd never been cultivated, as if I'd never done anything for them.

They just went wild. They were not good grapes. They were sour grapes.

And God says, what more could I have done to get good grapes from my vineyard? And then he says in verse 7 of Isaiah 5, For the vineyard of the Lord of hosts is the house of Israel, and the men of Judah are his plant, or the vine. So the vineyard and the vine both represent Israel in one sense. And God expected Israel to produce fruit.

What fruit did he desire from Israel? He doesn't leave us in suspense. That very same verse in Isaiah 5, 7 continues, I sought for justice, but what I found was oppression. I sought for righteousness, but I instead found people crying out under the abuse.

That is, the fruit he wanted from Israel was justice and righteousness. And the vine produces that in this case. The vine produces fruit.

Now Israel never did, but Jesus would. He said in John 15, I am the true vine, which is perhaps in the context of the Jewish thinking of Israel being the vine, he's saying I'm the true Israel. What Israel was supposed to produce in the way of good wine, it did not produce.

It produced oppression, it produced injustice, but God has always been looking from his vineyard and from his vine to get justice and righteousness. And Israel has failed to produce it, but I am here to produce that. Now, how is it produced by Jesus? It's very interesting that in this story of the turning water into wine, the water pots are specifically mentioned that these are not just kitchen water pots for cooking.

It says these were water pots that were the type that the Jews used for purification. We're told that. The Jews had a system of washing ceremonially that they did all day long.

Anything might make them ceremonially unclean. Now, we wash our hands because we are concerned about germs and dirt and parasites and so forth that we might pick up when we're out getting dirty. And then when we eat, we know that we can put bad stuff into it, so we wash our hands.

We've been educated in hygiene. They didn't have any education in hygiene in ancient times. They didn't know about germs until Louis Pasteur.

They had no idea that germs would pass along through the hand by invisible little microbes. So when they washed their hands, it wasn't because they were afraid of physical uncleanness. It was a ritual thing.

They considered that they were ritually unclean and that they had to be ritually cleansed by the outward washing of their bodies or their hands or whatever depending on the circumstance. But of course, this is merely an outward washing. It couldn't change anything inside the person.

And there's a sense in which the whole law is emblemized by those washings because the law could command a person how to behave. And a person might even behave outwardly according to the law. But what was lacking, and God often complained about it, was a corresponding heart change.

Under the law, you had people circumcising their foreskins but not circumcising their hearts. You had them cleansing the outside of the cup, as Jesus put it, but the inside of the cup was still full of filthiness and debauchery. He said the Pharisees, who were the most eminent in following the practices of the Old Covenant law, they did it religiously as no one else did.

Jesus said they were like whitewashed tombs. Now, a tomb was an unclean thing because bones, dead bodies, and so forth were unclean to the Jew. If you touched a dead body, you were unclean for a week.

So a tomb was a place that Jews didn't want to go. If you had to go to your father's funeral, you were just unclean for a week and it was very inconvenient, but you had to do it. But you'd avoid dead bodies all you could.

In fact, the reference to whitewashed tombs is a reference to something that was actually done in that area because Jerusalem was visited by pilgrims, Jewish pilgrims, from all over the world three times a year for festivals. And, how to say this delicately, caves were like restrooms. We know that from a famous story in the Old Testament.

Saul, pursuing David and going into a cave to relieve himself. But where else are you going to do it? I guess if there are bushes, but you're out in the desert. People had to relieve themselves from time to time and so they went into caves to do that.

And the thing is, tombs and caves were obviously sometimes the same thing. A lot of times people were buried in caves. Now, people in the area would know which caves were burial places and they wouldn't go in there to relieve themselves.

But outsiders who were visiting from other countries coming to Jerusalem would see a cave and go in there and they wouldn't know if it was a tomb or not. And then they become defiled because there's dead bodies in there and then they couldn't keep the Passover or whatever because they're defiled for a week. So, what the Jews did to avoid that accidental defilement is when the seasons of the festivals came and they expected pilgrims from out of the area, they would go out with whitewash and a brush and they would whitewash the outside of those caves that were burial places.

That way, outsiders would know instantly that's not available for normal purposes. There's dead bodies in there. Don't go in there.

So, the whitewashing of a cave on the outside would advertise this is a burial place. Do not go there. So, Jesus was making reference to something that every one of his listeners had heard of when he said, you guys are like whitewashed tombs.

Everyone probably there had seen whitewashed tombs. He said, you know, they look all white and shiny and nice on the outside, but they're full of defilement. You come into contact with them and they're not all that clean.

They're unclean. They're full of uncleanness and defilement and you'll be made unclean by contact with them. What Jesus is saying is that he said that about the Pharisees who were the most conscientious observers of the Old Testament law.

They were outwardly clean, but they were inwardly not transformed. They had hearts of stone that needed to be replaced with hearts of flesh. And so, in other words, what God needed to do for people was to give them an inward change.

Not just laws that tell them how to behave, which they could conform to outwardly only. Because you could conform outwardly to the code and inwardly be totally corrupt, as he pointed out. Now, these water pots were the type that were used for the outward washings that the Jews practiced on a regular basis.

Thus, the water, rather than perhaps being an emblem of refreshment, it was actually water that was used for washing your hands and your feet, things like that. These pots were not drinking vessels. They were more like what you bathe with.

And therefore, the water that Jesus turned into wine was water which would be, under ordinary circumstances, used for cleaning the outside of the body. Now, when he turned it into wine, of course, it was then drunk by people. And what does wine do? According to Scripture, wine cheers the heart of man.

Everyone knows that. I mean, everyone knows that alcohol does, if you drink enough of it, it does either elevate the mood or at least change the mood in some way. Alcohol has an effect on the mind.

It's a consciousness-altering drug. And that's why we're told not to drink too much of it, because it's not a good thing to alter your consciousness that way. But, in ancient times, people were not considered to be drunkards if they just drank enough to feel happy for a little while and didn't do that all the time.

And so, sometimes, wine is commended in Scripture as that which elevates the mood, that which cheers the heart of man. And in one place, it says, cheers the heart of man and God. If you've been reading Judges, you came across that line in Judges chapter 9. In the parable of the trees seeking a king.

And they said to wine, be our king. And he said, why should I leave my task of producing wine that cheers the heart of God and man? In order to be a king of the trees. What more worthless vocation could there be than being a king of trees? What do they need a king for? They don't do anything.

So, wine actually is known for its consciousness-altering quality. In other words, it changes the heart. Now, too much of it is obviously a bad thing.

So, it says in Hosea 4.11, wine and new wine and fornication take away the heart. Or, in the King James's takeaway, in modern translations, they enslave the heart. But the point is, that wine is an emblem of that which changes you inwardly, it changes your mind and your heart.

As opposed to water that washes only the outside. And, so, this is a picture, I believe, of Jesus replacing the law of the Old Covenant as a means of producing fruit or righteousness with something different, something more dynamic. Remember there was a time when Jesus was asked why he and his disciples didn't observe a regimen of fasting, like John the Baptist's disciples did and even the Pharisees did.

And they fasted twice a week, but Jesus' disciples didn't. But Jesus said, among other things, he said something else first, but then he said, no one puts new wine in old wineskins or else the wineskins will burst and you'll ruin the wine and the skins. Now,

what he's referring to is the fact that when they made wine in those days, they didn't put them in glass bottles like we do in our day.

They put them in, what do they call them, Buddha bags, is that what we call them? Bags made out of goat skin. And they sealed them up full of wine. But the wine, as it ferments, gives off gases and so forth and it expands.

And if it's in an airtight container, it has to expand. And so that's why they put it in leather bags because leather can stretch. And therefore the wineskin could stretch to accommodate the growing wine as it ferments.

Because wine is alive. Water isn't alive, but wine is. Wine is alive, that's why it grows.

That's why it needs to be in a pliable wineskin. And Jesus said, if you take an old wineskin that's already been stretched out to its maximum and you put new wine in it and plug it up, well, that new wine is going to want to expand, but the old wineskin is too brittle. It's expanded to its capacity.

It's not going to accommodate this living, changing stuff. And what Jesus was saying is that the laws of the Pharisees and their rigorous fasting schedules and all the things they did to be righteous, those things were like a rigid, inflexible institution. It's institutional religion.

It's not spiritual. It's religious. And religion by definition, when it gets institutionalized, becomes inflexible.

The rules become established over time, the expectations, the doctrines that are tolerated and that won't be tolerated. And institutional religion becomes, because it is religion, inflexible. The Jews had an inflexible religion.

In fact, that's why they crucified Jesus. He didn't fit into the mold. He kept thinking too much outside the box.

They weren't flexible. What Jesus was bringing was like wine, new wine, which is alive. It's changing.

That is to say, it's growing. Living things need elbow room to move about. And you don't put wine that has not yet fermented and needs to expand, you don't put it in a bag that won't expand with it or else it's going to break the bag and you're going to lose the wine and so forth.

So Jesus said, the reason my disciples don't follow your routines, your religious routines, you Pharisees, is because they have the new wine. You might even remember on the day of Pentecost what the observers said when they heard the people speaking in tongues. They said, oh, they're full of new wine.

And Paul said in Ephesians 5, 18, he says, do not be drunk with wine wherein is dissipation, but what? Be filled with the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit, being filled with the Holy Spirit is inwardly transforming, just as wine, in a sense, transforms your consciousness too, in a different way, but the point is, Paul says, instead of getting drunk with wine, get filled with the Holy Spirit. Because what Jesus brought is likened to wine.

It is something, you know, if we think of intoxication as a bad thing, which we should, then we might not want to use the word intoxicating, but again, the Bible always speaks of drunkenness as a bad thing, but when not speaking of drunkenness, it speaks about wine almost always as a good thing. Remember the good Samaritan poured oil and wine into the wounds of the man who, it was a disinfectant. It disinfected the water they drank, it disinfected wounds, and it was, if you drank enough of it, it made you feel a little better.

It changed your heart in some ways. Not necessarily in a good way, but the point that it had the power to change you inwardly, whereas washing with water doesn't have any impact on you inwardly. This water that was in these washing pots is an emblem of the law as a system, the old covenant as a system, that cannot produce righteousness.

It can cleanse the outside of a person. That is their behavior. A person can clean up their act outwardly.

It's like the emblem of washing yourself outwardly so you're clean like a whitewashed tomb or like a cup that's been cleansed on the outside, but inside it's full of swill and putrefaction. What good is a clean cup if it's full of sewage when it's served to you? I mean, obviously that's what Jesus is saying about the Pharisees. You clean the outside of the cup, but the inside is full of sewage, essentially.

Defilement, putrefaction. So here Jesus does a miracle that is an emblem of what He as the true vine does. What does He do? He comes into the Jewish culture.

He takes Jewish men who are His disciples. They have been under the law. They have been following the old way of trying to please God and trying to be righteous.

And He brings a transformative inward dynamic, the Holy Spirit, who changes them inside in a way that the law could never do because He brings a living thing. The law was kind of alive at first. There were some exciting miracles that took place at the time of the giving of the law and so forth, but in the hands of the chief priests and the Pharisees and those who taught the law to people, it had become a dead letter.

And the most they could hope to do is force people to clean up their outward behavior by conformity to the law. Jesus said, I'm not going to comply with your movement. I'm not going to pour my new wine into your old wine skin.

It'll ruin your wine skin, it'll ruin my wine. And I'm going to do something different with

that. But that's because His movement and the dynamic of His movement of the Kingdom of God and of the Spirit of God was a living thing that couldn't be confined in the structures of a man-made religious system.

And so the wine that He makes becomes an emblem of the new life of the new covenant that He's bringing. And He takes that which was the old covenant and transforms it. He made a new covenant.

And remember how the new covenant is described in Jeremiah chapter 31. It might be good to look at it because what I'm saying here is well illustrated in this one prophecy which is found to be quoted in Hebrews twice and is assumed everywhere to be fulfilled in Christ. It's also quoted in 2 Corinthians chapter 3. So the New Testament quotes it at least three times, at least parts of it.

But in Jeremiah 31, beginning with verse 31, God says, Behold, the days are coming, says the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah, not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt. The covenant at Mount Sinai that He made with them after the Exodus. My covenant which they broke, though I was a husband to them, says the Lord.

I kept my covenant. I was a good husband. I was a faithful husband.

They were an unfaithful wife. They broke the covenant. We don't need another covenant like that.

They don't seem to be willing to keep those kinds of covenants. But He says, But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the Lord. I will put my law in their minds and write it on their hearts and I will be their God and they shall be my people.

No more shall every man teach his neighbor and every man his brother say, Know the Lord, for they shall all know me from the least of them to the greatest of them, says the Lord. For I will forgive their iniquity and their sin I will remember no more. Now He says, The old covenant I made with them at Sinai, it was inadequate.

They broke it. I'm not going to make another one like that. That was just a law, a rule I put upon them and they showed that their interior life was so corrupt that they would rebel against the rules on the outside.

So I'm going to make a different kind of covenant. I'm going to make one that changes them inside. The laws I'm going to give them will be written in their hearts.

Which means that their hearts will be changed in such a way that they'll be disposed toward obedience to God. If you're born again, if you are a genuine Christian, then your

heart is disposed to obey God. Not legalistically, but because that's just what's in your heart to do.

Not because someone's telling you you have to, but because your heart tells you you have to. Because that's what you want to do. It's written in your heart.

It's the code in your computer. And so God has written His law there in our hearts. And He says, It's different than the covenant I made before.

The old covenant was as good as water in a washing pot. The new covenant is like wine. It changes the person inside.

It changes their heart, their mind. It alters their consciousness. And so this miracle of Jesus, I believe, illustrates that important point.

And that's pretty much as much as we have time for tonight. I was just looking to see if there's any other points I want to make before we close. I will point out that even the head waiter observed that the wine that Jesus made was better even than the wine they'd had before.

So, I mean, that comment being recorded as it is indicates that, first of all, Jesus doesn't make any junk. I remember a friend of mine who, back in the Jesus moment, people prayed for all kinds of miracles and stuff and sometimes saw them. A friend of mine who had an old Dodge van was on his way to work one day and on a rather rural neighborhood road, his van ran out of gas.

And he was out in the middle of nowhere. This was before they had cell phones. He couldn't call for help.

He was just out stranded somewhere. He sat in his van, just kind of sat there being bummed out and praying and stuff. And he felt the Lord spoke to him and said, Put water in your gas tank.

And there was a house nearby where he could probably get the hose and put water in it. He was also an auto mechanic. And he said, I'm not going to put water in my gas tank.

I know what that will do to my car. But he just felt again and again that he felt like God was saying, Put water in your gas tank. And he was just crazy enough to think, Well, maybe this is God speaking to me.

And so he went up and asked the neighbors if he could use their hose and he filled his gas tank with water from their hose. And then he prayed. And he said, God, you know, you turned water into wine on one occasion.

And maybe you intend to turn this water into gas. And he prayed really hard. And he tried to turn the car over.

Of course, it didn't turn over. It wouldn't start. And he said, Man, he's just thinking, What have I done to my engine? I've just destroyed my engine.

But he didn't have many choices but to keep trying it. And he kept praying. And eventually the car started and ran.

And he got to where he was going on this gas tank full of water. But he said it didn't run very well. When Jesus made water into wine, he made good wine, not inferior wine.

It sounds like he made inferior gasoline from water if he really did make it into gasoline. I don't know, maybe God just had the car run without any fuel. I've had something like that happen to me, I think, a few times.

I was out of fuel in the middle of nowhere and I asked God to stretch my mileage when there was no fuel left in the tank. And I've gotten some good miles a few times. This was back in the Jesus movement, too, back when we were really simple.

We were really simple and had real simple faith. And you could tell you'd have to have simple faith to put water in your gas tank because you thought God told you to. But I don't know what to make of that story.

It seems to me if God turned his water into gasoline that it'd be good gasoline, but he said it wasn't good gasoline. But anyway, it's a strange story. There are many strange stories emanating from revivals, and that was one of them.

But when Jesus turned water into wine, he didn't make any junk. He made the best wine. And, of course, the emblem of this transformation, it speaks of transformation in God's people.

Instead of them being washed outwardly, they are changed inwardly. So when God does a supernatural work transforming you so that you can be righteous, he's creating righteousness in you. The fruit of the vine is righteousness.

And Jesus is creating righteousness in you. He does a real work. It turns into real wine, not just kind of half wine, not half gasoline type stuff.

It's really good wine. Jesus has the best to offer. His miracles have never been to create inferior things.

And so the work he does in us is not an inferior work, but he makes the best he is capable of making in us. As we come to him by faith, John's teaching of the gospel is that it's when we believe in him that this everlasting life comes into us. It's a spiritual life that changes us inwardly.

And so John, in telling of the miracles that he does, I don't think he tells any miracles of Jesus for no purpose. I think sometimes the other gospels sometimes tell, because they

tell 20 or 30 miracles in them, they sometimes just mention one miracle after another, sometimes just because they're stupendous, another great true story about what Jesus did. John has been very selective.

He has used very few miracles. And apparently only the ones he selected, he selected them only because of the way that they tell us something spiritual. Jesus did a physical miracle, but it seemed to John's mind that this miracle represents something spiritual.

And I believe that that's the value of John in giving us these connections to the miracles of Jesus. Jesus never did miracles just to impress people or just to dazzle people. He did them because they were to communicate something.

Even in the synoptic gospels, we have him saying, oh, you don't think I can forgive sins? Well, it's harder for me to say your sins are forgiven or take up your bed and walk. But so that you may know that the Son of Man has authority to forgive sins, I'll tell this guy to get up and walk. So, I mean, Jesus even stated, the reason I'm doing this miracle is so you'll know something about me, about my authority, something about who I am.

And so in John's gospel, the miracles that are recorded have that very same purpose, to show us who Jesus is. In this case, that he is the true vine. Where Israel failed to produce righteousness and justice, Jesus himself comes as the true vine and produces it in us.

And so in that parable that he tells in Matthew chapter 21 about the vineyard and the tenants and how they didn't produce the fruit and the owner was upset, the owner, after the tenants killed his son, if you're familiar with the parable at the end of Matthew 21, the tenants killed the son of the owner. And it says he was going to destroy them and lease his vineyard out to others who would bring forth the fruits of it. And of course, the tenants, the original tenants of the vineyard are Israel.

And the others to whom it is given are Christ's people who will produce the fruits of it. Justice and righteousness is what he's looking for from his vineyard. And this is produced not by outward righteousness of just washing the outside.

It's produced by a new kind of work, a new covenant that engraves new trends and dispositions in the heart of righteousness. And that's illustrated in this first of Jesus' miracles.