

Show Me the Glory!

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A woman came out of church, and as she shook the Pastor's hand she smiled and said, "That was a really warm sermon!" The Pastor smiled and thanked her. The next week, she said the same thing: "That was a really warm sermon!" He thanked her again, but was puzzled at her choice of words. The third week, when she once again said, "That was a really warm sermon!" The pastor asked her what exactly she meant by that. She said, "Oh, that means it wasn't so hot!" I'll try to avoid giving a "warm" sermon today, because I want to talk to you about Jesus showing His glory, and that should be more than just a "warm" topic. We will think about His Glory in the context of a wedding.

John 2:1-11 1 On the third day a wedding took place at Cana in Galilee. Jesus' mother was there, 2 and Jesus and his disciples had also been invited to the wedding. 3 When the wine was gone, Jesus' mother said to him, "They have no more wine." 4 "Dear woman, why do you involve me?" Jesus replied. "My time has not yet come." 5 His mother said to the servants, "Do whatever he tells you." 6 Nearby stood six stone water jars, the kind used by the Jews for ceremonial washing, each holding from twenty to thirty gallons. 7 Jesus said to the servants, "Fill the jars with water"; so they filled them to the brim. 8 Then he told them, "Now draw some out and take it to the master of the banquet." They did so, 9 and the master of the banquet tasted the water that had been turned into wine. He did not realize where it had come from, though the servants who had drawn the water knew. Then he called the bridegroom aside 10 and said, "Everyone brings out the choice wine first and then the cheaper wine after the guests have had too much to drink; but you have saved the best till now." 11 This, the first of his miraculous signs, Jesus performed at Cana in Galilee. He thus revealed his glory, and his disciples put their faith in him.

Jesus was invited to a wedding. I've been to a lot of weddings. I've paid for one so far and I know a lot of you have done the same. It can quickly turn into something that seems totally out of control! **(Clip from "Father of the Bride")** The wedding reception we gave for Rachel and Jon wasn't that big compared to many, including that one in the movie. You've heard about and maybe attended some of those weddings that are over the top. Up north, they really go all out with formal dinners and dances. It can turn into a big production and a very expensive affair. But even the most extravagant wedding you can think of pales in comparison to the typical wedding in the ancient Near East 2000 years ago. Those weddings began when the bride is brought by her relatives and friends to the groom's house in a big procession. The festivities would last anywhere from seven to fourteen DAYS! Can you imagine hosting a party that lasts for TWO WEEKS? This was a joyous occasion, one worth celebrating. The couple had been betrothed for a year, legally married, but they did not live together or consummate the marriage until after the ceremony. When the bride arrived, there would be a brief blessing and ceremony and then the party started. The couple began living together while the celebration was going on.

It is significant that Jesus was invited to the wedding. Some people think He may have been related to the bride or groom, since He and His mother were present. Some have speculated that the groom was John, the Son of Zebedee, and that John was Mary's nephew, but that is just conjecture - we are not given details in Scripture. What we do know is that Jesus was an invited guest. A lot of people have this mental image of Jesus as someone who was always serious and proper and thinking lofty thoughts. They have a hard time thinking of Jesus enjoying Himself. But remember, He was human – a sinless human, but human nonetheless. And here He is at a party – a week-long party at that!

A lot of people also have a problem with the fact that **WINE** was a part of this party. Some argue that it was just grape juice, but the text does not support that. Others say that it could not have been alcohol because it is evil, and it certainly is a substance that can be abused. But in that culture, wine was a drink cherished above all others. It was mentioned as a remedy for stomach problems by Paul. But even more significant than that, God uses wine as a sign of his love and blessing throughout Scripture.

Deuteronomy 7:13¹³ He will love you and bless you and increase your numbers. He will bless the fruit of your womb, the crops of your land—your grain, new wine and oil—the calves of your herds and the lambs of your flocks in the land that he swore to your forefathers to give you.

Isaiah 25:6-8⁶ On this mountain the Lord Almighty will prepare a feast of rich food for all peoples, a banquet of aged wine—the best of meats and the finest of wines.⁷ On this mountain he will destroy the shroud that enfolds all peoples, the sheet that covers all nations;⁸ he will swallow up death forever. The Sovereign Lord will wipe away the tears from all faces; he will remove the disgrace of his people from all the earth. The Lord has spoken.

Wine is mentioned as a good thing in the context of eternal blessing. In fact, we are told the unfaithful would be cursed with a lack of wine

Deuteronomy 28:39³⁹ You will plant vineyards and cultivate them but you will not drink the wine or gather the grapes, because worms will eat them.

Wine was important. It could be abused, to be sure, but it could also be used and enjoyed. To run out of wine at a celebration was a serious problem. So Mary steps in. “Jesus, they’ve run out of wine.” She knew He could do something. She was confident He would do something. But as Jesus has now begun His ministry and was about to do His first recorded miracle, He would distance Himself a bit from His mother. He gives her a mild rebuke: ***"Dear woman, why do you involve me?" Jesus replied. "My time has not yet come."*** He was not to be known as the Son of

Mary, but the Son of Man, the Son of God. **His mission now is to do the will of His Father, not His mother.** He would reveal His glory as God in His time.

When it was time, Jesus told the servants to fill the six stone jars with water. If each of these jars held 20 gallons, that would mean there was **120 gallons** of wine. There are those who would see that as a problem. Even those who concede that you could have wine at a celebration might think it a bit excessive to have 120 gallons! The Greek word implies that they were drinking “freely.” This doesn’t mean the guests were plastered, but revelry was a part of the celebration. And for a celebration that long, they needed a lot of wine. Now they had the BEST wine, the wine Jesus made.

In this miracle, we get a glimpse of the **GLORY** of Jesus. Was showing who He is and what He came to do – The Son of God had come to provide blessings for the people. It was a sign that He was the Lamb of God, the Messiah promised by the prophets, the King of Israel, the Son of God. This sign was the first of many revealing Him to be the source of eternal life, the one who would lay down His life for the sins of the world. He was giving that first glimpse of Himself, the God-man, who would suffer, die and rise again to open the kingdom of heaven to all believers. It wasn’t about putting on a show or saying, “look what I can do!” It was a display that He was the one who was in control of all things, the one who loved us enough to set aside His power in order to come among us and save us. Jesus Shows Himself as the Savior.

You might think, “That was fine for them. They got to see Jesus. What about us?” How do we see the glory of Jesus? It would make sense for Missouri Synod Lutherans to think that way, because Missouri is the “SHOW ME” state. We might even think, “**Show me the Glory!**” We want to see it for ourselves. How does that happen?

First and foremost, His **glory is shown to you through a cross and an empty tomb.** You may not have seen it with your own eyes, but there it is. It seemed as though evil had triumphed over Jesus when He was dead and buried. However, just as this text tells us a wedding took place on the third day,” there would be cause for everyone to celebrate because of what happened on the third day. Jesus would reveal His glory in conquering sin and death and Satan. On Calvary he declared, IT IS FINISHED. Sin was paid for. And in the Resurrection we see the accomplishment of God’s grace.

His glory is also revealed in His **concern**. In this account, He was concerned that the wedding guests had what they needed for the celebration. This same one is concerned that every human being has what he or she needs to celebrate eternity with Him.

Some will say that His miracles and resurrection are just folklore. They will not find the solution to sin that He accomplished. Only through Jesus are we rescued from evil. At Cana, He showed God's favor by providing wine. At Calvary and the days following He displayed the greatest sign of God's favor on us. He showed Himself to be God's grace and truth made flesh to accomplish your salvation. Because of Jesus, God forgives your sin and welcomes you into His family.

SHOW ME THE GLORY- it is seen at Cana. It is seen at Calvary, at the Open Tomb, at the Hill of Ascension, and in the promise of His glorious return on the Last Day. It is also seen in what God has done in your life at the **Baptismal** Font and the Communion Rail. And His glory is revealed to you plainly in His Word. Through these means God gives you the forgiveness Jesus earned on the cross. Here you see His glory.

Because Jesus has revealed His glory, it is only right that we give Him all the praise and worship and glory.