

COMMENTARY ON JOHN

LESSON NUMBER 20

“JOHN 2:1 *And the third day there was a marriage in Cana of Galilee; and the mother of Jesus was there:* ²*And both Jesus was called, and His disciples, to the marriage.* ³*And when they wanted wine, the mother of Jesus saith unto Him, They have no wine.* ⁴*Jesus saith unto her, Woman, what have I to do with thee? Mine hour is not yet come.*”John 2:1-4)

THE THIRD DAY

INTRODUCTION

Once Jesus was baptized, He was *“led up of the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil”* (Matt 4:1-11). Mark says *“And immediately the Spirit driveth Him into the wilderness. And He was there in the wilderness forty days, tempted of Satan; and was with the wild beasts; and the angels ministered unto Him”* (Mark 1:12-13). Luke and John omit this temptation in their gospels. This temptation took place prior to the events of our text. Matthew says that *“Now when Jesus had heard that **John was cast into prison**, He departed into Galilee”* (Matt 4:12). Mark says, *“Now after that **John was put in prison**, Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God”* (Mark 1:14). John is covering events that took place before John was cast into prison. For a short period of time, John and Jesus were both ministering simultaneously, although they were in different areas. As late as the third chapter, the apostle John mentions the active ministry of John the Baptist for some time after Jesus had begun His ministry (John 3:23-4:3). Although their ministries were quite different, they were not in competition with one another, even though men attempted to so represent them (John 4:1). Jesus still spoke highly of John, even though He knew his ministry was drawing to a close (Matt 11:7-15). Now the apostle John takes us to an entirely different surrounding. He had declared the pre-incarnate Word (John 1:1-14), the witness John gave of Him (John 1:15), the baptism of Jesus (John 28-34), and Jesus’ response to Andrew, John, Philip, and Nathanael (John 1:42-51), and the nature of Christ’s ministry (John 5:51). You will notice that in whatever circumstance Jesus was found, whether in a manger, as a Babe in the Temple, as a twelve year old in the Temple, at the baptism of John, or in conversation with followers, **He is always the preeminent Person**. He is never secondary among men, or in any circumstance. His words are always the most significant ones, and His Presence is always the most important. This is setting the stage for how we are to think of Jesus. His Person, Presence, and Word are never to be considered incidental, secondary, or a mere projection of human priorities.

THE MOTHER OF JESUS WAS THERE

“JOHN 2:1 *“And the third day there was a marriage in Cana of Galilee; and the mother of Jesus was there.”*

THE THIRD DAY. In the creation, *“the third day”* was the first day **living things were made**. The earth brought forth grass, the herb yielding seed, , and the fruit trees

yielding seed (Gen 1:11-12). So some of the first signs of productivity will now appear in the ministry of Jesus.

I understand this to be the third day after Jesus' words with Nathanael (John 1:47-51). Once again, it is important to note that the focus remains on Jesus, not on Nathanael. This is a consistent factor through the entirety of *"the record God has given of His Son"* (1 John 5:10-11). If He is in a crowd of people, He is always the focus of attention. If He is involved in a discussion with someone, His words are always the most outstanding ones – and there is never an exception to this rule. Whether He is talking to Pharisees (Lk 11:39), Sadducees (Matt 16:1-4), lawyers (Matt 22:35-40), the high priest (Matt 26:63-64), a wealthy ruler (Lk 18:18-22), or Pilate (John 19:10-11), **the truly weighty words always belong to Him.**

I do not believe this view is commonly held by professing "Christians." They are far too ignorant of His words to justify their claim to be His followers. This is the real Jesus to whom the apostle is giving witness. Think of what Jesus said about His *"words."* He taught us how to regard them.

1. *"Heaven and earth shall pass away, but **My words** shall not pass away."* (Matt 24:35).
2. *"Whosoever therefore shall be ashamed of Me and of **My words** in this adulterous and sinful generation; of him also shall the Son of Man be ashamed, when He cometh in the glory of His Father with the holy angels."* (Mark 8:38)
3. *"Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth **My word**, and believeth on Him that sent Me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life."* (John 5:24)
4. *"It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing: **the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life.**"* (John 6:63)
5. *"If ye continue in **My word**, then are ye My disciples indeed."* (John 8:31)
6. *"He that rejecteth Me, and receiveth not **My words**, hath One that judgeth him: **the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day.**"* (John 12:48)
7. *"Jesus answered and said unto him, If a man love Me, he will keep **My words**: and My Father will love him, and We will come unto him, and make Our abode with him."* (John 14:23)

THERE WAS A MARRIAGE IN CANA OF GALILEE. Coincidentally Nathanael was from *"Cana of Galilee"* (John 21:2), so that what follows took place in Nathanael's home town. Only John mentions this city (John 2:1,11; 4:46; 21:2). Later, while in this same town, Jesus healed the son of a certain nobleman (John 4:46-54), described as Christ's *"second miracle"* (John 4:54). The fact that Jesus is associated with this occasion confirms that *"marriage is honorable in all"* (Heb 13:4). We will find that, as usual, His presence is the focus of proper attention, even *though He will work behind the scenes.*

THE MOTHER OF JESUS WAS THERE. Mary is referred to as Jesus *"mother"* six times (Matt 1:18; 2:11; 13:55; Lk 2:34; John 19:25; Acts 1:14), and the one *"of whom Jesus was born"* (Matt 1:16). Gabriel appeared to her, announcing that she would give birth to the Son of God (Lk 1:26-39). She delivered a stirring prophecy while she was with Elizabeth, the one who gave birth to John the Baptist, forerunner of the Lord's Christ (Lk 1:46-55). She was, indeed, *"blessed among women,"* as both Gabriel the angel, and Elizabeth declared (Lk 1:28,42).

It is quite possible that Mary was a relative of the persons being married. There is a reference to Mary's *"sister"* (John 19:25), and the fact that she kept company with Mary the wife of Cleophas, and Mary Magdalene (John 19:35). Later, after Jesus' ascension, she was among the apostles (Acts 1:13-14), *"the women"* who went first to the tomb,

and the brothers of Jesus (John 19:35). She was also acutely aware of Jesus' ministry, once thinking He had unnecessarily wearied Himself (Matt 12:46-47; Mk 3:21,31).

The thing that particularly stands out to me here is the manner in which earlier followers of Jesus conducted themselves. Their acquaintances and friends were generally fellow Jews. This was true all through the ministry of Jesus. This was not a display of sectarianism, but of the drawing power of Christ Himself. Even when the disciples thought all had ended with the death of Jesus, they continued to meet together (Lk 24:33). After Jesus ascension, the disciples met together (Acts 1:14-15). When the church was threatened, they came together (Acts 4:23-32). We are seeing this closeness beginning to form.

JESUS AND HIS DISCIPLES WERE CALLED

"² And both Jesus was called, and His disciples, to the marriage."

Other versions read, *"were invited,"*^{NKJV} *"was bidden,"*^{ASV} and *"came as guests."*^{BBE} The word used here includes the idea of "TO INVITE ONE TO SOMETHING I. E. TO PARTICIPATE IN IT, ENJOY IT"^{THAYER} – to be a part of something, not merely to be an observer.

JESUS AND HIS DISCIPLES. Other versions read, *"and His followers."*^{IE} Lexically, the word *"disciple"* means, "A LEARNER, PUPIL, DISCIPLE; ONE WHO FOLLOWS ONE'S TEACHING,"^{THAYER} "IN A MORE TECHNICAL SENSE DISCIPLE, APPRENTICE; SPECIFICALLY IN THE NT AS ONE WHO ATTACHED HIMSELF TO A SPIRITUAL LEADER; IN A BROADER SENSE DISCIPLE, FOLLOWER, ONE WHO ADHERED INTELLECTUALLY AND SPIRITUALLY TO RELIGIOUS LEADERS, SUCH AS JESUS."^{FRIBERG} "ONE WHO PROFESSES TO HAVE LEARNED CERTAIN PRINCIPLES FROM ANOTHER, AND MAINTAINS THEM ON THAT OTHER'S AUTHORITY. IN THE NEW TESTAMENT IT IS APPLIED PRINCIPALLY TO THE FOLLOWERS OF CHRIST . . . A DISCIPLE OF CHRIST MAY NOW BE DEFINED AS ONE WHO BELIEVES HIS DOCTRINE, RESTS UPON HIS SACRIFICE, IMBIBES HIS SPIRIT, AND IMITATES HIS EXAMPLE."^{MCCLINTOK & STRONG'S}

Jesus **AND** His disciples were called, or invited, *"to the marriage."* These "disciples" were not the twelve, all of which had not yet been called, for *"the twelve"* were not chosen until later (Matt 10:1-4; Mk 3:13-19; Lk 6:13-16). Luke records the choice as having taken place after Jesus had healed the man with the withered hand, and spent a night in prayer (Lk 6:6-13). Matthew says the choice was made after *"Jesus went about all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing every sickness and every disease among the people"* (Matt 9:35). Mark says it was after He had been thronged by the multitudes, and *"He goeth up into a mountain, and calleth unto Him whom He would: and they came unto Him. And He ordained twelve, that they should be with him, and that He might send them forth to preach"* (Mark 3:13-14).

The disciples who were called with Jesus must have been Andrew, John, Peter, Philip, and Nathanael (John 1:40-51). This being true, we learn from this that these men stayed with the Lord Jesus, becoming identified with Him. They were so close they were invited with Jesus to the marriage. Most, if not all of them, had been followers of John the Baptist. They were devout men, and when they were confronted with Jesus of Nazareth, they became His disciples – learning from Him, and following Him. They recognized His superiority, and were convinced He was the One God had promised through Moses and the prophets. They had followed the best teacher available to them before Jesus – John the Baptist. Through his preaching, he had prepared them to recognize Jesus in order that they might follow Him. He did his job well, for as soon as they knew who Jesus was, they followed him.

The teaching of John the Baptist was not identical to that of Jesus, but it was compatible with it – preparatory to the reception of the Lord's Words. It concerned the same God, the same Kingdom, and the same Savior. Where there were *"crooked"* places,

he made them *"straight,"* and where the way was *"rough,"* he made it *"smooth"* (Lk 3:5). This is still a valid work.

If there is a single deficiency in the nominal church, it is this: **it is not enabling men to recognize the real Jesus, and to follow Him wherever He goes.** For the most part, a Jesus is being presented to the people who is nothing more than a straw man, void of power. This is why they have to rely on programs, methods, and techniques that have been developed by men. But systems created by men have no more power than the men who have developed them. They cannot deliver men from the power of darkness, not bring them to Jesus, in whom they can be made *"complete"* (Col 2:10).

These men are excellent examples of the identity of people who are really following Jesus. Today, with Christianity having been institutionalized, true followers of Christ are exceedingly rare. It appears that most professing "Christians" know relatively little about what Jesus teaches, and are not known for following Him in their words and manners. Such people are nothing more than misrepresentations, and are not to be taken seriously. Real disciples are clearly described: *"Herein is our love made perfect, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment: because as He is, so are we in this world"* (1 John 4:17).

JESUS COMES WITH HIS DISCIPLES. As was true in our text, Jesus does not ordinarily come to anyone without His disciples. Nicodemus is an exception to this, coming to Jesus privately by night (John 3:1-21). However, the general rule is that whether before God or men, Jesus is accompanied by His disciples. In fact, His followers are referred to as *"His body"* (Eph 1:23; 5:30), and *"the body of Christ"* (1 Cor 12:27; Eph 4:12). The union is so personal that believers are called *"of His flesh, and of His bones"* (Eph 5:30). The saved are *"joined unto the Lord,"* and are *"one spirit"* with Him (1 Cor 6:17). That is why those who are *"added to the Lord"* (Acts 5:14), are also said to be *"added to the church"* (Acts 2:47).

Jesus Himself spoke of His identity with His disciples: *"For where two or three are gathered together in My name, there am I in the midst of them"* (Matt 18:20). Further, in the day of judgment, when all men stand before the Lord, Jesus will say to the Father, *"Behold I and the children which God hath given Me"* (Heb 2:13). Jesus and His people intentionally go together.

MINE HOUR IS NOT YET COME

"³ And when they wanted wine, the mother of Jesus saith unto Him, They have no wine. ⁴ Jesus saith unto her, Woman, what have I to do with thee? Mine hour is not yet come."

This whole event was orchestrated from heaven. We know this is the case because Jesus taught, *"The Son can do nothing of Himself, but what He seeth the Father do: for what things soever He doeth, these also doeth the Son likewise"* (John 5:19). And again, *"I can of Mine own Self do nothing: as I hear, I judge: and My judgment is just; because I seek not Mine own will, but the will of the Father which hath sent Me"* (John 5:30).

WHEN THEY WANTED WINE. Other versions read, *"ran out of wine,"*^{NKJV} *"the wine gave out,"*^{NASB} *"the wine was gone,"*^{NIV} *"the wine failed,"*^{RSV} *"had not enough wine,"*^{BBE} *"wine being deficient,"*^{DARBY} *"wine fell short,"*^{MRD} *"wine supply ran out,"*^{LIVING} *"lacking wine,"*^{ABP} *"being short of wine,"*^{JUB} and *"started running low on wine."*^{MESSAGE}

Natural resources, even refined ones, finally run out. Man cannot create anything that is endlessly self-perpetuating, or that never needs replenishment or replacement. There is a sense in which everyone really knows this, even though many live as though

that is not the case.

THEY HAVE NO WINE. Mary was acquainted enough with Jesus to know that He could do things no one else could do. Here again, it is the God of heaven who is setting the events in place. For something significant to take place that brings the attention to the Lord, Jesus is the One who will have to do something – and Mary appears to know that.

Note that Mary does not present a solution, but only the need. *"They have no wine."* Other versions read, *"They have no more wine,"*^{NIV} and *"Jesus' mother came to him with the problem."*^{LIVING}

There is a significant lesson to be learned here. Like Mary, we do not need to present possible solutions to the Lord. Often, it is best to simply state the circumstance. I do understand there are times when we are to order our cause before the Lord, and bring forth our arguments (Job 23:4; Isa 41:21). Nevertheless, there are times when our minds are not able to place solutions on the table of intercession. However, this does not mean prayer cannot be made for the situation. Sometimes we may have to reason like *"Thou art of purer eyes than to behold evil, and canst not look on iniquity: wherefore lookest Thou upon them that deal treacherously, and holdest Thy tongue when the wicked devoureth the man that is more righteous than he?"* (Hab 1:13). Thus, Mary simply sets the matter before Jesus, evidently confident He will do the best thing.

WOMAN, WHAT HAVE I TO DO WITH THEE. Other versions read, *"what does your concern have to do with Me?"*^{NKJV} *"Why do you involve Me?"*^{NIV} *"What concern is that to you and to Me?"*^{NRSV} *"what have you to do with Me?"*^{RSV} *"this is not your business,"*^{BBE} *"why should that concern Me?"*^{CJB} *"why are you saying this to Me?"*^{NET} *"what do you want from Me?"*^{NJB} *"that's not our problem,"*^{NLT} *"I can't help you now,"*^{LIVING} *"Leave the matter in My hands,"*^{WEYMOUTH} *"You must not tell Me what to do,"*^{CEV} *"Do not try to direct Me,"*^{GOODSPEED} and *"[Dear] woman, what is that to you and to Me? [What do we have in common? Leave it to Me]."*^{AMPLIFIED}

This passage can be attended with some difficulty, but it does not need to be so. It seems to me that Jesus is saying His agenda is not driven by human need. He is also saying that Mary does not need to be concerned about this circumstance. He is also saying that He has not come to address circumstances like this. His next words provide a more full explanation, clearly affirming there is an agenda by which He was operating. What He does will confirm that God intended for something to be done on this occasion, but it will not be driven by a request from Mary, His mother, but by His communion with the Father.

MINE HOUR IS NOT YET COME. Other versions read, *"My time is still to come,"*^{BBE} *"It isn't yet My time for miracles,"*^{LIVING} *"the time for Me to act has not yet come,"*^{WEYMOUTH} and *"My time (hour to act) has not yet come."*^{AMPLIFIED}

To this point, the time for unveiling Christ before the people had not yet come. The revelation that took place at His baptism was for Himself and John – not the multitudes. And yet, the precision of this statement is most remarkable. Jesus will do something about this circumstance, and He will do it on this very day, and in this very place. Yet, the Father's timing will drive the entire matter. As it works out, the desired effect will not take place among the people, or even to the master of the feast. There will be two small groups of people who will know what happened: the servants and Jesus' disciples.

What we must take away from this exposure to the Master is evident. We must not yield to the temptation to make our circumstance the primary reason for Jesus working. We must be able to say at all times, *"Thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven"* (Matt 6:10). When Paul was being led to Rome, according to the word of the glorified Christ

(Acts 23:11), there was some concern among the disciples if that was the right thing to do (Acts 21:11-12). However, afterward, eventually the brethren saw beyond the circumstance and said, "*The will of the Lord be done*" (Acts 21:14). So may it be among us.