

Title: God's Handiwork**[Slide 1]****Text: John 1:1-14****Scene 1****You can't/God can!**

How do you turn water into wine? You can't. But God can!

How do you turn something ordinary into something life-changing? You can't. But God can!

How do you turn a disaster into a celebration? You can't. But God can.

Scene 1:

When the curtain rises on Jesus' first public appearance in John's Gospel, we find ourselves in a Middle-Eastern wedding banquet. John announces the beginning of Jesus' public ministry by saying:

[Slide 2]

John 2:1-2 NIV

On the third day a wedding took place at Cana in Galilee. Jesus' mother was there, and Jesus and his disciples had also been invited to the wedding.

"On the third day." Is this just an ordinary time marker, or is it a hint at something far greater?

"A wedding took place." Again, is this just another long-anticipated village wedding attended by friends and family? Or does it hint at something far more wonderful?

John has already told us that Jesus came as "the Word made flesh" and dwelled among us. Those who saw Him saw His glory, "the glory of the one and only Son who came from the Father, full of grace and truth." (John 1:14 NIV)

If we look closely, will we see that glory? The glory of Jesus raised on the Third Day. The glory of the great Wedding Banquet when Heaven and Earth come together at last?

No more wine:

Whatever hints John might be giving us, he immediately dives into the problem at hand:

[Slide 3]

John 2:3 NIV

"When the wine was gone, Jesus' mother said to him, "They have no more wine."

This wedding banquet is about to come apart at the seams. Somehow, the store of wine has completely run out, an unthinkable disaster for the wedding celebration!

This is *our world*. We know this drill all too well. We make our plans, invite our guests, pin our hopes on a great outcome...and something goes wrong. Everyone one of us has lived this scene many times. High hopes, huge disappointment. Perfect planning, unexpected turn of events. That's how it is in a broken world.

We know Scene One all too well.

Scene Two

Not Yet!

Scene Two opens with Jesus speaking:

[Slide 4]

John 2:4 NIV

"Woman, why do you involve me?" Jesus replied. "My hour has not yet come."

Jesus' reply is by no means disrespectful. But it does carry a message: It isn't time *yet* for Jesus to reveal Himself as King and Creator. He is present,

living in this broken world alongside family and friends. One day He will indeed restore all that is broken. But not yet.

Recognize that kind of world? I know I sure do. I know God is present. I know that the Holy Spirit is living in me. I know that Jesus promised to never leave me or forsake me. I know that He has promised to make all things new. But not yet.

Mary, however, has another idea.

“Do whatever he tells you.”

Instead of trying to fix the problem or getting caught up in the drama, Mary simply says:

[Slide 5]

John 2:5 NIV

“Do whatever he tells you.”

How simple is that? Don't try to figure things out. Just do what Jesus says to do in the situation. He's there – right in the middle of things. *No, it may not yet be the Time when He repairs and restores everything.* But that doesn't mean He isn't here to help!

So, instead of trying to figure things out or fix them on your own, just *do whatever he tells you.* Listen to Him. Trust Him. Look away from the chaos and confusion. Refuse to get caught up in the negativity. Just *do whatever he tells you.*

The ultimate risk:

And that's where things get really interesting.

Jesus gives them three commands. The first thing He tells them to do is to fill six stone water jars with water. These jars were used for ceremonial washing before meals and other activities. John tells us that the servants filled them to the brim. So far so good.

The next command Jesus gives them is to draw some of the water out of the jars they have just filled. The final command is to take what they have drawn out of the stone jars to the master of the banquet.

The master of the banquet is the official wine taster. He is in charge of the whole event. Imagine what it would have felt like to pour water into a stone jar, draw it out again, and then be told to take your pitcher to the head honcho! How is he going to react when he gets a mouthful of wash water? Who is he going to blame?

Is this some kind of trick? Jesus didn't want to get involved in the first place. Is this how He gets even with His mother for dragging Him into the drama?

Or is something else going on here? Is this going to be a foretaste of the Third Day and the Wedding Banquet of the Messiah?

You have to take the ultimate risk to find out.

Scene Three

The best for last!

Hats off to those servants. They took the ultimate risk:

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John 2:8b-10 NIV

They did so, 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 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."

The master of the banquet never knew there ever was a problem. As far as he was concerned, somebody had mixed up the wine supply. Little did he or the bridegroom know where the best wine came from!

And isn't that the way it is so often when God does something in our lives? He challenges us to take a step of faith – a risk. A relationship is mended, a disaster averted, a wrong made right. And nobody knows what was going on behind the scenes. It is not yet the "hour" for all to be revealed.

But the servants know. They lived the miracle.

Glory:

John concludes the story by saying:

[Slide 7]

John 2:11 NIV

What Jesus did here in Cana of Galilee was the first of the signs through which he revealed his glory; and his disciples believed in him.

Turning the water into wine was not just a miracle that saved the day at a wedding reception. It was, more importantly, a "sign." It pointed to something much greater, Someone much more wonderful than the miracle itself. It pointed to the "Word made flesh."

Remember, John wrote in the previous chapter:

[Slide 8]

John 1:14

The Word became flesh and dwelled among us, and we beheld his glory...

Jesus revealed that glory when He turned water into wine. He didn't wave a magic wand. He drew no attention to Himself whatever. He simply told the servants what to do. It was only when they obeyed that Heaven's glory shone through. That's how God works in His world. That's how God's glory shines through.

Turning water into wine:

And now it's our turn. It's our turn to learn to "do whatever he tells you." Instead of retreating into victimhood or trying to figure things out on our own, we need to learn to listen to what Jesus says to do. He won't give us all the instructions at once. He will show us the *next thing* that we need to do. One step at a time.

And when the ultimate risk looms before us, remember: He is right beside us. He knew it was coming. He knows the way through.

Just do whatever He tells you.