

CLOSE ENCOUNTERS with Christ

“Seeing the Savior in Action”

Key Verse - 20:31—*“But these are written that you might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing, you might have life through His name.”*

Study Number One – The Wedding in Cana – John 2:1-11

The Gospel of John is written by the Apostle John. He’s recognized by everybody as the “Apostle of Love.” However, he was not always that way. John wrote not only the gospel, he wrote 1, 2 and 3 John and was responsible, under divine inspiration, for the Book of Revelation.

The first time that Jesus met him and his brother James, He called them “Sons of Thunder.” This gives us a little indication about the kind of temper that he had.

There’s a fantastic change that takes place in the life of John the apostle when he becomes one of the twelve disciples. Whereas he would always get angry when his rights were stepped upon, he became compassionate and concerned about others.

Whereas he was eagerly pushing his mother to get him the right-hand seat and his brother the left-hand seat in the

Kingdom, filled with selfish ambition, he became a man who was only concerned about serving the Lord.

And instead of being a guy who was super exclusive and concerned about people wearing his tag and being a part of his group, he is a guy who was open with arms of love to anybody who would name the name of Christ.

Because of the fabulous change that took place in John's life, he took it upon himself under divine inspiration to write this Gospel. He wants to share with us the fact that Jesus Christ is not just any ordinary man. He is the Son of God. That's the only explanation for the change in his life.

He wants to present to the world Jesus Christ for us to examine and he wants to present Him as the Son of God. Is this hated Nazarene really God come in human flesh?

So many ask why are there four Gospels? Why Matthew, Mark, Luke and John?

MATTHEW is writing specifically **JEWS** and he's presenting Christ as a **KING**.

MARK is writing to the **ROMANS** and he's presenting Christ as the **PERFECT SERVANT**.

LUKE writes to the **GREEKS** and he presents Christ as the epitome of **PERFECT MAN**.

JOHN comes along and writes to EVERYBODY, presenting Christ as the SON OF GOD.

Oftentimes people do not have a full-orbed concept of Jesus Christ. They have some misconstrued ideas about Him. They have some thoughts about the kind of life that He lived and what He approved of and what He disapproved of.

In this series of studies, we are going to take little snapshots out of the Gospel. We're going to look at Jesus in action in these encounters so we can get a picture of Him by the time we're through.

And so we're going to travel through the Gospel of John, just hitting key points and picking out some of these places where He's in action.

Now John begins the Gospel with a majestic picture of an eternal God coming in HUMAN FLESH and dwelling among us, and then we get his first miracle.

In this snapshot, as we see Jesus at a wedding, it's going to help fill out the picture of Jesus Christ to see that He is a person who can have fun and who can relate socially.

Now in breaking down the passage that's before us, in John 2:1-11, we have FIVE LITTLE WORDS that'll break this passage down:

1. The Setting—verses 1-2

2. The Need— verses 3-5
3. The Miracle—verses 6-8
4. The Response—verses 9 and 10
5. The Results—verse 11

Now let's consider THE SETTING or the location for this as we begin with verse 1.

I. The Setting—verses 1-2

v. 1 And the third day there was a marriage in Cana of Galilee, and the mother of Jesus was there.

“And the third day there was a marriage in Cana of Galilee, and the mother of Jesus was there.”

This marriage took place in “Cana of Galilee” which is north of the city of Jerusalem.

The next statement in verse says:

“[Mary] the mother of Jesus was there.”

Now hold onto that for just a minute because she figures into this particular experience. And there is a reason for her being here. There's a reason for the miracle and there's a reason for

what's going to happen in just a few minutes as we see her there. She evidently was part of the family. She was one of the relatives that had been invited to the wedding.

Now this wedding is not like the weddings we have now. Now we can do the whole thing in a couple of hours with a brief reception and then we're on our way. The way they married them in those days, was that they really did it up fine.

The wedding ceremony was held at the home of the bridegroom and it lasted for a whole week. And the bride and the groom were treated like royalty through the whole thing. There was feasting. They had oysters and shrimp and lobster and steak and salads and desserts and cornbread and homemade bread and wine and iced tea and coffee and milk and Pepsi and whatever you wanted—they were obligated to provide it. And so it was one of those fabulous feasts.

Now some people get kind of shook that there's wine involved in this passage. That kind of gets them all scared and wondering why this passage is in the Bible. We're not going to spend a lot of time on that fact. Actually, what they were drinking was two parts wine and three parts water.

Drunkenness was just as repulsive in those days as it is in our day. Let's not let that be the issue in the passage because it certainly isn't. And let's get a picture here of a respectable wedding in mind and realize that without water purification like we have now, they were settling for liquids for their body and wine was one of those liquids.

v. 2 Jesus also was invited, and His disciples, to the marriage.

“Jesus also was invited, and His disciples, to the marriage.”

Now this young couple possibly could have been friends of Jesus and the twelve apostles. Maybe they went to school together. Maybe they’ve been invited because they were old college buddies.

Imagine having thirteen grown men involved in figuring out how they’re going to make life tough for the groom.

Do we mean that Jesus could have a good time with a group of guys like that? Yes! A lot of people have the idea that to become a Christian it’s sour grapes and that the more spiritual we are the more our face is turned downward. If we have that serious look of intent sobriety, we must be a saint that’s walked with the Lord for 75 years. And people have that idea.

Some people look on Jesus as a very pompous, serious individual. He lived with twelve guys for the three years of His public ministry. They laughed. They had fun. They talked just like people talk. They fellowshiped, they shared, they wept together, they laughed together. They just enjoyed one another.

And here we see Jesus at a wedding. He’s enjoying the social contact. He’s enjoying the opportunity of being there, getting

to know His twelve better. But He was also celebrating this wedding that's taking place.

Now notice that Jesus is witnessing the joy of this occasion, but He knows full well that marriage is never in the plan of God for Him personally.

He will never know the thrill of fathering a child. He will never know the joy of companionship of a woman. He will never know the fulfillment of having a home where He can take refuge from the ministry and the struggles of the day.

We may be alone. Maybe lost a spouse. We could be bitter toward God. We need to go into the very presence of the Lord because He can fully comprehend and understand the loneliness of our heart and He's ready to minister to our needs because He knows about that loneliness.

He knows what it is like to go to a wedding but to never be a groom. He might have the privilege of being the best man, but never the groom. He will never have the joy and fulfillment of companionship and marriage.

And so He's the one to whom we need to turn. He knows the loneliness of single life. He knew what it was to go to a wedding which spoke of union and blessedness. And for Him it's separation and service.

Now we see a crisis in the kitchen.

II. The Need—verses 3-5

v. 3 And when the wine failed, the mother of Jesus is saying to Him, “They have no wine.”

“And when the wine failed, the mother of Jesus is saying to Him, ‘They have no wine.’”

Now where’s Mary? She’s back in the kitchen. She’s helping, working, busily engaged in keeping everybody happy and satisfied—just like women do today. She’s back in the kitchen working.

There’s a crisis and who does she go to?

“the mother of Jesus is saying to Him, ‘They have no wine.’”

She goes to Jesus immediately.

Well, to the groom this is a serious matter, because with the absence of wine it would be a very embarrassing situation. The Jews had a saying that without wine there was no joy.

Psalms 104:15 says: “And wine that makes glad the heart of man.”

Now here she comes into the presence of the Lord Jesus and she presents this need they have with the wine. Now, why does she come to Jesus? Well, Joseph evidently has already died, and usually a mother is dependent upon the oldest child

and so she comes to Jesus with this request.

Another possibility could be that she's hoping that Jesus will vindicate her finally. For thirty years she's lived under the shadow of claiming a virgin birth, but every intelligent being who had never heard of a virgin birth, accused her of extra-marital activity. And so now she's hoping against hope that He will vindicate her by showing the fact that He really is Messiah, the Son of God, come in human flesh. And so she comes to make this request with the hope that she might get some glory through her Son.

Now this wedding feast has everything else, but there is something missing. When we read that, "They have no wine"—an evidence of joy—we realize that that is the characteristic of so many people that we meet today.

We have people who have the best boats, the best houses, the best cars. Everything in the world, they've got to have the best. And they've got the best! But they'll tell us honestly, when we get up close to them, there's something missing. They have a basic unhappiness at heart that needs to be satisfied and it can only be satisfied with the wine of joy in a relationship to Jesus Christ.

Often people have never been born again and so there's something missing in their lives.

Some people might be saying, "Well that doesn't describe me. I'm a Christian. I've been born again, but there's still

something missing.”

If there’s something missing in our life as a Christian, it’s because we’re out of fellowship with Him. It’s because we have become dull of hearing and we have not heard the message of God behind us saying, “This is the way, walk ye in it.” (ref. Isaiah 30:21)

And as a result of being out of fellowship, yes, we certainly do feel something missing in our life. Perhaps this study will precipitate within our hearts the desire to get back to that place where we’ll find the fullness of joy that comes as a result of being rightly related to the Lord and walking in fellowship with Him.

Well, she comes and she makes this request. Naturally the request is, “They have no wine.”

Verse 4 is a very abrupt ANSWER if we look at it just on the surface.

v. 4 And Jesus is saying to her, “What is it to me and to you, woman; my hour has not yet come.”

“And Jesus is saying to her, “What is it to me and to you, woman; my hour has not yet come.””

Now this really is not an abrupt statement. It’s a very polite statement.

The reason it seems abrupt is because when a wife begins to nag her husband, they usually say, “Get off of my back woman!”

For them the word “woman” was the epitome of polite address

Notice He says, “woman” and not mother.

And he also says here, “What is it to me and to you.”

For this couple it’s a UNION. It’s a marriage that’s taking place. For the Lord Jesus it’s a SEPARATION. He is separating Himself from His mother.

He’s now going to go on the path that takes Him to the cross. And instead of being submissive to His mother now, He’s going to go into service to accomplish the will of God. He’s going to be separated from His earthly parent at this particular point.

For ONE it’s:

UNION,

COMMUNION,

JOY, and

FELLOWSHIP.

For JESUS, it's:

Walking that LONELY PATH to the cross.

Isaiah 63 describes that as, “treading the wine press alone.”
(ref. Isaiah 63:3)

He's going there to shed His own precious blood, the wine of God, in order that we might have a relationship.

Mary is somewhat caught by the statement, “What is it to me and to you.” She had been used to the fact that when Jesus was approached by a request, He would usually say, “Well, what do you want Me to do about it mom?” In other words, it was a respectful submission to the request.

It says in Luke 2 that after he was twelve years of age, He went home and He submitted Himself to His parents. He was obedient to them.

Hebrews 5:8 says: “Though He were a son, yet learned He obedience by the things which He suffered.”

He took that place as a child in the home and was submissive to both Joseph and Mary through all these years. Now the change takes place. The reason being, in this first miracle, He's getting ready to head toward the cross.

And now the Lord Jesus is going to be Lord of His mother. She catches that message very quickly. In verse 5 she says to the

servants:

“[His mother is saying to the servants,] ‘Whatever He says to you, do it.’”

It’s no longer “Whatever I say to you, do it,” it’s “Whatever He says.” She’s putting Him in that position where He belongs.

“What is it to me and to you?”

It’s a polite way of saying, “Leave Me to Myself. Let Me follow out My own course. I’m entering into a new phase of My ministry. The time of silent discipline and obedience is now over. I’m in a position of rejecting this influence which you once had over Me as a child.”

Now notice He says one other thing in that fourth verse. He says: “my hour has not yet come.”

What does He mean by that? He means that the time of the cross isn’t here yet. The time for the ultimate accomplishment of His mission on the cross has not come yet.

One of the hardest things in a Christian life is waiting on God’s time to the fulfillment of His will.

Oftentimes we’re in a hurry but the Lord isn’t. We want to listen to the advice of friends, we want to look at the threat of the foe, we want to see that the circumstances are pressing us. Like King Saul, we force ourselves to go make a sacrifice. And

then the provision comes on the heels of it, after we've already blown the whole thing.

How easy it is, as a Christian, to be in a hurry to help God.

As a Christian, we are in one of **FOUR POSITIONS**, with regard to the will of God:

1. we're either **RUNNING AWAY FROM IT**,
2. we're being **BROUGHT BACK TO IT** through a whole of an experience like Jonah,
3. we're **RUNNING IN IT** and we're finding great fulfillment, or
4. we're **RUNNING AHEAD OF IT** and we're totally frustrated, because we're ahead of what God has in mind for us.

“Wait thou upon God,”

Psalm 27:14

Wait on the Lord, be of good courage,
and he shall strengthen your heart...

Habakkuk 2:3

These things I plan won't happen right away. Slowly, steadily,

surely the time approaches when the vision will be fulfilled. If it seems slow, do not despair, for these things will surely come to pass; just be patient, they will not be overdue a single day.

v. 5 His mother is saying to the servants, “Whatever He says to you, do it.”

“His mother is saying to the servants, ‘Whatever He says to you, do it.’”

Well, she passes the test of FAITH and TRUST here. She comes to the point of utter and complete abandonment to whatever He wants to be done. She realizes she’s overstepped her authority and she backs up instead of telling Him she’s leaving the guidance and direction completely into His hands to fulfill His perfect will.

Now, contained in those words is the KEY to the study:

“Whatever He says to you, do it.”

Are we willing to do that? Let’s get serious for a minute.

And if someone were to ask them, “Are you a Christian?” They might respond, “Well, yes, I think so.”

The real question is, Have they ever invited Jesus Christ to become their Savior?

The Word of God makes it clear. The only way we’re prepared

for eternity is a personal possession of Jesus Christ as our own Savior. Nothing else counts but a relationship with Him.

“Whatever He says to you, do it.”

Are we willing to do that and let Him become our Savior?

Now someone might say, “Well, you know, I’ve done that.” But how many frustrated Christians have to come to Christ as Savior but they’re not living the life in fellowship with Him? And so they’re totally frustrated, confused, and upset.

They’re living a desert experience. And that still small voice is wanting to say, “This is the way, walk ye in it. When you turn to the right hand and turn the left,” and they’re not hearing it. And they’re unwilling to do that which He wants them to do.

“Whatever He says to you, do it.”

We may not always understand what He wants and why it is He’s going about it in the way that He does. But His way is always the best. And when we do what He says, there’s one equation. That equation is super fulfillment and blessing as a result of doing what He says to do.

So here’s the safest place to be.

“Whatever He says to you, do it.”

We might not understand it, but we do it. It equals blessing,

super fulfillment, and prosperity.

Now we can see that from a lot of scriptural illustrations. Remember the children of Israel? They trucked up through the wilderness for forty years because they're unwilling to trust the Lord to go into the land and possess it. Finally Moses is going to drop off the scene and the new leader is going to take over.

Now Joshua's leading the people and they're going to cross the Jordan River and they're going in to possess the land. Their first campaign is going to be against the city of Jericho.

The Lord says, "Joshua, I've got a few last minute instructions for you. We're not going to use the artillery on this one. You're going to go in and you're going to march around the city once on the first day. You're going to do the same thing on the second day. Fourth, fifth and sixth day, you're all going to do that same thing one time. On the seventh day you're going to march around seven times. You're going to toot the horn and the city is yours."

Joshua says, "Wow, I can't believe the battle plan." One thing we can believe is that when they did what He asked them to do, the city fell into their hands.

Take a guy like Naaman. The little maiden says, "You know Naaman, if you go see Elisha he'll help you get over that leprosy you've got."

Old Naaman goes up there expecting that Elisha's going to say "abracadabra" and that's going to be it. He's going to be well and he can go back home, freed from leprosy.

Naaman is in for a surprise. Elisha says, "You know Naaman, if you're going to be cured from leprosy, you're going to go down and dip in that muddy Jordan River seven times. And on the seventh time, everything's going to be just hunky-dory. You're going to be cured."

Naaman, of course, says, "Not me buddy. I thought you were going to just take care of it very easily. Well if you want to live with your leprosy, live with your leprosy."

Naaman decides that there's only one alternative. Either live with the leprosy or go dunk in the river and at least give it a try. So he goes down and six times he dunks in the river but he still has leprosy. But on the seventh time when he's obedient and he does something that he doesn't understand, he's cured.

Gideon's the same way. The Lord says, "Gideon I've got great plans for you. You're going to deliver our children, the nation Israel, from the Midianites. I want you to go out among the children of Israel and I want you to get as many people as you can to be a part of our army."

Great! Gideon does. He just enters into a fantastic campaign of trying to get people. And he ends up with 32,000 people out there on the plains to meet the Lord. Gideon says, "Lord, it's

me and I have 32,000. That's all I could get." The Lord says, "You've got too many."

"What do You mean too many? I've been working my tail off to get this many. I felt like I needed even more than this!"

The Lord says, "Gideon, stand up before those people and when you stand up before them, tell everybody's that chicken to go home."

Gideon says, "Lord, You want me to get killed in the rush?"

"Do what I say."

Gideon stands up and says, "Alright, all you guys that are chicken, go home!" Gideon got killed in the rush.

Twenty-two thousand people went home. He's only got ten thousand guys left.

And so Gideon says, "Now Lord, look what You've done."

The Lord says, "You've still got too many. Take them down there and let them get a drink. They're going to drink in two different ways and I'm going to tell you the ones we're keeping and the ones you're going to let go."

They go down to take a drink of water and he sees 9,700 of them lying flat on their stomachs drinking water and he says, "It's got to be those." The Lord says, "You made a mistake

again Gideon. It's only the 300 that are scooping up the water that are going to remain."

Then Gideon comes to the conclusion, "Lord, do You have some atomic weapons or something that You're going to use for this because that's only 300 guys? What kind of weapons will we have?"

"Oh, we're going to have a pitcher, a candle and a trumpet."

The interesting thing is, that as Gideon is obedient and takes the instructions from the Lord, follows them through and does what He says, the Midianites fall into their hands. And you'll find in the law and the scripture that whenever a person follows the instructions that he receives from the word of God, there is eventual blessing and prosperity from that. God always meets the obedient heart with super abundant blessing.

If we feel wiped out and in the midst of turmoil and problems and we feel frustrated about our relationship to God, maybe this little statement, "Whatever He says to you, do it," is what the Lord's trying to get across to us.

"I want an obedient heart and then blessing will result."

Now let's read about the MIRACLE in verses 6-8.

III. The Miracle—verses 6-8

v. 6 Now there were six stone water jars sitting there after the Jews' manner of purifying, holding about 18-27 gallons.

“Now there were six stone water jars sitting there after the Jews' manner of purifying, holding about 18-27 gallons.”

“These stone jars” were for washing, before and after the meals.

v. 7 Jesus is saying to them, “Fill the water jars with water.” And they filled them up to the top.

“Jesus is saying to them, ‘Fill the water jars with water.’ And they filled them up to the top.”

See how quickly the servants are to obey?

v. 8 And He is saying to them, “Draw out now and carry it to the superintendent of the dining room”; and they carried it.

“And He is saying to them, ‘Draw out now and carry it to the superintendent of the dining room’; and they carried it.”

Now “the superintendent of the dining room” was the guy who was in charge of food service. He arranged the couches and he always tasted the food before it went in to be sure that it passed the test.

We can imagine the turmoil of feelings in these servants' hearts. One servant says, "Oh well, we just work here." Another servant says, "I left the door open so we can make a quick exit when he spews that water all over the place."

And they're walking this water into the very presence of the guy who's going to taste it before it can be given to anybody else. And the response is fantastic.

v. 9 Now when the superintendent of the dining room tasted the water which had become wine and knew not from where it was, but the servants knew (the ones who had drawn the water), the superintendent of the dining room called the bridegroom,

"Now when the superintendent of the dining room tasted the water which had become wine and knew not from where it was, but the servants knew (the ones who had drawn the water), the superintendent of the dining room called the bridegroom,"

The phrase about the fact that "the servants knew" but the superintendent didn't know is great. That's the little blessing that comes to a person who serves the Lord.

As we serve the Lord and we walk in companionship with Him, some of the neat little things that happen, nobody else knows about. And that's so cool. It's so great to see the Lord sort of miraculously over here, pick out something when He knows we have a need and He meets that need. And it's just a

super little secret that only us and the Lord knows, but it's so cool when we do that. When we walk with the Lord and we secretly give Him a little request that was sort of selfish we thought, in a way, but He turns right around and almost before we answer He meets it and it just blesses our heart.

These guys had the privilege of getting this water together and being used by the Lord to take it into the superintendent and they knew where it came from. They were aware of its source.

The only problem was, they weren't aware of the power with what could happen to that water that had been given. They knew the source of it, but not the power that had made it into wine.

Verse 10 tells us what the superintendent tells the bridegroom.

v. 10 and is saying to him, “Every man first sets out good wine, and when they have drunk freely [then] the inferior, you have kept the good wine until now.”

“and is saying to him, ‘Every man first sets out good wine, and when they have drunk freely [then] the inferior, you have kept the good wine until now.’”

We can almost hear the servants saying, “What did he say? Run that by me again. You saved the good wine till what?”

Now!”

We can imagine these servants are probably saying, “Who is that guy anyway? That he can change water into wine?”

That’s exactly what the disciples said in the boat when the storm was so terrible and Jesus said, “Peace be still.” They said, “Who is that that even the winds and the seas will obey His voice?” (ref. Matthew 8:27)

Well, they’re amazed. And the superintendent of the dining room says something interesting. He says, “most people set out the good wine and then when everybody’s had plenty to drink, then the inferior”—because the taste buds are already gone and they don’t appreciate it anyway, so they put out the good first and then the inferior later.

“you have saved the good wine till now.”

Life gets terribly more constraining for a person who is unwilling to be submissive to God’s plan in his life.

And if we’re going to continue in that direction, go ahead and enjoy it because it’s the best we’re going to get. It’s going to get worse and worse and worse.

The world system is always to put out the best first to entice us and then the worst later. For instance, for some kids it’s to get them high on drugs and then give them the rehabilitation center later. Give them the sex—enjoy it! And then worry

about the abortion and the unwanted pregnancy later. Suffer the pain of it.

Satan will always take people and take them across golden bridges, feasting with harlots and then feeding with swine. It's a process of life that he operates on. He wants to get us with the bait and then hook us real good after he's got us caught.

That's the way the world operates. How does the Lord Jesus operate? The Lord Jesus operates this way:

it's the GORY and then the GLORY,

it's the CROSS and then the CROWN,

it's the THORN and then the THRONE,

it's the SUFFERING and then the SATISFACTION.

And with the Christian life, it's always getting better and better and better. The more we walk with the Lord, the better it becomes. It's fulfilling and exciting.

Remember that, we actually say, "Lord, You've kept the best till now!" It's almost the way we start every day when we're walking in fellowship with Him. It just keeps getting better and better.

As Christians, as we begin to follow the Lord Jesus, things continue to get better and better.

Notice the opinion of the wine taster, or the superintendent of the dining room, “you have kept the good wine until now.”

The reason he made that analysis is that when Jesus Christ has anything to do with something, it’s always going to be the best.

Remember in Genesis it says:

Genesis 1:31

And God saw all that He had made and behold, it was [WHAT?] it was very good...

And when God is responsible for putting something together, it’s going to be the greatest.

Why don’t we trust Him? Why aren’t we willing? If He is responsible for putting it together, it’s going to be the very best and it’s going to be the epitome of fulfillment. Then why can’t we trust Him to do what He’s promised to do?

Whenever He’s had a part with something, it’s always the very, very best.

v. 11 This Jesus did as a beginning of His signs in Cana of Galilee and manifested His glory, and His disciples believed on Him.

“This Jesus did as a beginning of His signs in Cana of Galilee and manifested His glory, and His disciples believed on Him.”

Here’s His first sign, providing something in an impossible set of circumstances. And in verse 11 there are TWO THINGS:

1. It “manifested His glory” and
2. “His disciples believed on Him.

Manifesting His glory of course refers to His MESSIANIC GLORY and the disciples recognized who He was.

Now there are several lessons that we draw from this passage as we conclude this study.

Lesson #1: Jesus knows the loneliness of a single life.

We see that in the fact that He’s at a wedding, but the wedding—as far as the will of Father for Him—is not going to be in the plan for Him to ever have children, the companionship with a wife, or refuge of a home.

Lesson #2: Are you willing to say, “Lord, whatever you say, I’ll do it,” and follow it?

Lesson #3: He gives to Christians, according to His own time, and not according to our personal desires.

Lesson #4: He makes a glorious thing out of the common.

Lesson #5: Mary made a request and there was a period of time before that request was granted. His gifts are always on time and they're always adequate for the need.

And many times, exceed the need. Like the 18-27 gallons of wine that was provided for the feast.

Lesson #6: He gives the best last. It always gets better.

There are **THREE STATEMENTS** that stand out in the passage:

1. verse 3—"they have no wine."

We can have everything, but without a relationship to Jesus Christ, we're missing the most precious possession.

2. verse 5—"Whatever He says to you, do it."

"Come unto me all ye that weary and are heavy laden and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of Me, for I am meek and lowly in heart, and ye shall find rest for your souls." (ref. Matthew 11:28-30)

3. verse 10—"you have kept the best until now."

Those are going to be the very words that we're going to speak when we step into the presence of the Lord.

Ephesians 1:13 says, “This now is only the earnest of our inheritance”—the engagement ring.

What’s coming will get better and better. And when we enter into the inheritance, which Peter says is reserved for us in heaven, we’re going to say, “you’ve saved the best until now.”

Stop and think of the times we’ve come to the Lord already. Times we’ve come to the Lord at the cross and He gave us salvation. Fantastic!

We’ve come to the Lord in a commitment of our present life He’s given us and we’re enjoying life abundant right now.

When we come to the Lord in eternity He’s going to give us our full inheritance.

The Bible says in 1 Corinthians 2:9 that, “it is written that eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, either hath it entered into the heart of man, the things which the Lord hath prepared for them that love Him.”

We can honestly say, as a Christian, it will get better and better and we ain’t seen nothing yet. It’s going to be fantastic what the Lord has in store for those who love Him.

Perhaps we’re in one of these two conditions tonight:

1. We’re in fellowship with Him, as a Christian, experiencing the joy of the life abundant. Praise the Lord for

that.

2. We're without Him and we need Christ as our own personal Savior.

Let's pray together.

Our heavenly Father, as we conclude this time of study together in this first snapshot of the Savior from John 2, thank You that we see a man's man operating here. Thank You that we see the beauty of His ability to socialize and have a good time and be in a situation where He is relaxed and loving to be with people. Lord, thank You that we can see the Lord Jesus, meeting the need of the occasion. And Lord, we know that You can meet the need of this occasion as we're gathered together. You know the hearts, You know the concerns, You know the anxieties, the burdens and the problems and You're still able. Whatever You say, if we'll do it, You will equal that with Your own personal activity, Your own blessing and direction in our lives as we submit to Your leadership. And Lord, thank You too that You're saving the best till last. We're challenged with the Christian life to go on to new heights from day to day. And as we press on that upward way and new heights we gain day by day, thank You that the fulfillment becomes greater and greater. The satisfaction and joy of getting to know the Lord Jesus, better by personal experience is our personal satisfaction and joy. And now Lord we commit each one of these to You. Thank You as we study the Word, that You'll make it a blessing to each of us. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

CLOSE ENCOUNTERS with Christ

“Seeing the Savior in Action”

Key Verse - 20:31—*“But these are written that you might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing, you might have life through His name.”*

Study Number One – The Wedding in Cana – John 2:1-11

Key Verse 2:5

I. The Setting—verses 1-2

v. 1 And the third day there was a marriage in Cana of Galilee, and the mother of Jesus was there.

v. 2 Jesus also was invited, and His disciples, to the marriage.

II. The Need—verses 3-5

v. 3 And when the wine failed, the mother of Jesus is saying to Him, “They have no wine.”

v. 4 And Jesus is saying to her, “What is it to me and to you, woman; my hour has not yet come.”

v. 5 His mother is saying to the servants, “Whatever He says to you, do it.”

III. The Miracle—verses 6-8

v. 6 Now there were six stone water jars sitting there after the Jews’ manner of purifying, holding about 18-27 gallons.

v. 7 Jesus is saying to them, “Fill the water jars with water.” And they filled them up to the top.

v. 8 And He is saying to them, “Draw out now and carry it to the superintendent of the dining room”; and they carried it.

NOTES

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IV. Response—verses 9-10

v. 9 Now when the superintendent of the dining room tasted the water which had become wine and knew not from where it was, but the servants knew (the ones who had drawn the water), the superintendent of the dining room called the bridegroom,

V. The Results—verse 11

v. 10 and is saying to him, “Every man first sets out good wine, and when they have drunk freely [then] the inferior, you have kept the good wine until now.”

v. 11 This Jesus did as a beginning of His signs in Cana of Galilee and manifested His glory, and His disciples believed on Him.

QUESTIONS:

1. Read John 2:1-11 and in your own words pull out the main thought of this passage.

2. What crisis develops at the wedding?

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3. What do you think Jesus meant in answer to Mary when He said, “My hour has not yet come”?

4. Read Luke 1:38 and compare it to the advice that Mary gives to the servants in verse 5.

5. How do you suppose the servant felt in fulfilling the command of verse 8?

6. What is the superintendent's response to the tasting of the new wine, according to verse 10?

7. What was the usual practice used by those who were entertaining guests, according to verse 10?

8. What two things resulted from this miracle, according to verse 11?

9. What verse in the study has meant the most to you?

10. What lesson have you learned from this study?

LESSONS FROM THE PASSAGE:

What are some of the lessons we can learn from this particular study?

LESSON #1: Jesus knows the loneliness of a single life.

LESSON #2: Are you willing to say, “Lord, whatever you say, I’ll do it.” “Though he slay me, yet will I trust in Him”? Submit to His authority?

LESSON #3: Christ gives us the most precious things for nothing.

LESSON #4: He makes a glorious thing out of the common.

LESSON #5: He gives to us, as Christians, according to His own time and not according to our needs. His gifts are always on time and it is just enough to meet the need.

LESSON #6: He gives the best last.

ADDITIONAL NOTES:
