



Jesus Treasures

Sunday, January 26, 2025—Aledo UMC

Pastor Dave Schultz

Gospel Lesson, John 2:1-11

2:1 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"Woman, why do you involve me?" Jesus replied. "My hour has not yet come."

⁵His mother said to the servants, "Do whatever he tells you."

⁶Nearby stood six stone water jars, the kind used by the Jews for ceremonial washing, each holding from twenty to thirty gallons.

⁷Jesus said to the servants, "Fill the jars with water." So they filled them to the brim.

⁸Then 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 aside¹⁰ 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."

¹¹What 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.

Sermon, "Jesus Treasures"

The summer of 1985 opened with the theatrical release of *The Goonies*, about a group of kids who live in the "Goon Docks" neighborhood of Astoria, Oregon. They are facing the loss of their homes due to the expansion of a country club.

Gathering for a final weekend together, the Goonies rummage through an attic where they come across a 1632 doubloon and an old treasure map which purports to lead to the treasure of legendary pirate "One-Eyed Willy." The treasure map leads the Goonies to a secret cave and hidden clues as they embark on an adventure to find hidden treasure and save their homes.

In John 2, a widowed mother and her mostly adult children set out for a wedding in the small town of Cana. Or maybe they were on a treasure hunt, looking for clues.

Put yourself in Mary's sandals for a moment. After the birth of Jesus, shepherds came to visit him and when they did, they described to Mary and Joseph that a "multitude of the heavenly hosts" appeared to them in the skies. They praised God and proclaimed the birth of the Savior.

What did Mary do? Luke tells us that "Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart" (Luke 2:19).

A month later, Mary and Joseph presented Jesus in the temple, but were intercepted by Simeon and Anna who prophesied over the baby and proclaimed him to be the Messiah. Can you imagine what went through the minds of Mary and Joseph? The Bible says that they were amazed (Luke 2:33). But I think that was an understatement.

Twelve years later Mary, Joseph, Jesus, and his siblings made another trip to Jerusalem. They probably went to Jerusalem every year, but this was the first time they went after their eldest son had reached the age of twelve. A heading in my Bible says, "The Boy Jesus at the Temple." But Jesus was no longer a boy. In that culture and at that time, age twelve is when young men began to take on adult responsibilities. And that appears to be what Jesus was up to. Because when it was time to return home, Jesus stayed behind in the Temple where he was engaged in conversation with the teachers of the Law, asking questions and clarifying their answers.

Mary and Joseph were already a day's trip down the road when they realized that Jesus was not in their caravan. They hurried back to Jerusalem where they frantically looked for their son Jesus for three days. But they didn't find him at the ice cream shop or the YMCA or the video arcade. They found him in the Temple.

"Young man, would you like to explain yourself?"

Jesus simply replied, "Why were you searching for me? Didn't you know I had to be in my Father's house?"

Of course, his parents didn't understand what he was saying. Nonetheless, Jesus left the temple and went back to Nazareth with Mary and Joseph. And the Bible says that he was obedient to them.

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And Mary? Luke again tells us that she “treasured all these things in her heart” (Luke 2:51b). What does one do with all that treasure? It appears Mary took that treasure with her to Cana.

In the previous chapter, Jesus was baptized; that marked the beginning of his ministry. Then he spent forty days alone in the wilderness where he was tempted by the devil. Afterwards, he began his teaching ministry in Nazareth, as we saw last week when he went to a synagogue and began teaching from Isaiah 61.

From there, Jesus began calling his first disciples. In John chapter 1, he called Peter, Andrew, Philip and Nathanael to follow him. But he hadn't yet performed any miracles.

Through it all, Jesus stayed connected to his mother. Later in his ministry, he says some things which to the modern ear sound rather harsh. In Mark 3, a crowd had gathered around Jesus when someone tells him, “Your mother and brothers are outside looking for you.”

Jesus responds, “Who are my mother and my brothers?” Then he looked at those seated in a circle around him and said, “Here are my mother and my brothers! Whoever does God's will is my brother and sister and mother” (Mark 3:31-35). But that's not a putdown of his family; rather, it is meant to lift up all who do the will of the God—including those who are not blood relatives to Jesus.

Speaking of blood relatives, Jesus and his family may have attended the wedding because either the bride or the groom was related to Jesus, presumably by way of Mary. That would also explain her anxiety concerning the lack of wine. (And maybe one of the reasons the wine ran out is because Jesus brought his disciples with him to the wedding!)

We see Mary's anxiety in verse 3: “When the wine gave out the mother of Jesus said to him, ‘They have no wine.’” Mary's the one who sets this miracle into action. But what prompted Mary?

Long ago Mary began collecting clues about the nature of her first-born son and hiding them in the treasure chest of her heart. Those clues began with the angel who announced to her that she would give birth to the Messiah, despite her own virginity. More clues came from:

- The shepherds who testified to seeing angels heralding the birth of the Messiah.
- Simeon and Anna who blessed the infant Jesus in the temple.
- Astrologers from the East who saw signs of the Messiah's birth in the stars.
- Jesus' journey to Jerusalem at age twelve.

Now at a Cana wedding, Mary decides it was time cash in on all of those little heart treasures; it was time to apply those heart treasures to a real-life situation—and believe God that something special will happen.

I wonder: What kind of little Jesus treasures are you hiding in your heart? I hope you're doing it because the day will come when you'll want to cash in on those heart treasures; the day will come when you'll need to draw them out for a real-life situation.

And you may have to be patient about it. Mary was probably about 14 years of age when she gave birth to Jesus. She was 26 or 27 when she found her 12-year-old son in the Temple. Now in Cana she's in her mid-40s. She's been hiding those little Jesus treasures in

her heart since she was the age of one of today's eighth grade students. But now, as the mother of a 30-year-old man, it was time to cash them in.

How long have you been hiding those little Jesus treasures in your heart? Have you cashed any of them in? If you haven't, you will. But you won't be able to rely on them if you don't first store them up in your heart.

Mary had been storing all those Jesus treasures in her heart for over thirty years. And now, finally, she says to Jesus, "They have no wine." What are you going to say to Jesus in prayer when you cash in your Jesus treasures? Clearly Mary expects Jesus to do something. That is a remarkable level of faith: in 30 years she has never seen her son perform a single miracle. And yet she somehow perceives that Jesus can take a bad situation and make it better.

But Jesus replies, "How does that concern either you or me? Besides, my time hasn't come as yet."

It may not have been Jesus' time, but don't tell Mary. She was operating on a whole different clock. So she turns to the servants and says, "Do whatever he tells you." Mary was unfazed by the clock that Jesus was using so she did whatever she could to change God's timing; she did whatever she could to open the door for the Lord to do the unexpected.

Haven't you ever operated on a different clock than Jesus? It can be frustrating. But I'm so glad that every once in a while, the Lord syncs his clock to our need.

In this case, the need was for more wine. For the wine had run out, even though the chief steward had no doubt diluted the wine many times over, as was the custom. But it wasn't enough. The wine was gone. So Jesus directs the servants to fill some water jars with water. After doing so, he instructs them to draw some out and serve it to the chief steward. And of course, he tasted not water, but wine!

I love this miracle—the first ever performed by Jesus. It was a miracle of transformation and change. But it was also a miracle of celebration, a miracle of hospitality, and a miracle of extravagance.

I fear that without this miracle, Christianity would be very drab, utilitarian, and lacking in zest.

- Without this miracle, there would be no reason to worship God in anything but a barn or utilitarian steel frame building. But thanks to this miracle, we can be a more extravagant before God. We can have stained glass windows and beautiful pipe organs.
- Without this miracle, we would have to be serious all the time. But with this miracle, we can laugh and hug and enjoy gathering together in the presence of our Lord.

Let's be honest: this miracle was not necessary. It wasn't like his miracles of healing. If Jesus had not turned this water into wine, no one would have died. His miracle simply allowed his host to save face. And it allowed the wedding guests to "party on."

But it also demonstrated something else. In his gospel, John never uses the word “miracles.” What we might call “miracles” John calls “signs.” And this particular sign proved what Jesus later claimed in John 15:

“I Am the True Vine...Abide in me as I abide in you. Just as the branch cannot bear fruit by itself unless it abides in the vine, neither can you unless you abide in me. I am the vine, you are the branches. Those who abide in me and I in them bear much fruit, because apart from me you can do nothing” (John 15:1a, 4-5).

Thus the miracle at Cana is an invitation to live in Jesus Christ who is the True Vine. And as we abide in him—as we live in him—we bear fruit. And the fruit that we bear is not weak or bitter or diluted by the things of this world. The fruit that we bear is sweet and tasty. It’s something that people want. And it’s something that will enhance our celebration.

But how do we bear that fruit? The answer, I believe, is found in the wonderful words of Mary in verse 5: She turns to the servants and says, “Whatever he tells you to do, do it.”

“Whatever he tells you to do, do it.”

We can say that to ourselves if we’ve been storing little Jesus treasures in our heart. Wouldn’t that be a great refrain for 2025? What if we woke up every morning, looked in the mirror, and repeated the words of Mary: *“Whatever he tells you to do, do it.”*

What if we went to school every day telling ourselves, *“Whatever he tells you to do, do it.”*

What if we went to work or the store or to my neighbors with the words of Mary on our hearts and on our lips: *“Whatever he tells you to do, do it.”*

How would our lives be transformed? How would our families, our schools, our places of business, our church, our community and even our world be transformed if we simply took to heart these simple and yet profound words:

“Whatever he tells you to do, do it.”

Let’s do it!