

The Good Wine Kept Till Now

John 2:1-11

Grace to you and peace from God our Father and our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

There is some debate about what constitutes a good wine. In fact, I am probably in the minority in these parts when I say that what we use for communion wine is *not* a good wine. You aren't going to find many, if any, Concord grape type wines on the wine menus of fine restaurants, or reviewed in any wine magazines.

But then, I would guess that many of you would not like what would be considered a fine wine by the standards of fancy restaurants or Wine Enthusiast magazine. Most would not like what I consider a good wine.

In our text, we really do not know what the criterion was that made the water turned to wine, a good wine. Was it a Pinot Grigio, a Beaujolais, a white, a red, or a Concord grape? It doesn't matter. What does matter is that it was kept for now.

The master of the feast was amazed at how good the wine was. He really did think that the first wine that had been served, and which they ran out of, was the good wine. And this stuff is even better, so good that the master of the feast is so impressed he looks for the bridegroom to point this fact out. And by the way, it was wine – not grape juice. The master was amazed, because if you serve the good first, after a couple of glasses, people won't notice when you switch it to the lesser quality wine. That is not the point either.

In fact, the bridegroom knew nothing about the good wine or where it came from. The servants knew, but the bridegroom didn't.

John's Gospel is the easiest Greek to read, but has the richest theology. He tells the events of the life of Christ to put things together in the deepest theological manner. So, yes this is a miracle. Yes, this is the first of His signs. Yes, his disciples were amazed and believed in Him.

Jesus had 6 stone jugs filled with water – about 150 gallons worth. Then he had the servants draw some of the water out and take it to the master of the feast. Wow! A miracle! It is now wine, very good wine. But – there is something even bigger than the miracle going on here.

There was no reason for Jesus to make wine for the wedding. Was this necessary to heal someone? Was this necessary to save the life of someone? Did he really need to be involved in such a mundane thing? If they ran out of wine at a wedding, did they really need more?

Jesus' stepping in here, shows His concern with even the simple things of this life. But, there is still more. That is only the surface of this whole event. That is only the top layer, the simple outward event of what is going on here.

Jesus performs this miracle to teach His disciples. God inspired John to record it as it is, so that it might also teach you.

The Law given by God to Moses long ago, the Law came first. When the Israelites were given the Law, it showed that they were the chosen people of God, His chosen nation Israel. With their release from Egypt and the coming to Sinai and there receiving the Law from God, it proclaimed to them – and all nations – that they were set apart and special.

But even though set apart and chosen by God, even though He gave them the law, it wasn't the best. The Law had a simple task, though many were confused, the simple task was to show them that they were still sinners. The Law couldn't make them perfect. The Law couldn't save them.

Do this, don't do that – that's what people think God's Law does. Most think it is a recipe for holy living. Indeed, it is. But it is a recipe that we cannot follow. While the Law is holy and perfect, we are not. In fact, the requirements of the Law simply show us how imperfect we indeed are, and how much we fail daily.

Think of Moses, God's chosen one to lead the Israelites out of Egypt. Even though specially called by God through the use of a burning bush, He doubted God. Moses was not perfect. Although chosen by God to lead the Israelites, Moses was unworthy to look at the face of God, but God would only let him look at His back.

The Law, though holy and perfect and righteous, cannot save you or me. It does point us to where salvation comes. It comes in Christ. Jesus is that which is even better than the Law. You have kept the good wine till now...

God gives His son, Jesus Christ. Those who walked the earth with Jesus, got to see God's face, though hidden in human flesh. Though He was in the world, the world did not know Him – even His own did not receive Him. He was hidden in human flesh. It is why they would kill Him, His perfect life – His perfect holiness – His perfect keeping of the Law, sacrificed when they nailed Him to the cross. He purchased forgiveness for all those who fail at the Law. He is the good wine kept till now, till the fullness of time, to purchase forgiveness of sins.

There is even more. Think about these things together. He's at a wedding, and God talks about Himself as the bridegroom and His church as His bride. Heaven is called the eternal wedding feast.

Jesus turns water to wine. Is there anything in the church that deals with water? Is there anything that deals with wine? Baptism leads to the Lord's Supper. We get the good wine, kept till now.

But even this holy meal we have set before us today on the altar is only a foretaste of the feast to come. There, in heaven, we won't have to worry about sins corrupting our bodies. There will be the eternal wedding banquet feast, and those who have faith get that wine.

Till that time we have to live our lives in this world. Is this a good life? Yes, we are given many blessings to enjoy – family, friends, food, drink, celebrations to rejoice in, and so many pleasures given to us by our Creator. Yes, life isn't too bad.

And yet, even in the midst of our joys, even hidden in our blessings, is the stain of sin. It confronts us every day. Sin bring into our lives heart ache, pain, sorrow, and tribulations.

And even knowing this, there are those who just have an overwhelming infatuation with this life. You will hear people comment that if someone dies young, they didn't get to live a full life.

Really?

They died young, they didn't get to enjoy life. Really?

Were they a believer in Christ? To believers, the best is yet to come. Those who leave this life in faith, are taken away from this life and brought into heaven. If we really believed that, then maybe the complainers should say, "They didn't get to suffer long enough! How come they got to go to heaven before me, haven't I had to deal with the aches and pain of this life long enough?"

Dear friends, the best is yet to come. It is yours, for Jesus brings it to you Himself. He is the bridegroom of the eternal wedding feast.

Yes, this life is good. He has given you and me so very many blessings each and every day.

But today, this day, this holy day, His Sunday – He has kept the good wine till now. He has kept the best He has to give, and gives it to you till this morning. Jesus serves you the good wine. Here and now He gives you His blood of the new testament in His Supper for the forgiveness of sins. He gives you to eat and to drink so that you might be fed and nourished to enjoy the best wine for eternity.

Thanks be to God, in Jesus Christ. Amen.