



Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church. He gave up his life for her. Ephesians 5:25

This is the story of Jesus' first miracle. It is found in the gospel of John, chapter 2, verses 1-11. It is a clear demonstration of Jesus' power and authority over the created world. He didn't just change the color of the water or something simple like that; He created wine, and according to the master of ceremonies, it was the BEST!

The fact that Jesus' first miracle happened at a wedding seems significant in light of the importance of marriage as outlined throughout Scripture.

Starting in Genesis 3, where God proclaims a man and woman who come together in marriage to become ONE.

Marriage is very important to God. He designed people to be a reflection of His goodness, marriage, which is a **LIFELONG commitment** between a man and a woman (Gen. 2:24), does a lot to put on display what God is like:

- First of all, He is the **Provider** whom we depend on. He designed man and woman to be equal but different. Husband and wife are more complete together, than they are apart.
- Next, He is **Loving**. A good marriage must be grounded in love. True love means caring more about someone else than yourself.
- And He is also **Personal**. He is not a distant, far away God; He is near, and wants to have a daily close relationship with His loved ones, Just like a joyful marriage of a man and woman.

For these reasons, a wedding ceremony is a big deal. And in Jesus' day, this was no less the case. In a traditional Jewish wedding, It starts with the groom-to-be asking the girl's father for her hand in marriage. And he shows how much he values his future wife by **offering a bride price**. That is, offering a big gift of money or precious things to show how much he cares about the woman.

After that, there is a waiting period where the bride waits as the **husband prepares a place for them**. Then at a time that is not determined, the groom goes to get his future wife, and there is a **wedding procession**. It's like a big parade where family and friends watch as the man and wife make a commitment to live together as one.

Then after that, there is a REALLY BIG FEAST. Family, friends and neighbors all gather together to celebrate a new marriage union that will illustrate to the world just how loving God is.

Application:

- Discuss how the ceremony of a Jewish wedding symbolizes Jesus' coming for His Church (his people).
- Consider how this miracle (**sign**), which like all miracles achieved its dual purposes which are:
 - an **immediate purpose** – to be seen by witnesses on earth, to open their eyes and hearts
 - and an **ultimate purpose** – **to give God all the Glory**.
- The story ends with "This miracle, which happened at Cana of Galilee, was the first time Jesus revealed his glory. And his disciples believed in him (John 2:11) Discuss the difference between those who **witnessed** the miracle and those who **benefited** from it, in light of the two purposes of Jesus' Miracles.