

“God’s Changes—God’s Timing”—John 2:1-4

The text for this sermon, the theme of which is, “God’s Changes—God’s Timing”, is John 2:1-4 → *On the third day there was a wedding at Cana in Galilee, and the mother of Jesus was there. Jesus also was invited to the wedding with His disciples. When the wine ran out, the mother of Jesus said to Him, “They have no wine.” And Jesus said to her, “Woman, what does this have to do with Me? My hour has not yet come.”* This is the text.

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ Jesus:

How well do you deal with change? Even though we live in a time when we are bombarded with changes everyday we still go through a certain amount of “stress” when we experience changes in our lives.

Think of the last time you went to the store in search for something as basic as toothpaste only to discover that your particular kind was no longer available. As your eyes scanned the “wall” of options did you feel overwhelmed trying to make a new choice? Did you find yourself frustrated or even angry that you were forced to make a new choice? Did you wonder what was wrong with the variety you used for the past ten years only to get more frustrated with such a thought?

While this example may be rather ridiculous it does reveal some of the dynamics we encounter within ourselves when changes occur in our lives. In one respect we can begin to feel that our security is threatened every time another change takes place, wondering if the change is actually for the best.

However, there are those times when we do want things change in our lives. The desire for change usually comes at times of suffering, desperation and discontentment. We'd welcome changes that would bring us relief from suffering, deliverance in the midst of desperate situations and happiness in life. In such situations we can easily find ourselves crying out to the LORD for Him to bring about the desired changes and then be frustrated when they're not happening according to our timing.

Timing in the midst of change was everything in our text. During Jesus' visit to the wedding in Cana we discover the importance of waiting upon the LORD to produce His changes in our lives.

While Jesus and His disciples were at this wedding an interesting problem arose—they ran out of wine. Don't you just hate it when you have guests over and you run out of food and drink? Even though this may seem like an insignificant problem to many it actually was a social embarrassment for the wedding hosts in Jesus' day.

For some reason Jesus' mother felt the need to take action. Verse 3 of

our text says that *when the wine ran out, the mother of Jesus said to Him, "They have no wine."* Notice she simply stated their dilemma to Jesus. There is no record of Mary actually asking anything of Jesus here. Could it be that Mary understood the proper concept of submissive prayer?

Many people view prayer as an exercise in manipulation. Prayer gets removed from its Biblical teaching centered around God making changes in our lives in His time and in His way. When we pray do we find ourselves simply laying our needs before the LORD for Him to work in His time and in His way or by also telling Him how we want the problem to be worked out in our lives, in our favor, in our time?

Prayer is meant to be an act of worship and submission to God's will for our lives, not a way to control or manipulate Him to do things our way. Recognizing Jesus as the all-powerful Lord of our lives is expressed in our willingness to submit to His will in our lives, even if His will doesn't fit our will or our circumstances don't get better. A Christian prayer desires God's will to be accomplished first and foremost in our lives!

1 John 5:14-15 says: *This is the confidence that we have toward Him, that if we ask anything according to His will He hears us. And if we know that He hears us in whatever we ask, we know that we have the requests that we have asked of Him. We have the requests that we have asked of Him because*

our desire is for His will to be done in the midst of those requests! We simply place our requests before the LORD and wait for Him to do His will in His time as we go about the daily vocations and task in our lives.

Notice how Jesus responded to His mother's information in verse 4 of our text: *"Woman, what does this have to do with Me? My hour has not yet come."* In other words, to step in and change the situation at this wedding by performing a miracle would involve some special timing **on God's part**. In one sense, Jesus was simply telling His mother to wait—something that is very important for us to do as we come before the LORD, difficult as it is to do so. Psalm 37:5-7 says: *Commit your way to the LORD; trust in Him, and He will act. He will bring forth your righteousness as the light, and your justice as the noonday. Be still before the LORD and wait patiently for Him.*

A basic characteristic of sin is the desire to control and this is true of our relationship with the LORD many times as well. It is difficult to simply lay our requests at the throne of God's grace and wait for Him to act. Many people have shared the difficulty they encounter with "letting go" of their problems in prayer. I've heard many tell me they do take their problems to the Lord in prayer. The problem is they can't seem to leave them there! It seem like they keep taking them back. When taking things to the Lord in prayer, the temptation is still there to take it back from the Lord, to take control of it again!

This doesn't mean that we don't take steps of faith to work out solutions to our situations. However, we do so recognizing God's Lordship over our endeavors and seek to discern the guidance of His Holy Spirit in the process. The danger is to spend more time on trying to solve our problems **on our own** rather than simply waiting on the LORD in prayer, trusting in His changes in His timing.

As Jesus functioned on this earth He was always sensitive to His Father's greater timing to bring about His best changes in our lives. This special timing had to do with the full expression of God's love for us manipulative sinners in the *hour* of His suffering, death and resurrection. Mary also trusted this timing as she simply laid the problem into Jesus' hands to act as He saw best.

Our text tell us that Jesus did decide to help them with their problem at some point in the celebration. He told the servants to *fill . . . six stone water jars . . . with water, draw some out and take it to the master of the feast.* (cf. John 2:7-8) This demanded some steps of faith on the part of the servants! Jesus' request might have seemed utterly ridiculous to these servants. To pass off water as wine? What would happen to the servants when the head steward discovered it was water instead of wine? I can imagine them even arguing about who should take the cup to the master of the feast! The main

point is that they obeyed Jesus **on the basis of His word**. Faith overcomes manipulation through humble submission!

The response of the master of the banquet reinforces the fact that when the LORD makes changes in your life they will always work out according to **His best** for your good! After tasting the water turned into wine *the master . . . said, . . . “You have kept the good wine until now.”* (cf. John 2:9-10) **God always performs His best for us!**

The changing of water into wine by Jesus caused the greatest and best change of all to take place in peoples’ lives—a change of heart from unbelief to faith in Jesus! John 2:11 says: *This, the first of His signs, Jesus did at Cana in Galilee, and manifested His glory. **And His disciples believed in Him.*** When Jesus acts in your life to make changes it is for His glory and the strengthening of your faith in Him as Lord and Savior!

Even though change is difficult for us to deal with many times because it may upset our sense of “security” . . . or the adjustments connected with the changes may involve more work on our part . . . or it may mean facing up to some things about ourselves that we would rather not see or admit . . . it is necessary for us to learn when change is good and necessary and when it is not. God’s working of His best in your life will involve change. However, you can adjust in a God-pleasing way when your heart is open to the LORD, totally

trusting that He is “bringing you up” in the faith to draw you closer and closer to the forgiveness and grace He’s given you in Jesus Christ! **His changes will work for your spiritual benefit!** It is a growth which learns daily the lesson that God’s changes in God’s timing will always bring about God’s glory in the midst of your life because He is in control for your eternal benefit! Amen.

Ecclesiastes 3:11 says:

He has made everything beautiful in its time.