

John 2: 1-11

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[0:00] Good morning, church. He is risen. He is risen indeed. A wonderful tradition. For centuries, the saints of God have said that on Easter Sunday.

! Well, good morning. My name is Mike, one of the elders here at Shoreline. And we're so glad that you've chosen to worship the Lord here this morning with us on Easter Sunday. The Lord has had Shoreline in a 10-week hiatus from our sermon series in the Gospel of John. And I'm very excited that today, on Easter Sunday, we return to this beautiful Gospel.

Our text for today is John 2, 1-11. For those that read John 12, 1-11, due to the typo in this week's email, I apologize. But I trust the Lord used it to instruct your hearts, even if you were confused.

And just a bit, my wife Brittany will be coming up here to read the text for us. But first, because it's been a while, I just want to re-familiarize ourselves with the context that we're in.

So, on December 4th, we started our series in John, not in chapter 1, but in John's declared purpose for writing the book. John 20, verses 30-31. And John says this, See, this here, this is the overarching purpose of John's Gospel.

[1:30] He wants us to read about the life, death, and resurrection of Christ, and respond by believing that he is the Christ, the Messiah, the Son of God, and so have eternal life in his name.

We then walk through chapter 1 together. John sets up his whole Gospel with this amazing prologue in verses 1-18, in which he declares Jesus to be God himself, the creator, the one in whom is light and life.

Jesus, as John says, is the God of the Old Testament who manifested his glory to Israel and dwelt with her in their tabernacle. And he has now come in human form to make God known to mankind like never before.

Verses 19-34, we read of John the Baptist and his testimony of Jesus. And then in verses 35-51, Jesus calls his first five disciples. Now we see John employs a ton, the Apostle John employs a ton of symbolism throughout his Gospel.

And in part of that, he loves the numbers 3 and 7. Maybe you've noticed this as you've read through John. So in these accounts of John the Baptist and Jesus' first disciples, the Apostle John actually reveals seven different titles for Jesus.

[2:45] So take that home, see if you can find all seven titles in that first chapter. Also, maybe a bit more subtly, these two accounts, along with today's passage, the wedding at Cana, they actually constitute seven days.

And John's pointing back to the seven days of Genesis 1, you know, the seven days of creation.

And Jesus is inaugurating a new creation, and John wants us to see that.

As far as openings to his story goes, this one is epic. Absolutely epic. And remember, John wrote it. Why? So that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing, you may have life in his name.

If you're here this morning, and you don't believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, my prayer is that as we walk through today's passage, you would believe, and so find life in his name.

So Brittany, you can come up now to read the passage. So if you would, you could turn in your Bibles to John chapter 2, verses 1 through 11. It will also be up on the screen. And out of respect for God's word, if you are able, why don't you please stand as Brittany reads this text.

[3:58] John 2, verses 1 through 11. 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. His mother said to the servants, Do whatever he tells you.

Now there were six stone water jars there for the Jewish rites of purification, each holding 20 or 30 gallons. Jesus said to the servants, Fill the jars with water.

And they filled them up to the brim. And he said to them, Now draw some water, some out, and take it to the master of the feast. So they took it. When the master of the feast tasted the water, now become wine, and did not know where it came from, though the servants who had drawn the water knew, the master of the feast called the bridegroom and said to him, Everyone serves the good wine first, and when people have drunk freely, then the poor wine.

But you have kept the good wine until now. This, the first of his signs, Jesus did at Cana in Galilee, and manifested his glory, and his disciples believed in him.

[5:19] Heavenly Father, this is truly your word. These are words of life. And I pray that by your spirit, that you would reveal deep and hidden things about God to us today.

Lord, my words hold absolutely no power whatsoever. It's the words of God that hold power. It's the words of God that hold life. It's the words of God that bring salvation. It's the words of God that instruct us.

So would you be the one teaching us this morning by your spirit? Or would you change our hearts? Would you raise the dead to life? We're totally dependent on you this morning.

Oh Lord, I pray this in Christ's name. Amen. You may be seated. Amen. So growing up, this story always confused me. Like first, what in the world is going on with Jesus and Mary?

Like I don't understand that interaction. Is Jesus being snarky with Mary? I'm not really sure. And like what's the point of the miracle anyway? Is it that Jesus wants everyone to party? Right? Is it that Jesus is okay with everyone drinking alcohol?

[6:22] Is Jesus just doing a cool trick to get people's attention? Now I think the answers to these questions will become clear as we work through this story together. And just to be clear, for those that are new here, and as a good reminder for those that aren't, when I say story, I'm not talking about a fictional made-up tale.

Right? This story describes real people in a real place and real events that occurred in history. This story is not John employing some Hollywood-like embellishment so he can use it as an allegory for something else.

This church believes that this was an actual event in history written that we might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing, we may have life in his name.

Amen. So let's work through this text together and unpack its meaning and application for our lives today. So we see that first verse there, which will be on the screen again. On the third day, there was a wedding at Cana in Galilee.

On the third day. So if we follow John's indicators of time, I'm not going to walk us through them right now, but starting in 119, it starts this new creation week that I'm saying.

[7:32] There's seven days that John leads us through. And this wedding at Cana is on the seventh day of this new creation week. Right? And what happened on the seventh day in creation? Anybody?

Everybody got rested. Got rested. He implemented a Sabbath. And so here we see that Jesus is working on this figurative Sabbath. Jesus is demonstrating that the redemptive work that the Father has given him to do, it's actually not in contradiction to the Sabbath as the Jewish rulers think it is, but it produces a Sabbath rest for the people of God.

Can you go one more back? Where are we here? I think back. Yep. Hit that a couple more times. Maybe I'm confused. It'll work eventually.

So this idea of Jesus working on the Sabbath, that's an important theme in this book, and it'll become much more prominent later. But I just wanted to mention it today so that you see it here in the Gospel of John.

Now the other thing about the third day, well, let me ask you, what else happens on the third day? Anybody? Jesus rises from the dead.

[8:42] Can we say it with conviction? What else happens on the third day? Yes. Jesus' resurrection from the dead. That's one of the things we celebrate today in particular.

We remember it especially on Easter Sunday. Now, I'll be clear here. Some commentators don't think that John's intent is to point to the resurrection here, but I've got to be honest.

I'm not a theological scholar. I'm not a New Testament scholar. But I don't know why John wouldn't have intended that connection. I mentioned John has a thing with the numbers 3 and 7. In the very next text, which Jim Gankars will be preaching in a few weeks, Jesus says this, And John tells us there in verse 22, Jesus is actually speaking about his resurrection.

His body is the temple, and he's going to raise up his temple back to life on the third day. Also, in the book of John, you know, there are, he likes number 7, and there are seven significant signs in his gospel that Jesus performs.

The first one is the one today, the water turning into wine. And do you know what the seventh one is? It's Jesus' resurrection from the dead. So this starts a series of signs culminating in Christ's resurrection from the dead.

[9:58] So, considering those two things, considering today is Easter Sunday, guess what? We're going to talk about the resurrection. Hope you're okay with that. Okay. So there's a wedding in Cana, and Jesus' mother Mary is there.

And then in verse 2, we see that Jesus and his disciples are invited to the wedding. And in verse 3, we learn that the wine runs out, which Mary tells to Jesus, right?

They have no wine. So, a little bit more historical context here. In those days, a wedding celebration could actually last up to seven days. That sounds pretty fun.

Not sure why we don't do that. And the groom's family, actually, was responsible for ensuring that there was enough food and drink to last the whole time. And the fact, so this culture was much more honor-shame than our culture is today.

The fact that the wine ran out could have actually led to serious embarrassment for this family. And, I learned, they could even be fined for such a thing. It's kind of crazy. So, Mary appears to have some sort of connection with this family.

[11:02] So, desiring to protect them, you know, from social and financial harm, she turns to her resourceful son, Jesus. Now, we might think that Mary was expecting a miracle to happen, but I actually don't think so.

John tells us this is the first, the very first of Jesus' signs, and he's 30 years old, right? So, it's not as if Mary has seen Jesus do things like this in the past.

But, as her firstborn son, as a 30-year-old man, and her husband Joseph has likely passed away years before, Mary has come to rely on Jesus. And as Sinclair Ferguson says, she's basically telling her son something that all of us sons and husbands in the room have probably heard before. Don't just stand there, do something. And Jesus said to her, in the next verse, Woman, what does this have to do with me? My hour has not yet come.

Now, this is a very confusing line, and I'm not going to go into all the details, but the Greek word translated as woman here is apparently very difficult to translate.

[12:03] It probably wasn't meant to be demeaning, like we might read it in English, but it also wasn't meant to be endearing, like saying mother or ma'am. It's somewhere in the middle, and commentators aren't exactly sure.

But, they all agree that Jesus' response, it is intended to be like a mild rebuke. You see, Jesus, he's distancing himself from Mary here.

While she nursed him, and raised him, and poured her life into his, he is the son of God. And his purpose is to carry out, not the will of Mary, but the will of the Father.

And that's what he's trying to show here. And when he says, my hour has not yet come, this is an indicator of something we're going to see some more in the book of John, and it's referred to as the messianic secret.

The messianic secret. Jesus' hour, it refers to that time that we just celebrated on Good Friday, that time when he would manifest his glory in the most spectacular and unexpected way possible, in giving up his life on the cross to save sinners.

[13:07] Here in John 2, Jesus' ministry has barely just begun, and it's not time yet for him to walk that road to Calvary. So, he's not looking to disclose his identity.

When he does, and we'll see this in later chapters, as Jesus starts to disclose who he is, this brings increasing controversy and opposition from the Jewish leaders, right? And they see Jesus as being blasphemous, and therefore deserving of death.

So, how does Mary respond to Jesus' mild rebuke? Verse 5. His mother said to the servants, Do whatever he tells you. Now, when I first read this, I envision Mary's response as being dismissive, almost as if with like a roll of her eyes, she ignores her son's retort and basically says, like, yeah, okay, Jesus, you're cute.

Do whatever he tells you. You know, that kind of thing. But that actually entirely misses what's going on. Mary's response is a response of faith. Let me show you this real quick.

Mary receives this mild rebuke, right? And in an act of trust in Jesus, she tells the servants, Do whatever he says. D.A. Carson summarizes these verses like this. In short, in verse 3, Mary approaches Jesus as his mother and is reproached.

[14:23] In verse 5, she responds as a believer, and her faith is honored. She still does not know what he would do, but she has committed the matter to him and trusts him.

So these first five verses, they lay the groundwork for the miracle itself, and these are all introduction to bring us to the main points. So first, let's reread verses 6 through 10, which are on the screen again.

Now, there were six stone jars there for the Jewish rites of purification, each holding 20 or 30 gallons. Jesus said to the servants, Fill the jars with water. And they filled them to the brim. And he said to them, Now draw some out and take it to the master of the feast. So they took it. When the master of the feast tasted the water, now become wine, and did not know where it came from, though the servants who had drawn the water knew, the master of the feast called the bridegroom and said to him, Everyone serves the good wine first, and when people have drunk freely, then the poor wine.

But you have kept the good wine until now. So verse 6. Well, the first main point is, Out with the old, in with the new.

[15:34] Out with the old, in with the new. Verse 6 says there, See, These massive stone jars were used to hold water because stone jars were considered to be ceremonially or ritually unclean.

You can read about this in Leviticus. Water from the stone jars could therefore be used for washing. In this story here, this basically lived out parable that Jesus is showing us, these stone jars essentially represent the entirety of the Jewish ceremonial law.

Under the Jewish law, one could be made clean, made pure, through the observance of external rituals. And Jesus tells the servants to fill the jars with water, and they filled them to the brim. So as the jars were filled to the brim, right, all the way up, one commentator writes, The appointed time for the ceremonial observances of the Jewish law had run its full course.

These observances had so completely fulfilled their purpose that nothing of the old order remained to be accomplished. The time had come, therefore, for the new order to be inaugurated. The wine symbolizes the new order as the water in the jars symbolizes the old order.

[16:52] So what is the new order? What is that? We get a little bit of a clue from this story. So the servants, they draw water from the jars, right, and Jesus supernaturally turns that water into wine, and then the wine is consumed, right, it's consumed by the master of the feast.

So the water from these jars was previously used for external cleansing, but the new wine goes down into the inward parts. The new order that Jesus is inaugurating is radically internal.

And this is actually a theme over the next few chapters of John. It's radically internal. See, what we see in the Gospels is that Jesus, by his sinless life, fulfills all the requirements of the Jewish law. And then, by shedding his blood on the cross, he purifies for all time those who believe in him. Hebrews 9, 13, and 14 says this, For if the blood of bulls and goats and the sprinkling of defiled persons with the ashes of a heifer sanctify for the purification of the flesh, that's talking about the old order, the old way, the Jewish ceremonial law.

And here's the new order. How much more will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal spirit offered himself without blemish to God, purify our conscience from dead works to serve the living God?

[18:15] So the wine in this story, this lived out parable, if you will, it represents the blood of Jesus, which he shed on the cross for our sins. Right? And Jesus, he offered up his blood to the Father to pay for my sin, to pay for your sin, to pay for the sins of the world.

So we owed a debt that we could not pay. We deserve to receive God's just wrath because of our sin. But Jesus, he paid a debt that he didn't owe.

Right? He displayed his boundless and steadfast love for mankind. And the Father, the Father receives the blood of Jesus. Right? And he declares it to be sufficient. He declares it to be good by raising Christ from the dead.

Amen. Thank you. How then does the redemptive work of Christ get applied to our hearts? Right? We're talking about an internal transformation.

How does that happen? Well, let me tell you, it's not by washing yourself with water from stone jars, nor by any external ritual. You don't receive Christ's redemptive work for you by being here right now.

[19:22] Right? You don't receive it by going to church a certain number of times, or by giving up meat for 40 days, or by attending Bible study with a certain frequency, or by praying before each meal.

No, friends, none of these external observances will do it. The redemptive work of Christ is applied to your heart and mind internally when the Holy Spirit breathes our dead hearts to life.

Paul says, Titus 3, 4 through 6, But when the goodness and loving kindness of God, our Savior, appeared, he saved us, not because of works done by us in righteousness, but according to his own mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit, whom he poured out on us richly through Jesus Christ, our Savior.

Friends, this is the gospel. This is the gospel. The gift of salvation is offered to us, to you, freely by God. And all we have to do is receive it through repentance and faith.

This looks like, you know, recognizing that we're sinners, that we're in need of a Savior, and then confessing that sin to the Lord, turning from it. Right? That's repentance.

[20:37] 1 John 1, 9, If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, right? And cleanse us from all unrighteousness. It looks like believing in Jesus as our Lord and Savior, as the one who died and rose again for our redemption, the one who ascended back to heaven and reigns supreme over all things.

That's faith, right? Romans 10, 9, and 10, that if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. When we receive this gift, the Holy Spirit raises our dead hearts to life, and he makes us pure forever.

He makes us righteous forever. We have a standing that is in righteousness before God, and then we can fellowship with God now and forevermore. Somebody say amen.

Friends, that's the gospel. That is the good news of Jesus Christ. Salvation and fellowship with God, it's not based on outward observances which we fail to keep.

If it was, we would never receive salvation. We all know this. We all know the inward sin of our hearts. We all know that we can't even keep our own standards, let alone the standard that God lays out, perfection.

[21:52] We could never come to God through outward observances, but salvation and fellowship with God is based on the finished work of Christ, and that brings inward transformation of the heart by the Spirit.

So that is the first point, and probably the main point of this text here, out with the old and in with the new. Here's another one here. So let's go back to the story, actually, and I need some water.

What is the means that Jesus uses to perform the miracle? Who are the ones actually doing the work?

The servants, yes. And Jesus gives the servants some commands. He says, fill the jars with water, right? Draw some water out. Take it to the master of the feast.

Three different commands he gives the servants. Now, I want us to try and place ourselves in their shoes for a minute. I doubt that they had access to New London City water pressure, right? They probably didn't have a faucet and a hose.

[22:54] I'm not sure where their water was coming from, to be honest. Maybe they had drudged it in from a well over and over again, and maybe they had a supply nearby. I'm not sure. But I'm guessing they had to use buckets or other jars to fill these giant, you know, 20 to 30-gallon jars of water.

And Jesus is probably watching them going back and forth, fetching the water, and they're probably like, okay, like, is this enough already? Is this enough already? And he's like, hey, what part of fill do you not understand?

You know, like, they're continuing to put water in over and over and over again, and then they're probably out in the back like, oh, this dude's crazy. Like, I shouldn't even be here right now. You know, the other wedding had Italian wine and bacon-wrapped scallops, so if they had done that, though, the following week, how much would they have realized that they had missed out on what was going on?

But here's the point. Here's the point. As the servants carry out the commands of Jesus with physical, natural effort, what happens? And you can go to the next slide, Kevin. Jesus applies divine power to bring about supernatural results.

And that's our second main point. Natural efforts, supernatural results. And this principle is seen all over Scripture. All over Scripture. I'll just give two examples today.

[24:05] First is in Joshua 6, right? The fall of Jericho. God tells Israel to march around the city of Jericho every day for six days and then on the seventh day to march around the city seven times.

Do you think any of the Israelites were grumbling on day five, maybe day one? Like, what in the world are we doing? If you've watched the VeggieTales video, they were getting slushies thrown at them from the peas above.

But they obeyed the command of God, right? They obeyed. And what happens? On the seventh day, they raise up a shout and the walls of Jericho are leveled. Physical efforts carried out by the command of God and then God applies his divine power, right?

Does anyone remember, secondly, the story of Naaman in 2 Kings 5? Probably not. It's a pretty obscure story.

For some reason, my daughter was hooked on it for like when she was like two and three and would always talk about it and we never knew why. But Naaman in 2 Kings 5, he's a commander of the Syrian army and he has leprosy.

[25:08] And a little Israelite girl who he had taken into his service suggests that he go to Elisha, the prophet of Israel, to be cured. And when Naaman arrives from his long journey, does anyone know what Elisha told him to do?

Anybody? Yes. Oh, everyone knows it. Okay. Cool. Elisha tells Naaman to go and wash in the Jordan seven times, right? Does he go and do it right away?

No. He's enraged. He's like, I came all the way from Syria and you're going to tell me to wash in the river? He's like, I was expecting to show. I wanted some smoke and some lights and this is what you're telling me to do?

And his servants have to basically reason with him. They're like, hey, Elisha told you to go wash and you're not even going to wash? Like, we came all the way here and you can't even wash in the river? And so he does. He goes and washes seven times and what happens?

He's cured. He's cured of his leprosy. Natural efforts, right? Carrying out the commands of God and God applies his divine power and brings out a miracle. So friends, Christians, listen to me.

[26:11] This is the way that God has ordained for his glory to be manifested in the world. This is the way. We apply physical, natural effort and the Holy Spirit breathes his power, his life and he brings about supernatural results, right?

Like Mary and the servants at the Sweden in Cana, we just need to trust him and do what he says and we can because he's proven himself to be faithful and good.

Go back and listen to Carl Crabtree's sermon on Job because that was a big point from that. So I just want to give three practical examples from life. Maybe two. One of them is preaching, right? Every Sunday people get up here and they preach from God's word and we apply physical, natural efforts to prepare and to deliver sermons, right? We're filling the jar, filling the jar, filling the jar as we prepare sermons and we're praying all the while that God would turn that water into wine and breathe out his spirit upon the church so that our souls are nourished.

I can't nourish your souls. Only God can nourish your souls but we do the work, right? Second thing, parenting. Now we've been talking about this idea in the adult biblical education class on family worship right?

[27:30] Parents, God has called us to raise our children in the discipline and instruction of the Lord. He has told us train up a child in the way he should go even when he is old he will not depart and man, even though my oldest is only five years old I've started to realize that's a deep jar.

Like I'm just keep filling it and filling it and filling it and I'm like, babe, did you put any water in that yet? And we're like throwing the buckets down in despair and sitting against the wall just like, oh, it's never gonna get filled and then sometimes we go and draw some out and we're like, there's gotta be some wine in there, right?

Like, there's gotta be. It's hard work being a parent, right? Keep doing that work. Like, keep doing it and do it on your knees in faith because God is the one who produces fruit, right?

God is the one who breathes his power onto our children's hearts and he's the one that brings about transformation. I'll do the third example here. Discouragement because this is one that we all face, discouragement.

All of us here have faced seasons of discouragement, sometimes short, sometimes long. Maybe you're in the middle of one right now, right? We go to God's word, we pray, we attend church, we go to community group and all the while we can't shake it and we think, Lord, why?

[28:53] Why? That's the why of Job that Carl talked about several weeks ago. And sometimes in that discouragement we give up, we pull back, we don't go to church as much anymore, we don't go to community group as much anymore, we stop reading God's word, we stop praying because we're not seeing any fruit.

And he's saying to us today, why did you stop filling the jar? Why? Why did you bail on fellowship with me for that Italian wine and those bacon wrapped scallops, right?

like they tasted good for a second and now you're hungry, now you're thirsty, now you're unsatisfied. And to a weary, discouraged Israel, God declared this promise, that even youth shall faint and be weary, young men shall fall exhausted, but they who wait for the Lord shall renew their strength, they shall mount up with wings like eagles, they shall run and not be weary, they shall walk and not faint.

Friends, if you're discouraged, keep filling the jars with water, don't throw your bucket away, right? Don't lose heart, don't give up, pursue the Lord, wait on Him.

And we've talked about waiting in the past, that's an active thing, waiting on Him through prayer, through spending time with Him in His word, through doing the things like coming to church and community, do those things, pursue the Lord, and I promise you, the Lord promises you that times of refreshing are going to come, it's going to come, resurrection is going to come, it's around the corner.

[30:32] Your strength will be renewed, the discouragement, it will give way to confidence and to hope, the heaviness will subside and it gives way to the lightness and the joy, to the peace and the soul rest that come from fellowship with Jesus.

So, our first main point was out with the old, in with the new, and our second point, natural efforts, supernatural results, and that brings us now to our third point, God with us, glory revealed.

So there's no like, you know, alliteration going on here, these are hard to remember, but here they are. I want to reread verses 9 through 11. When the master of the feast tasted the water, now become wine, and did not know where it came from, though the servants who had drawn the water knew, the master of the feast called the bridegroom and said to him, everyone serves the good wine first, and when people have drunk freely, then the poor wine, but you have kept the good wine

until now.

This, the first of his signs, Jesus did at Cana in Galilee and manifested his glory, and his disciples believed in him. Now when John says there that Jesus manifested his glory, he's pointing back to the previous page.

Look there at chapter 1, verse 14. It's not on the screen. 1, verse 14, and the word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory. Glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth.

[32:07] And we talked about this in December, right? The language that John uses here, it's pointing back to the tabernacle in Israel, where God would dwell with his people and manifest his glory.

Now in two weeks, Randy Matthews is going to be here preaching from Exodus 33, where God descends on the tent of meeting as a pillar of cloud and speaks with Moses. A similar scene is described in Exodus 40, after the tabernacle is built, according to God's exact instructions.

Go to the next slide. Isaiah, Exodus 40, it says, Then the cloud covered the tent of meeting, and the glory of the Lord filled the tabernacle. And Moses was not able to enter the tent of meeting because the cloud settled on it, and the glory of the Lord filled the tabernacle.

Throughout all their journeys, whenever the cloud was taken up from the tabernacle, the people of Israel would set out. But if the cloud was not taken up, then they did not set out till the day that it was taken up.

For the cloud of the Lord was on the tabernacle by day, and fire was in it by night, and the sight of all the house of Israel throughout all their journeys. And 1,500 years later, right, in this backwater town in Palestine, the same God who descended upon the tabernacle of Israel and manifested his glory to her, he descended again, right, to earth, except this time in the form of a man.

[33:37] And here in Cana, right, Jesus, that the preexistent, the preeminent God of the universe manifests his glory to this group of locals gathered for a wedding. He manifests his glory by putting on display the character and the power of God.

Now, this could be a whole other sermon, but we're going to keep it short here in a few ways, right? First, Jesus shows God's heart of love and care, right? He saves this groom's family from financial harm and social embarrassment by doing the thing that he does.

Like, we can't ignore the fact that there is a miracle to a group of people, like real people that were there. So, God's heart of love and care. Jesus shows God's heart of generosity, right, by supplying wine to the guests.

And clearly, it's not just any wine, right? It's actually found to be good wine by the refined palate of the master of the feast. He's like, most people save the bad wine for the end when people can't really taste anymore, but you're bringing out the best.

Heart of generosity. Third, Jesus shows God's desire, and this is probably perhaps the most profound one here, God's desire to dwell with mankind, to actually fellowship and commune with us, right?

[34:51] To be himself a source of joy that's ever new and ever satisfying. And while Jesus enjoys fellowship with those at the wedding, that fellowship would come to an end, right?

The wedding stopped, you know, it concluded a few days later and the fellowship was over. But, Jesus' miracle here, it points forward, right, to a more permanent fellowship between God and man. It's the fellowship that was made possible by the cross and the resurrection of Christ. It's a fellowship that begins now as God dwells in the tabernacle of our hearts by his spirit.

And it's a fellowship that will carry on forevermore into eternity in heaven. This eternal fellowship, it's also pictured in scripture as a wedding feast, right?

It's the marriage supper of the Lamb. In fact, the next time that we see Christ drinking wine, it's with his disciples on the last supper, right? And he says, I'm going to do this again with you someday, pointing forward to that wedding feast, the marriage supper of the Lamb.

[35:59] See, not many were invited to this wedding at Cana in the first century A.D., but all, all people are invited to the marriage supper of the Lamb. You are invited to the marriage supper of the Lamb.

And you say, Mike, I'd like to be there, but I actually don't think I've received an invitation. Like, I haven't gotten one in the mail. What are you talking about? And even if I did, like, where do I send my RSVP? And that, friends, brings us full circle.

Friends, the invitation, it's this book. It's the whole thing, and specifically the Gospel of John. It's this book. This is your invitation. And the offer we've read, what's the offer?

It's eternal life with God. That's the offer. And the RSVP, it's your belief that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God. Now, I've been using the term miracle all throughout my sermon, but that's not actually the term that John uses here in verse 11 or in his Gospel at all.

The New Testament, including the Synoptic Gospels, which is Matthew, Mark, and Luke, it often uses the Greek word *dunamis*, which means mighty work when referring to miracles. But John uses the Greek word *semeion*, which means sign.

[37:17] because Jesus' miracles, they're not dazzling displays of power as ends in themselves, right? They are meant to point to something, namely, him, right?

The signs point to Jesus. The signs point to his identity as Christ and the Son of God. And here in verse 11, we see that Jesus' disciples, they witnessed the sign of Jesus turning water into wine, and what do they do?

They believed in him. And that is the intended effect of the signs. And friends, today is Easter Sunday, right?

A far greater sign was given in just a few years, right? Well, not only does he raise, Jesus raises Lazarus from the dead, right? But then he himself is raised from the dead.

The ultimate sign pointing to the fact of both his divinity, that he is God, right? He is who he says he was. He claimed to be God, and he rose from the grave proving that he is God.

[38:20] And it points also to his authority. He holds power over sin, over death, over Satan, over all things. Over all things.

Do you believe that this morning? And that's the question for you to answer. Do you believe? Do you? Do you believe? Do you believe? Do you believe?

I'm talking to you individually. Not does Shoreline believe. Do you all individually believe this morning? There is no greater question in life that you will have to answer.

Don't get me wrong. There are other important questions in life. For my five-year-old daughter, it's what dress she's going to wear to preschool. That feels like a very important question to her right now. For Connecticut residents, it's whether you're going to be a fan of the Red Sox or the Yankees, right?

How about, should I go into the Coast Guard or the Navy? Who should I marry? Where should I live? Where should I work? Yes, there are many important questions in life, but this one surpasses them all in importance by far.

[39:26] Because the answer to this question has eternal implications. Do you believe? Do you believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, who died for your sins, was buried, and rose again on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures?

And on Easter Sunday, we need to remember something very important. Paul says, 1 Corinthians 15, if Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile, and you are still in your sins, then those also who have fallen asleep in Christ have perished.

If in Christ we have hope in this life only, we are, of all people, most to be pitied. If Jesus died for our sins but did not rise triumphantly from the grave, his death was worthless.

Why are we talking about it? If he did not rise from the grave, our faith is worthless. Like, what are we even doing here then? We have better things to do with our time if Christ is not risen.

Friends, Christianity hinges on the resurrection of Christ. I believe that Christ was raised bodily from the grave.

[40:51] So do many of you in this room. So have thousands of saints over the last 2,000 years, many of whom have given up their lives to preach that gospel.

We know some now through Randy who are in Pakistan, who are in China, who are all over the world, willing to lay down their lives, willing to give the ultimate price because they believe this message.

And so did Paul. Paul gave up his life preaching this gospel. And he boldly declares in the next verse, but in fact, Christ has been raised from the dead.

And further down, he says, death is swallowed up in victory. Oh death, where is your victory? Oh death, where is your sting?

Do you believe that this morning? And you must decide this question for yourself. It doesn't matter how your parents answer.

[41:47] It doesn't matter how your grandma answers. It doesn't matter how your pastor answers or your teacher or your neighbor or your co-worker. Not for your soul. Right? What matters is how you answer this question.

Now if you're not sure, if you have doubts or you have questions and you want to talk to someone, like I would love nothing more than to talk with you after this service. But for those who do believe, in conclusion, we've seen a few things from this text, right?

We saw the first thing, out with the old, in with the new, right? The old order is fulfilled. The new one has begun. Through Christ's shed blood for us, we've been given a free gift of salvation that we did not deserve.

Our hearts have been raised to life, not by anything external that we've done, but by the power of the Spirit. Just as Christ was raised from death to life, we saw natural efforts, supernatural results, right?

We now live a life in which all the time, all the time, we reenact this water into wine miracle. We carry out the commands of God with natural efforts. God applies divine power to bring about supernatural results.

[43:00] The results themselves, the timing of those results, those are up to God. We didn't talk about that before. Those are up to God. They're in his hands, right? But we can trust him because he's proven himself time and again to be faithful, to be good.

And last, God with us, glory revealed. We saw that God's disposition towards us is one of love and care and generosity and he desires to have fellowship or communion with us right now by his Spirit and forevermore in his presence in heaven.

This fellowship, it's endlessly joyful. It's satisfying. David prophesied in Psalm 16, in your presence there is fullness of joy at your right hand are pleasures forevermore.

Now I want to close by reading two verses from the song that we opened with this morning. Christ the Lord is risen today. Now when I read a line, I want you all to lift up your voices and say, Alleluia, okay?

Which means, praise the Lord. So I'm going to read and you're going to respond. Love's redeeming work is done. Alleluia.

[44:17] Fought the fight, the battle won. Alleluia. Death in vain forbids him rise. Alleluia. Christ has opened paradise.

Alleluia. Soar we now where Christ has led. Alleluia. Following our exalted head. Alleluia.

Made like him, like him we rise. Alleluia. Ours, the cross, the grave, the skies. Alleluia. Praise the Lord.

Let us go before the Lord in prayer. Heavenly Father, you are good and your steadfast love endures forever.

we have seen that this morning. You have shown us your love. You have shown us your glory. You have shown us your power. And you are the same God today.

[45:19] The same God who dwelt with Israel in the wilderness is the same God who came down as a man and lived the perfect life and died a death that we deserved, right?

And you are the same God who is now with us today in our hearts even by your spirit. And you actually tell us or Paul wants us to know what is the immeasurable greatness towards us who believe that same greatness, the same might, the same power that raised Christ from the dead and seated him at the Father's right hand in the heavenly places far above a rule and authority and power and dominion.

That power is at work in the saints today. and we can have fellowship with you today. We can be filled with joy today, satisfied in our hearts today because you are with us.

And God, we celebrate the cross where you died for us. We celebrate the resurrection where you proved the satisfying payment of your sin.

And God, I pray that those in this room who don't believe would come to believe and so have eternal life. God, would you let your word have its way in our hearts this morning even as we go from here.

[46:51] In Jesus' name we pray. Amen. Now we're going to turn to a time of communion and some might think it's strange that we would celebrate or take communion or the Lord's Supper on Easter Sunday as if the tone doesn't quite fit but the Lord's Supper is actually a celebration.

All right? It's a celebration of the ongoing unity and fellowship that we have together with and in Jesus. Right? And it's a unity and a fellowship that was made possible through the cross and the resurrection of Christ.

The Lord's Supper also, it celebrates and anticipates that joyful and endless wedding feast of the ages to come in which Christ and all those whom he has redeemed will enjoy unhindered fellowship with him and each other.

So this meal, this communion meal, it's for those who have put their faith in Christ as their Lord and Savior. However, if you're a believer and you're living in secret unrepentant sin, scripture tells us that taking the elements is actually eating and drinking condemnation upon yourselves.

So just, let's all examine ourselves this morning and ensure we're right with the Lord to receive this meal. And for those who don't believe in Jesus as the Lord and Savior, please don't take the elements as they're not for you this morning, but instead we would implore you receive Christ who offers you eternal life in fellowship with God.

[48:26] So before we take these elements together, let's just spend a couple minutes in quiet, focused meditation and prayer. Ask the Lord to search your heart and to reveal sin and confess that sin to the Lord and meditate on the cross and the empty tomb by which you've been redeemed and brought into fellowship with God and then respond in gratitude and worship.

After a couple minutes, we'll then take the bread and cup together. Now, as they were eating, Jesus took bread and after blessing it, broke it and gave it to the disciples and said, take, eat, this is my body.

Let's do this together in remembrance of him. Amen. And he took a cup and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them saying, drink of it, all of you, for this is my blood of the covenant which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins.

I tell you, I will not drink again of this fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom. and grateful remembrance and joyful anticipation.

Let's do this together. Jesus, we thank you for your sacrifice on the cross and your mighty and triumphant resurrection from the grave through which we are redeemed not because of anything we've done but because of your finished work.

[50:30] We thank you, Lord, that we have fellowship with you forevermore because of that. Pray this in Christ's name. Amen.