

The Case for Glory

Read John 2.1-25

I / INTRODUCTION: THE CASE FOR GLORY

1 / Our lesson text is from **John 2.1-25**. I'm calling it '**The Case for Glory**' because that's what John declares Jesus Himself was doing by the miracle-signs that He performed. **Read ch 2.11: This, the first of His signs, Jesus did at Cana in Galilee, and manifested His Glory. And his disciples believed in Him.** This was Jesus' miracle of turning the water into wine [more on that later...]. John declares that by performing this miracle, Jesus '**manifested His Glory.**' To 'manifest' means 'to reveal, make visible.' So Jesus was making His Glory visible by His miraculous works.

2 / What then is this '**Glory**' that Jesus is revealing? 'Glory' can have several shades of meaning. [1] It can mean 'praise' that someone earns and receives. [2] It can mean to 'boast' in something. [3] Most of the time it means 'excellence, superiority, and perfection.' All of those apply here and to all of Jesus' miracles. **But here, most specifically, 'Glory' means Jesus' very Deity – that He is God.** John uses 'Glory' in this way in **ch 1.14: 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.** Here, 'Glory' means His Deity – that He is very God incarnated in human flesh. Jesus Himself will talk about His 'Glory' as the Deity that He is as God ... and the Glory that He enjoyed with the Father before the creation of the world / **see John 17.1-5, 20-24.**

3 / So, when Jesus turned the water into wine, He was publicly revealing His Deity – He, as God, was working what only God can work.

4 / So what John is really saying is that **“Jesus performed this first miracle-sign and made the case for Himself that He is God.”**

II / JESUS MIRACLE-SIGNS / WORKS: WITNESSES TO HIS GLORY / DEITY

1 / Jesus will refer, not only to this first miracle, but to all the miracle-signs and works that He performed as just one of the many undeniable witnesses that make the case that He is Deity – God revealed and incarnated in human flesh. Read, for example, what Jesus said in **John 5.30-47**. What He is saying here is listing at least these witnesses to His Glory, His Deity, that He is God:

[1] **v 31** / Himself

[2] **vv 32-35** / John the Baptist

[3] **v 36** / the works that the Father was working through Him

[4] **v 37** / the Father Himself

[5] **vv 38-44** / the Scriptures

[6] **vv 45-47** / Moses

2 / **But for our purposes right now, I want to note especially #3, the works that the Father was working through Him. Jesus says that those works testify and witness to His Deity – that He has come from the Father, and even that the Father Himself was doing the works through Jesus that He [Jesus] was doing / see vv 17-18.**

3 / So if all of Jesus' works were witnesses making the case for His Glory, His Deity, then this one in **ch 2.11** was the first that John will write about in his **Case for Jesus' Glory.**

4 / And if you connect this **ch 2.11 with ch 20.30-31**, you will be able to see John's template and outline he will follow for the rest of his book here. Let's just put these two verses together:

ch 2.11 / This, the first of His signs, Jesus did at Cana in Galilee, and manifested His Glory. And His disciples believed in Him.

ch 20.30-31: Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book; ³¹ but these are written 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.

III / THE CASE FOR GLORY: ALSO THE THEME OF THE WHOLE GOSPEL

1 / Also, in a very real sense, you could not only give the title ‘**The Case for Glory**’ to this **chapter 2**, but it would also serve very well as a theme and title for the whole Gospel of John. That’s what John is presenting here in this Gospel: **the case for Jesus’ Glory/Deity**.

2 / In **chapter 1**, John has already introduced Jesus to us in **vv 1-18** as The Word who is God ... who became flesh and dwelt / ‘tent’ed / tabernacled among us. He was ‘making known to us’ in visible flesh the God we have never seen [**ch 1.18**].

3 / Then in **vv 19-51**, John presents a series of personal encounters with Jesus and some of those first believers who saw His Glory and believed in Him for eternal life. These encounters are all themed on the phrase ‘**Come and see!**’ These first disciples/believers came and saw Jesus’ Glory / Deity – and they believed in Him.

4 / In the rest of this Gospel, John will continue to introduce us to a number of others who ‘came and saw’ Jesus’ Glory / Deity ... and believed in Him as the Son of God. John writes this book so that you and I – and all others who read these testimonies – will come and see ... and believe.

IV / JOHN, CHAPTER 2: THE CASE FOR GLORY

1 / So, with all that being said, let’s open up **chapter 2 ... The Case for Glory**.

2 / **Chapter 2** is actually a collection of two short stories and a brief commentary – all of which have the common theme of **The Case for [Jesus’] Glory**. We will notice that all three sections have these elements in common:

[1] they all contain reference to a ‘sign-miracle’ that Jesus performed;

[2] they all reveal and manifest some witness to Jesus’ Glory / Deity – His God-ness;

[3] they all make mention that His disciples and followers ‘believed in Him’ as God and Savior when they saw His Glory / Deity in His signs-miracles.

V / vv 1-12 / TURNING WATER INTO WINE

1 / Jesus and His whole family [**Matthew 13.55-56**] were obviously family friends with these wedding party families. They were all invited and they all attended together. [We will note at the end of the story that some of His disciples were also present and with Him there – and they witnessed this sign-miracle.]

2 / During the course of the festivities [which often went on for days...], they ran out of the wine they were serving. Jesus’ mother, Mary, brings the need to His attention. Although Jesus will perform the miracle, He very respectfully establishes His life’s and ministry’s priorities – to fulfill a specific purpose and work that He simply calls here ‘**My hour**’ / v 4. This is a phrase that He will reprise at least six times during this Gospel [**2.4; 7.30; 8.20; 12.23-27; 13.1; 17.1**].

3 / Also what Jesus is doing here is clearly differentiating between having come into the world to do His earthly mother’s will [as here] and doing His Father’s will [see **John 17.1-5 & Hebrews 10.5-10**].

4 / Then, what Jesus proceeds to do is command the servants to fill some water jars they had with water. They did. Then he told them to begin serving it to the master of the feast and the guests. The master of the feast had no idea where it had come from. He had not witnessed the transaction. But when he tasted it, he knew that it was fine wine. He complimented the bridegroom who was in charge of the activities for his choice of the fine wine.

5 / This act of supernaturally and miraculously changing one element into another was the first and the beginning of these sign-miracles that Jesus would perform over the course of His ministry. By doing so, **He clearly, unmistakably, and undeniably demonstrated, evidenced, and revealed His Glory / Deity – that He is God!**

6 / And when His disciples witnessed that miraculous work, **“they believed in Him.”** This does not mean that they weren’t believers before – but what it does mean is that they witnessed this demonstration of His Deity and their faith in Him and commitment to Him as the Son of God and the Christ/Messiah was confirmed beyond all doubt!

7 / So, here you have John’s first witness and testimony to **‘The Case for Jesus’ Glory.’**

VI / vv 13-22 / THE ‘CLEANSING’ OF THE TEMPLE

1 / Just so you will see John’s pattern here, after Jesus drives out the money-changers and livestock merchants, the Jews [elders, officials, leadership] will ask Him for a ‘sign’ to validate and credentialize His authority to do what He has just done / v 18. That’s one of the common threads and keywords that will tie together John’s **Case for Glory.**

2 / We are told that this occasion is the Passover feast. Before we get into this story, this same event is also recorded in **Matthew 21.12-17; Mark 11.15-19; Luke 19.45-48.** Except that they all place this event during the final week of Jesus’ life after His ‘triumphal entry’ into Jerusalem.

3 / John here seems to place this event at the very beginning of Jesus’ ministry. So this has posed a number of questions: [1] was it at the first or at the end of Jesus’ ministry; [2] or were there two such events?

4 / There really doesn’t have to be but one event, and it has all the evidences of having occurred in the final week of Jesus’ ministry. John’s purpose is not to give us a chronological sequence of events in Jesus’s life and ministry, but rather group his witnesses to Jesus’ Glory according to the themes he wants to emphasize.

5 / Especially also when we consider how even John here relates it to Jesus’ resurrection which would have occurred only a very few days from that day. Also, while Jesus was hanging on the cross, those around the cross mocked Him for what He had said during this event [see **Matthew 26.61 & 27.40**].

6 / So what is going on here? Jesus is ‘cleansing’ the Temple from all of this sacrilegious activity that is defacing God’s Glory that should have been worshiped in the Temple. The Shekinah Glory or Presence of God had always been the Glory of His Temple. But they had defaced, defiled, and desecrated that Glory centuries before.

7 / Yahweh had also declared in **Isaiah 56.7: “...these [Gentiles] I will bring to my holy mountain, and make them joyful in my house of prayer; their burnt offerings and their sacrifices will be accepted on my altar; for my house shall be called a house of prayer for all peoples.”** But what the Jewish leadership had done was to exclude the Gentiles from worshiping in the Temple at all and had replaced the Court of the Gentiles with these livestock bazaars. The pilgrims who came to the Temple to make their annual sacrifices couldn’t always bring their sacrificial animals with them. So the Sadducees [primarily along with the chief priest’s family ‘mafia’] had formed a racket selling these animals to the worshipers at exorbitant prices ... as well as exchanging their local currencies for the Jerusalem currency, again at exorbitant exchange rates.

8 / God had decreed that only He should be worshiped and glorified in His Temple ... but they had hijacked God’s Temple for their own commercial services and profits.

9 / And so Jesus comes to His Temple [as **Malachi 3.1-4 prophecies**] to purify it, cleanse it of all these defiling activities – and to restore the Glory of God to His Temple by His Presence. By so doing, Jesus was declaring that He Himself is the True Temple of God – the Presence of God who is to be worshiped!

10 / He calls the Temple **‘my Father’s house,’** thus calling God His Father and making Himself equal with God [see **again ch 5.18 & 10.30-33**].

11 / In all these expressions, Jesus was making the Case for His Glory ... declaring and demonstrating His Glory / Deity. Jesus was also declaring that He Himself was the Temple of God. He proclaimed that truth when He made the statement, **“Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up!”** The Jews mocked Him and scoffed at Him for such an incredulous and outlandish claim. Herod had been in a construction project already for forty-six years remodeling and beautifying that Temple – and it would be going on for another thirty-five years or so before it was destroyed by the Romans in 70 AD.

12 / But Jesus wasn't referring to that physical architectural temple at all – He was referring to the Temple of His very body. This would be fulfilled just a few days later when He was crucified and then raised from the dead three days later – just as He promises here!

13 / His disciples will remember this mysterious [at that time] exchange and claim that Jesus made when He was raised. They would also remember that the Psalmist prophesied in **Psalm 69.9: “For zeal for Your House has consumed Me, and the reproaches of those who reproach You have fallen on Me.”** Jesus was re-claiming the Glory that belongs only to God – and since He was God, it belonged to Him.

VII / vv 23-25 / MORE SIGNS-MIRACLES ... MORE BELIEVERS

1 / v 23 / **Now when He was in Jerusalem at the Passover Feast, many believed in His Name when they saw the signs that He was doing.** Notice how John continues to weave this thread of Jesus' signs in this brief commentary.

2 / John is simply relating here how Jesus continued to perform His miracles of healing, casting out demons, and all the other gracious works He performed – all of which demonstrated His Glory / Deity.

3 / One of the most notable miracles Jesus performed, especially during these last weeks of His life was the raising of Lazarus in ch 11. The effect of this miracle was that many of those who witnessed this miracle believed in Him [see ch 11.45].

4 / However, Jesus also demonstrates His Glory / Deity by knowing what really goes on in people's hearts when they claim to believe in Him. Many do – truly and sincerely – and they are saved from their sins. Others claim to be believers, but they do so hypocritically, superficially, or to gain some kind of physical benefit for their own advancement or enrichment. **Jesus knows the difference: “But Jesus on His part did not entrust Himself to them, because He knew all people and needed no one to bear witness about man, for He Himself knew what was in man.”**

5 / Only God can make such a claim as this. And so Jesus makes the case for His own Glory when He is able to discern the difference between those who truly believe in Him and those who only pretend to. The pretenders may be able to deceive and fool their peers who can't see past their façade, but Jesus knows.

VIII / MORE TO COME...

1 / Now that John has given us some markers and pointers to look for as we continue to read, he will proceed on in the following chapters to relate some more encounters with people who will come and see Jesus' Glory.

2 / Some will believe and be saved ... others will continue to not believe and will be condemned and lost.

3 / Now that you have read this part of John's Case for Christ's Glory, you, too, have come and you have seen His Deity. You have witnessed His God-ness. You have had your own encounter here with the Living God in the Person of Jesus Christ.

DO YOU BELIEVE?