

The Wedding at Cana

Bonus Elements for Marriage Curriculum

Story: Not Enough Pies

(I wrote this story based on an actual event that occurred involving a set of siblings in our children's church program.)

"What are you doing, Mama?" asked Penny.

"Oh, just looking at some pictures from one of the fall festivals we've had here at church. Look at all that chili," answered Mama.

"I liked the pies more than the chili," noted four-year-old Jacob.

Their mama looked through a few more pictures. "That's just the thing, son. I saw this email today from the church office and it said there aren't going to be enough pies this year."

Daniel leaned in to have a look at the photos. "Looks like there's plenty of pie in this picture. It's all over their faces." Being an always hungry eight-year-old boy, this seemed like a happy circumstance to him.

Penny giggled as she looked over her twin brother's shoulder. "I remember that. Those guys were in a pie-eating contest. What a mess!"

Mama's face lit up. "I have an idea. Why don't you three choose a recipe? You can each make a pie and enter it into the pie-eating contest."

"I like that idea. It would be sad not to have enough for everybody to eat and we can help." Penny began flipping through one of her mother's cookbooks looking at the pictures of the different pies.

"I have another idea," Mama said. "Our situation of not having enough pies reminds me of a Bible story about a very festive event where there weren't enough refreshments for the people."

"You sound like Miss Cindy at children's church. I think everything reminds her of a Bible story." Daniel grinned.

Jacob asked, "Did your story happen at a wedding? She talks a lot about marriage and weddings and stuff."

"Really? And what exactly have you been learning about marriage and weddings and stuff in children's church?"

"Well," began Penny, "we learned that God created marriage between a man and a woman, and it's like a symbol of something very special."

"Yeah, it's a symbol of how much Jesus loved the church and gave His life for it." Daniel could tell his mother was surprised that he knew this.

Penny began to sing, "Jesus is the bridegroom, the church His bride. That's a song Miss Cindy taught us."

"I'm impressed," said Mama. "Well, this Bible story is about a wedding that Jesus, His mother, and Jesus' disciples had been invited to attend. It was in a town called Cana. Weddings back then were very joyous events. Most wedding celebrations lasted at least seven days."

Penny remembered what her mother had said earlier. "You said that they ran out of refreshments. Would that have been so bad?"

Mama began pulling sugar and flour from the cabinets as she explained, "In those days, the hosts of the wedding were responsible for the wedding guests to have plenty of food to eat and plenty to drink as well. For

weddings, the hosts were to supply wine for everyone. Showing good hospitality was very important. To fail to do so, would have been a huge embarrassment.”

Jacob was busy putting sugar into a measuring cup. He declared, “If I ever have a wedding, I’m going to give everybody chocolate milk.”

Mama laughed. “Good idea. That suits you, I think. At this wedding, Jesus’ mother learned that the host had run out of wine. She must have been concerned that not having enough might make the host of the wedding look bad.”

Penny sighed, “It would be sad if something spoiled the happy day. Having something go wrong at your wedding wouldn’t be good.”

Mama began to laugh, “Oh, I think something almost always goes wrong at a wedding, but it’s still a happy day.”

Penny looked at the wedding pictures of her parents hanging in the next room. “That can’t be true. You and Daddy look happy and the church looks so pretty.”

“A picture doesn’t tell the whole story. My beautiful dress is covering up a very clunky and ugly cast on my leg and those beautiful candles...well, when the air-conditioner fan kicked on, we thought we may have a church fire. Fortunately, that didn’t happen and it was a wonderful day.”

Penny smiled. “That’s good. I’m glad the church didn’t burn down, but what happened at the wedding where Jesus was?”

“Jesus’ mother, Mary, was very concerned about the whole thing. She knew Jesus was God’s son and she could trust Him to help with the situation, so she told Him about the problem.”

“Did everyone else know Jesus was God’s son?” asked Daniel.

Mama thought about that for a minute. “Well, His disciples knew it, but I’m not sure they understood exactly what that meant. For example, Jesus hadn’t performed any miracles yet. They hadn’t seen God’s power working through Him at this point.”

“What happened?” asked Daniel.

“Mary told the servants at the wedding to do whatever Jesus asked them to do. And now,” Mama added, “I need you to do exactly what I tell you to do while we work on these pies.”

The next several minutes, the kids were busy getting instructions for preparing their pies. Finally, the pies were ready for the oven.

The kids were all coated in flour and a variety of other sticky ingredients. After they cleaned up, Mama wanted to continue with the Bible story as they waited for the pies to bake.

“Well,” she said as she dusted her hands, “I think we’ve helped solve the problem of not enough pies at the festival, so let’s finish our story about what Jesus did at the wedding to help with their refreshment problem.”

“Yeah, what happened?” asked Jacob.

“Jesus said to the servants, ‘fill the jars with water,’ so they filled them to the brim. Then he told them to draw some out and take it to the master of the banquet.”

“What happened then?” asked Penny.

Mama answered, “The master of the banquet tasted the water and the water had turned into wine. He didn’t have any idea that Jesus had been responsible for this miracle.”

“You’ve said that word two times. What’s a miracle?” asked Jacob.

“It’s a little bit hard to put into words,” explained Mama, “because a miracle is something that only God can do. A miracle is an event that involves the powerful action of God, going beyond ordinary natural happenings.”

“I think I understand about miracles. It’s something that only happens by God’s power. Like a sign that’s He’s in control,” Penny added.

“But, Mama, you said the master of the banquet didn’t know about the miracle. How could it be a sign of God’s power if nobody saw it?” Daniel asked.

“Good question and you’re correct, the master of the banquet never knew about the water changing into wine. He actually called the bridegroom aside and remarked that most people bring out the best wine at the beginning of the feast, but in this wedding, the best wine was saved for the very end. The master was clueless, but the servants knew what had happened.”

Penny had a thoughtful look on her face. “I think it’s a shame that only the servants knew about the miracle that Jesus did at the wedding.”

“Oh, they weren’t the only ones who knew. The Bible tells us that this was the very first of Jesus’ miraculous signs where He revealed His glory. His disciples saw the miracle and put their faith in Jesus,” Mama explained.

“Then that’s really good,” declared Penny, “because they were going to be learning a lot from Jesus and they needed to be able to trust him. At least, that’s what I think.”

“I’d say that’s some good thinking, Penny.” Mama grabbed two potholders and began to take the pies out of the oven.

The kids happily displayed their pies while Mama used her phone to snap pictures of their baked offerings for the fall festival.

That evening the whole family squealed with delight when Daniel was chosen as the winner of the pie-baking contest.

His daddy gave him a big hug. “Well, Daniel, I guess this is the happiest part of your day.”

“I’m pretty happy alright,” he answered, “but making all the pies today with my family and being reminded to trust in Jesus’ love for me is sure a happy thing too.”

“Yeah,” agreed Penny, “Pie-filling is yummy, but being love-filled is way better.”

Jacob rubbed the sticky remnants of pie onto his pants and jumped into the laps of his mama and daddy who were sitting on the couch. They soon found themselves smothered by a goopy hug. His brother and sister saw the fun and piled on as well.

Lifting his head from the tangled and giggly group hug, Jacob declared, “Yep, being love-filled is way more better!”