

St. John 2:1-11

Dear Friends in Christ,

Dr. Francis Pieper wrote, "In Christ, God and man are united in one Person... The resulting wondrous and singular union of God and man into one person...is called the personal union." (Francis Pieper, Christian Dogmatics, Vol. II, CPH, P.85) Our text for this morning is the well known account of "The Wedding at Cana." It states, "This the first of his signs, Jesus did at Cana in Galilee, and manifested his glory." He manifested the personal union.

The world mostly sees it as absurd that God in the flesh would manifest His identity in a miracle at a rather insignificant wedding in an insignificant town called Cana, in an insignificant area known as Galilee. Doesn't "common sense" dictate that God would choose the magnificent city of Rome in the presence of "magnificently" notable people? Shouldn't God be impressed with worldly impressive people? Well, God says, "I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and the discernment of the discerning I will thwart." (I Cor. 1:19; Is.29:14) So much for this world's thinking and ways. This Sunday we're fulfilling . . .

OUR INVITATION TO THE WEDDING

I. For Our Understanding.

"On the third day (the third day after Jesus called His first disciples) there was a wedding at Cana in Galilee, and the mother of Jesus was there." (v.1) Mary was more than likely a close friend of or related to someone in one of the immediate families. Perhaps, she was also there to serve. Consequently, we're told, "Jesus was also invited to the wedding with his disciples." (v.2) And, then, the question: Why did Jesus choose a wedding to manifest reveal His glory? Well, this is for our benefit.

We're to understand that this wedding becomes a picture of the church's relationship with Christ. The church is the bride. Christ is the groom. Recall how Jesus began "The Parable of the Wedding Feast": "The kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who gave a wedding feast for his son..." (Mt. 22:2) Recall the words the Apostle John heard and wrote down regarding this world's end: "...for the marriage of the Lamb has come, and his Bride (the church) has made herself ready..." (Rev. 19:7b)

Therefore, marriage is what God gives to this earth that pictures and is to remind us of the union between the Lord Jesus and His people. This can only be grasped by those who know that Christ is God in the flesh whose bloody death at Calvary earned our forgiveness of sin and eternal life. Thus, Scriptures teach: "Wives, submit to your own husbands, as to the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife even as Christ is the head of the church, his body, and is himself its Savior." (Eph.5:22-23)

With that in front of us, listen to these words for husbands, and "would be" husbands: "Husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her, that he might sanctify her..." (Eph. 5:25) A husband, if he is a Christian husband, will cherish, care for and protect his wife to the point of giving his life for her. A husband will submit to Christ with this understanding. This is the only way a wife can truly submit to her husband. Submission is intended for both if the marriage is, as we say, going to work. God's Word then says:

In the same way husbands should love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself... Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and hold fast to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh. This mystery is profound, and I am saying that it refers to Christ and the church. However, let each of you love his wife as himself, and let each wife see that she respect her husband. (Eph.5:28,31-33)

We have watched as the value of marriage has been degraded and become almost meaningless. We've watched parenting become almost meaningless. For God's people in Christ, marriage is a sacred union as Scripture clearly state: "...it refers to Christ and the church." Again, it points to the fact that Jesus, the heavenly Groom, will return to take his Bride (the Church) to the Great Wedding Feast!

II. To Acknowledge God's Timing.

Next, our invitation impresses upon us God's timing:

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." (vv.3-5)

Mary's statement, "They have no wine", is a request for Jesus to do something and do it quickly. She knew who Jesus was. Before Jesus' birth the angel Gabriel told Mary, "...behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son...and (he) will be called the Son of the Most High...he will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end." (Lk. 1:31-33) The Man that stood before her was from her womb. But He is also her God! Mary was hoping for a miracle.

Jesus' answer, "Woman, what does this have to do with me?" was not said in disrespect. Commentator Gary Baumler's stated:

He was really asking, 'What common interest do we have in my activity here?' Mary wanted to fulfill an immediate need...and she spoke as his mother. Jesus needed to reveal himself as the Messiah to strengthen the faith of his disciples (and I would add Mary's faith, as well), and he spoke as her Savior. Their purposes were essentially different, although his would satisfy hers. Their time table differed too, by a little. (Gary P. Baumler, *John*, Peoples Bible Commentary, CPH, St. Louis, 1997, p.39)

Sometimes we have real issues with God's timing for our lives, don't we? We do ourselves a favor to remember Job's words, "Man who is born of woman is few days and full of trouble...his days are determined, and the number of his months is with you, and you have appointed limits that he cannot pass..." (Job. 14:1,5) And I would guess most of us are familiar with the words from Psalm 139: "...in your book were written, every one of them, the days that were formed for me, when as yet there was none of them." (Ps. 139:16) And we must take to heart this Word of the Lord: "And we know that for those who love God all things (no matter how awful they seem to us) work together for good, for those called according to his purpose." (Rm. 8:28) God's timing always considers our eternal best interest.

III. To Witness His Glory.

And finally, our invitation to the wedding is tied to these words of our text: "This, the first of his signs, Jesus did at Cana in Galilee, and manifested his glory. And his disciples believed in him (v.12)." This, "the first of His signs" was turning the water of six stone jars into wine. But the foremost intent of His miracles was to reveal who He is and His work; God in the flesh who loved and loves us to eternal life!

Recall the account of the healing of the paralytic who was lowered through the roof. We're told, "And when Jesus saw their faith, he said to the paralytic, 'Son your sins are forgiven.'" (Mk. 2:5) He did not first physically heal him. He gave the man the greatest healing any human could receive, the forgiveness of sins which opened the door to eternal life! But always remember what happened next:

Now some of the scribes were sitting there, questioning in their hearts, "Why does this man speak like that? He is blaspheming! Who can forgive sins but God alone?" And immediately Jesus...said to them, "Why do you question these things in your hearts? Which is easier, to say to the paralytic, 'Your sins are forgiven,' or to say, 'Rise, take up your bed and walk?' (Mk. 2:6-9)

We know the answer: neither is easier. Both are acts of God. The miracle testified to who Jesus is: again, God in the flesh who has authority to forgive and heal. Jesus said to the paralytic, "But that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins I say to you, pick up your bed, and go home." (Mk. 2:10)

The miracles are never a guarantee that God will remove the sufferings and afflictions of this life. Again, they direct us to the fact that Jesus is God who can and will forgive sins and grant eternal life to those who trust in Him. They put a massive exclamation mark at the end of Jesus' words, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me." (Jn. 14:6) And these words: "Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only Son of God." (Jn. 3:18)

And I hope you noted this, what the master of the feast said after tasting the water turned to wine: "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." (v.10)

It's been said many times: If we had the best of everything of this world - whatever we wanted - we would have nothing more than a grave and the unending wrath of God. You and I have been filled with the most incomprehensible love of God in Christ? We will comprehend it fully in eternity!

Thank the Lord for giving us **Our Invitation To The Wedding!**

Amen.

Pastor Bill Abbott

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- II. To Acknowledge God’s Timing.
- III. To Witness His Glory.

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