

January 19, 2025

St. John 2:1-11:

We're Invited

- I. Because This Wedding Involves Us
- II. The Time Is Set
- III. The Point

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St, John 2:1-11

Dear Friends in Christ,

If we know Scripture then we know that the most important part of God's creation culminated in the creation of Man and then Woman as reported in Genesis. We know that the marriage of one man and one woman was clearly established in these words: "Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and they shall become one flesh (Gn.2:24)." In his Large Catechism Luther wrote:

"Significantly he established it as the first of all institutions, and he created man and woman differently (as is evident) not for lewdness but to be true to each other, be fruitful, beget children, and support and bring them up to the glory of God.

God has therefore most richly blessed this estate above all others... (Tappert. The Book of Concord, Luther's Large Catechism, p.393.207,208)."

After the fall, this relationship would become the movement of humans to that moment when God would enter this world in the person of Jesus. And get this, the first miracle of Jesus took place at what some might see as an ordinary wedding at an insignificant place. And guess what?

WE'RE INVITED

I. Because This Wedding Involves Us

"On the third day there was a wedding at Cana in Galilee, and the mother of Jesus was there. Jesus was also invited to the wedding with his disciples (v.1-2)." And we're invited because this is about the church - all people in Christ! It's about what the Holy Spirit had Paul write:

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...

Husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved the church (which is the point missed by most!) and gave himself up for her, that he might sanctify her... 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 one of you love his wife as himself, and let the wife see that she respects her husband (verses from Eph 5:22-33).

You see, this is about us; the church. We live in a world and time when the value of marriage has degenerated into...whatever! We live in a time where *submitting* is not acceptable. But in the Christian marriage, the husband must first submit himself to the Lord and be willing, if necessary, to sacrifice himself for his wife, to protect and save her from trouble and danger, as Christ did for us. It's the only way a wife can submit to her husband.

It would be good to recall Jesus' 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)." The great heavenly wedding feast will commence after the Last Day. It begins with what Jesus said: "And he will send out his angels with a loud trumpet call, and they will gather his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other (Mt.24:31)." And then follows this from the Apostle John regarding this world's end: "...blessed are those who are invited to the marriage supper of the Lamb (Rev.19:9)." The Lamb is Christ who is also the groom, the bride is His church - His people - us. As Paul wrote, "For the husband is the head of the wife as Christ is the head of the church...(Eph.2:22)."

It's amazing! For those in Christ, marriage is a reminder of our Lord and His relationship to the church; His people, His Bride. All who know Christ as Lord and Savior, married and single form His Bride and, therefore will attend the eternal wedding feast. And look at what we're told in our text...

II. The Time Is Set

"When the wine ran out, the mother of Jesus said to him, 'They have no more 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).'"

We call it "timing"; the right time for something. What God said in the Proverbs, He says to us: "The heart of man plans his way, but the Lord establishes his steps (Prov.16:9)." What He said in the Book of Ecclesiastes has not and will not change: "For everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven...(Eccl.3:1)." What Jesus said to the first Disciples He says to us, "It is not for you to know times or seasons that the Father has fixed by his own authority (Acts 1:7)."

Yes, Mary is Jesus' mother, but Jesus is her God and Savior. Mary had to understand this as we do when we can't figure out why God won't do something, or why He allows something to happen, or...whatever. Maybe some ask, "Why didn't Jesus enter this world centuries earlier to die for the sin of the world and deliver His people from their troubles and captivities? The only answer He gives is this: "But when the fullness of time had come, God sent forth his son, born of woman, born under the law, so that we might receive adoption as sons. (Gal.4:4)." And what was the fulness of time? The only answer: The time God chose!

It always comes back to the same answers: "The secret things belong to the Lord our God...(Dt.29:29)," and with that, "Oh, the depth of the riches and wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments and how inscrutable his ways! (Rm.11:33)."

III. The Point

And all this brings us to this point: "This, the first of his signs, Jesus did at Cana in Galilee, and manifested his glory. And his disciples believed him (v.12)." This was the very intent of His miracles; to reveal who He is and His work; to heal our sin paralyzed souls, and grant us eternal life. He revealed His glory to us in the miracle of our faith. And "glory" has been defined as "the revelation of God's being, nature, and presence to mankind...". (The New Bible Dictionary, Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1962, p. 472.)

That's exactly what we are to see in this miracle at the wedding in Cana - the revelation of God that brings with it love and eternal life. Well, recall the healing of the Paralytic who was lowered through the roof. We're told, "And when Jesus saw their faith" (as it was revealed in those who supported the paralytic, as well as the paralytic) Jesus said to the paralytic, "'Son your sins are forgiven (Mk.2:5).'" At that moment Jesus gave him the greatest miracle: the forgiveness of all sin and with it eternal life. He revealed His glory.

Recall the reaction of the scribes: "(They) were sitting there, questioning in their hearts, 'Why does he speak like that? He is blaspheming! Who can forgive sins but God alone (Mk.2:5).'" And that's the whole point! Only God can forgive. Jesus said "...that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins" - he said to the paralytic - 'I say to you, rise, pick up your bed, and go home.' And he rose and immediately picked up his bed and went out before them all...(Mk.2:10-11a)."

That's who was standing before the paralytic, his friends, and the self-righteous Scribes: God in the flesh! Listen to what Jesus said to Philip, one of His first disciples, after Philip said to him: "'Lord, show us the Father, and it is enough for us.'" Jesus said,

“Do you not believe that I am in the Father and the Father is in me? The words that I say to you I do not speak on my own authority, but the Father who dwells in me does his works. Believe me that I am in the Father and the Father in me, or else believe on account of the works themselves (Jn. 14:10-11).

And look, Jesus has left us with both His Word and Works. Maybe some think it would be a great blessing to witness the miracles of Christ. Well, let's look at it this way: Without Christ in our lives we would die and enter eternal hell. But Scriptures remind us, "...God being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us, even when we were dead (dead!) in our trespasses made us alive together in Christ - by grace (His undeserved love) you have been saved (Eph.2:4-5)." Do we believe that? Do we? If so, then every time we look into a mirror we're looking at someone who has been raised from the dead! Is there a greater miracle? The miracle of God's love and forgiveness we have received in Christ is solidified in our hearts and minds every time we study God's Word, recall our Baptisms, and receive His Supper; Word and Works!

P.E. Kretzmann wrote: "Knowing that Jesus did so many wonders in the days of His earthly sojourn, we are sure that He is able to perform also that miracle of bringing us to faith and keeping us in the faith to the end..." (P.E. Kretzmann, Popular Commentary of the Bible, the New Testament, Vol.I., pp.27-28). He is able and will be to the end.

Aren't we thankful and happy that we were invited to the wedding? Let's invite others . . . while there is still time.

Amen.

Pastor Bill Abbott