

St. John 2:1-11

Dear Friends in Christ,

The text for this day begins with “On the third day there was a wedding at Cana in Galilee...” (vs. 1) It ends with, “This, the first of his signs, Jesus did at Cana in Galilee, and manifested his glory. And his disciples believed in him.” (vs. 11)

The first miracle of God in the flesh is manifested at a wedding in a place called “Cana in Galilee.” As has been said so many times, everything about Scripture challenges the way humans think. You would expect something so spectacular to be manifested in Rome. But, Cana, in Galilee?

The words are rejected by those who want Jesus out of the picture. They’re too much for the self-righteous. 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) God does not accommodate human thinking. What He does, however, is lift up those with spiritual eyes. This Sunday . . .

LESSONS FROM A WEDDING

I. It’s About The Church.

Again: “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.” (vss. 1-2) Evidently, it was important enough to invite Mary, as well as Jesus and the disciples. Perhaps, family or close friends. But the question remains, “Why did Jesus choose this event to manifest His glory?” And the answer: Because it’s about the church.

First, the Biblical picture of the church is that of a Bride - Jesus being the Groom. Recall these words from Jesus’ Parable of the Wedding Feast: “The kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who gave a wedding feast for his son...” (Matt. 22:2) And this that the Apostle John heard regarding this world’s end as recorded in the Book of Revelation: “...for the marriage of the Lamb (Jesus) has come, and his Bride (the church) has made herself ready...” (Rev. 19:7b) And this from Revelation: “Blessed are those who are invited to the marriage supper of the Lamb.” (Rev. 19:9)

Second, marriage is an institution God gives to humans that pictures and reminds us of the union between the Lord and His people. Only the Christian can grasp this wonder. Paul writes:

“Wives, submit to your 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 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 of you love his wife as himself, and let the wife see that she respects her husband.” (portions of Eph. 5:22-33)

We live in a world and time when the value of marriage has degenerated into a do what you want to do atmosphere. For the child of God it becomes a constant reminder of the relationship of husband and wife to one another and their Lord and His relationship to the church. And then, as it turns out . . .

II. It's About Timing.

This wedding is a an event that teaches us about the Lord'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." (vss. 3-5)

It's old ground, but must be walked by us consistently. Mary's statement, "They have no more wine" is a request for Jesus to do something and to do it quickly (and I say that with no disrespect for Mary). But Mary was to learn something - something we must learn and re-learn regularly. We don't tell Jesus what to do, much less when to do it. The Man that stood before Mary was born in the flesh from her womb. And He was her God!

If we believe that Jesus has the hairs of our heads numbered (as Scriptures teach) - if we believe that God has a specific plan for each person (as Scriptures teach) - if we believe that God works all things to the good (as Scriptures teach) - then we have no choice but to believe that His timing is the best for our lives.

Listen to this from Psalm 102 - David declares: "You will arise and have pity on Zion (that is, the church for all times), **it is the time** to favor her; **the appointed time** has come." (vs. 12) From Exodus, these words of the Lord to Pharaoh as presented to him through Moses: "For if you refuse to let them (His people) go and still hold them, behold the hand of the Lord will fall with a very severe plague upon your livestock..." And **the Lord set a time**, saying, 'Tomorrow the Lord will do this thing in the land.'" (Ex. 9:1-5) And we could never forget the words of Paul, "But when **the fullness of time** had come, God sent forth his son, born of woman, born under the law, to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as sons." (Gal. 4:4,5)

And the time we consider from our text puts in front of us the greatest lesson . . .

III. It's About His Glory.

"This, the first of his signs, Jesus did at Cana in Galilee, and manifested his glory. And his disciples believed in him." (vs. 12) This was the very intent of His miracles; to reveal Who He was and is and His work.

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.'" (Mark 2:5) He did not first heal him. He gave the man the greatest gift any human could receive - the greatest healing - the forgiveness of sin. But recall 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, perceiving in his spirit that they thus questioned within themselves, 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?"' (Mark 2:6-9)

And we know the answer: neither is easier. Both are purely acts of God. The miracle testified to Who Jesus is: God the Son who has authority to forgive and heal. Jesus said:

But 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..." (Mark. 2:10-11a)

The miracles point to the authority and glory of God in the God/Man Jesus Christ! And that is so crucial to us because everything this morning underscores and puts 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)

Again, "(He) manifested his glory." And "glory" has been described this way:

"'Glory' generally represents...the root idea of 'heaviness' and so of 'weight' or 'worthiness'. It is used of men to describe their wealth, splendour, or reputation..."

"The most important concept is that of the glory (of the Lord). This denotes the revelation of God's being, nature, and presence to mankind..." (The New Bible Dictionary, Wm. B. Eerdmann Publishing Co., Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1962, p. 472)

This is what the Disciples saw. This brought the Disciples into a confrontation of Who Jesus was and is. It brings us into the same confrontation and comfort. P. E. Kretzmann writes:

"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., CPH, St. Louis, Mo., pp. 27-28)

Lessons from a wedding. As is always the case from Scripture: Every lesson is for our eternal benefit and well-being. May the Holy Spirit give us strength to pass that on to others.

Amen.

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II. It's About Timing.

III. It's About His Glory.

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