

*The Second Sunday After the Epiphany*  
January 24, 2010  
Amazing Grace Lutheran Church - Pastor Chip Wilke

John 2:1-11

*On the third day a wedding took place at Cana in Galilee. Jesus' mother was there, and Jesus and his disciples had also been invited to the wedding. When the wine was gone, Jesus' mother said to him, "They have no more wine." "Dear woman, why do you involve me?" Jesus replied. "My time has not yet come." His mother said to the servants, "Do whatever he tells you." Nearby stood six stone water jars, the kind used by the Jews for ceremonial washing, each holding from twenty to thirty gallons. Jesus said to the servants, "Fill the jars with water"; so they filled them to the brim. Then he told them, "Now draw some out and take it to the master of the banquet." They did so, and the master of the banquet tasted the water that had been turned into wine. He did not realize where it had come from, though the servants who had drawn the water knew. Then he called the bridegroom aside and said, "Everyone brings out the choice wine first and then the cheaper wine after the guests have had too much to drink; but you have saved the best till now." This, the first of his miraculous signs, Jesus performed at Cana in Galilee. He thus revealed his glory, and his disciples put their faith in him. (NIV)*

Do you believe in miracles? What if I told you that I asked those who set up communion this morning not to worry about getting the wine because I will take this water and turn it into wine? What if I told you that it will be the best wine you have ever tasted? Would you believe something like that could actually happen?

There are some people that absolutely refuse to believe in miracles. Unless something can be explained by modern science or natural means they will deny it. There are some people, in fact Thomas Jefferson was one, who take out all the miracles in the Bible. Anything that could not be explained he just removed.

How sad it would be if we did that because then we would not be able to enjoy this account of what happens at a wedding in a little obscure town called Cana. For here we have a miracle. We have a miracle, not by me because the Lord has never given me the power to do something like turn water into wine, but we have a miracle done by One for whom nothing is impossible. Of course we believe in miracles, because as followers of Jesus we see miracles do happen. Today, we witness once again the truth that: **Jesus is a true miracle worker.**

At Jesus' baptism, which we celebrated last week, we entered into the beginning of Christ's public ministry. John gives us a careful listing of the day by day activities in this first week of Jesus' public ministry. Jesus had been busy calling disciples to follow Him. There are five disciples that we know of for sure at this time: Peter, Andrew, John, Philip & Nathanael. Now we are told: "*On the third day a wedding took place at Cana in Galilee. Jesus' mother was there, and Jesus and his disciples had also been invited to the wedding.*" Cana was a village less than 10 miles from Nazareth, Jesus' childhood home. Here we have the stage set for Jesus the true miracle worker to do something

great. Here at a wedding in a little town there is a special guest. We are just as honored when Jesus makes His gracious presence at our weddings.

But during this wedding reception a problem arises. There is a shortage of wine. A Jewish wedding celebration in Biblical times customarily lasted up to seven days at the groom's house and wine was a major beverage that was served with all the meals. For the bride and groom to run out of wine would be embarrassing, very embarrassing. So Mary, Jesus' mother, being close enough with the family to be concerned about the serving, comes to Jesus and says: "***They have no more wine.***"

In this way I pray we imitate Mary because she takes this problem right to Jesus. We can do the same with our every problem. Mary took this problem to Jesus confidently knowing Jesus could help. We certainly don't criticize her for this. But there is something for which her Son does gently rebuke her. It is not in the request, but how Mary brings this request to Jesus. Mary addresses Jesus as though He is still a young lad who for years followed her commands and ran her errands. But that former relationship between mother and son is at an end. This is no longer Nazareth; this is Cana and Jesus' public ministry has begun.

Jesus answers His mother: "***Dear woman, why do you involve me?***" Literally, He then says: "*What business of mine concerns you too?*" "*What common interest is there in this between you and me?*" He concludes: "***My time has not yet come.***" There is no harshness or disrespect in Jesus' words toward His mother, but there is distance. In matters pertaining to His calling as the Messiah, Mary is not His mother. She is another sinner who needs a Savior. Mary speaks as His mother, wanting to fill an immediate need. Jesus speaks as her Savior, who has a greater plan to reveal Himself as the Christ.

While we are not tempted to approach Jesus and give Him orders as if He were our child, we too need to hear these firm words of Jesus anytime we try to interfere with the office of Christ. Are we ever dissatisfied with the way Christ rules the world? Do we ever get caught up in wanting our Savior to fill our immediate needs instead of seeing the big picture? Do we ever think we actually have a right to tell Jesus what He should do? Jesus is not just some personal handy-man, problem-solver, or personal aide. He is not just our personal miracle worker. He is the Messiah. He is the One anointed to do God's will. He is the obedient Son God sent to live under the law in our place. He is the Lamb of God come to offer Himself as a perfect sacrifice for us on the cross. He is our Savior sent for one very important reason - to save us from our sins. Jesus is the Christ who cares first and foremost about leading souls to eternal life with Him. While we may think we know what is best, Jesus always wants and knows what is best for us. So the same is true when it comes to Jesus' answer to our earthly problems, Jesus' answer may be yes, it may be no, or it may be as He answered Mary: "***My time has not yet come.***"

Yet even in this answer that basically says "*not yet*" Mary shows her faith in this Holy One that was born to her by telling the servants near by to "***Do whatever he tells you.***" What wise words those are! For now Jesus was about to reveal something special. What Jesus has in mind will also fill the immediate need of His mother and friends. Noticing six stone water jars able to hold from twenty to thirty gallons, Jesus says to the servants: "***Fill the jars with water.***" After they filled them to the brim, Jesus tells them: "***Now draw some out and take it to the master of the banquet.***" "***They did so, and the master of the banquet tasted the water that had been turned into wine.***" Jesus, the true miracle worker, takes care of the problem. There is no longer a shortage of wine. Not

only is there plenty of wine but the master of the banquet calls the bridegroom aside and says: ***“Everyone brings out the choice wine first and then the cheaper wine...but you have saved the best till now.”*** What a wonderful and bountiful gift from the Savior to this bride and groom!

Jesus does a miracle. This is clear. Water does not just change into wine on it's own. We are told ***“this, the first of his miraculous signs, Jesus performed at Cana in Galilee.”*** So what is the point of all this? Why does Jesus chose this miracle in this place? What does this possibly mean for you and me who don't even get to taste how good that wine actually was that Jesus made? Now John tells us what Jesus was doing. Now we get to see His intentions. ***“He thus revealed his glory, and the disciples put their faith in him.”*** Jesus gives His disciples, He gives us, just a glimpse of who He really is. This, disguised in human flesh and blood, is God. This is the Lord of all. This man is also true God. Jesus is worthy of our faith. Those who put their trust in Jesus will never be put to shame.

Do we believe in miracles? Yes, we do. As followers of Jesus we see one after another. But more important than believing in miracles is to believe in the true miracle worker - Jesus Christ. For this miracle in Cana was just the beginning as Jesus told Nathanael just three days earlier, ***“You will see greater things than that.”*** How sad it would be to take out of the Bible all the things we can't explain! In Thomas Jefferson's Bible the Gospel's end with the death of Jesus on the cross and this Gospel is then ended by these words ***“since the tomb was nearby, they laid Jesus there.”*** Aren't we glad we believe in miracles? We know that line is far from the end of the story. Our Jesus conquered death. Miracle of all miracles - Jesus lives and we also will live. Miracle of all miracles - Jesus lives and our sins are all paid. Miracle of all miracles Jesus lives and now heaven is our home.

And if Jesus took care of our greatest problems for us, won't He also care about our little ones? Go to Jesus with your every care. He loves us and is worthy of our faith. We have seen His glory. Jesus is a true miracle worker. Miracles do happen. The fact that we are His and He is ours is all the proof we need. Now may we gladly follow the wise advice of Mary when it comes to the Words of our Savior and ***“do whatever he tells (us).”*** Amen.

