

First Baptist Church Smiths Falls

January 21, 2018

Scripture Reading: John 2:1-12 New International Version (NIV)
On the third day a wedding took place at Cana in Galilee. Jesus' mother was there, 2 and Jesus and his disciples had also been invited to the wedding. 3 When the wine was gone, Jesus' mother said to him, "They have no more wine." 4 "Woman, why do you involve me?" Jesus replied. "My hour has not yet come." 5 His mother said to the servants, "Do whatever he tells you." 6 Nearby stood six stone water jars, the kind used by the Jews for ceremonial washing, each holding from twenty to thirty gallons. 7 Jesus said to the servants, "Fill the jars with water"; so they filled them to the brim. 8 Then he told them, "Now draw some out and take it to the master of the banquet." They did so, 9 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 10 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." 11 What Jesus did here in Cana of Galilee was the first of the signs through which he revealed his glory; and his disciples believed in him.

Prayer of Illumination: LORD'S PRAYER: "Our Father"

Our Father, Which Art in Heaven, Hallowed be thy name. Thy Kingdom Come. Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day, our daily bread, and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory. Forever and ever. AMEN.

Message: "Before His Time"

Introduction:

- Next time you need a short joke, try this one, "What did the grape say when the elephant stepped on it? It did not say anything, just gave a little wine."
- What miracle Jesus do with water? He turned it into wine.

- Last week we talked about Jesus at the beginning of His ministry as He was baptized. He then was tempted in the desert before He started gathering His disciples.
- And now, in John chapter 2, He returns toward His home in Galilee, and He attends a wedding thrown into crisis. They were out of wine. Turning to Jesus, a miracle is performed.
- In performing this miracle at the beginning of His ministry, Jesus did an action which (1) showed creation, (2) was an action done for the immediate and the present, and (3) also demonstrated the future.

Part (1) Creation

- Jesus was present at the creation of the world. We are told in John 1:10 and in Ephesians 2:10 and Ephesians 3:9 and Colossians 1:16 says that all creation was done through Christ. Out of a void, a nothingness, God was The Creator. Through Jesus, God began the act of creation. Reading the 1st and 2nd chapters of the Book of Genesis, one can see that God had a definite pattern in creation: starting with light, God then created the heavens and the earth, then the water & sky, dry land & vegetation, stars, water creatures & birds, animals and finally human beings. Ana all these things started with nothing but God. Creation reflects the awesome ability of God to make something out of nothing.

Science may be able to trace God's pattern in creation, and may attempt to explain creation using other words and theories, but they can never explain one thing: from where all the material for their theories came.

We know that God created it all: from nothingness to the wonder of creation.

- In this story, Jesus is about to do a similar miracle, one which reflects the creation of the world, but on a smaller scale. Jesus tells the people to fill the jars with water, and these jars are found to be with wine. Out of the emptiness of the jars, Jesus created the miracle which the people needed.
- Sometimes when we look at miracles, we tend to forget that the main element in them is God. We think that God miracles have to grandiose, but instead God performs miracles all the time.
- Many people ask me if I believe that miracles still happen. I have to respond with a resounding "YES!" Using people, using elements like water, using physical things like cars or buildings, using food, or gasoline, using anything in creation, or using nothing at all, miracles happen everyday, every moment, with every breath. Many miracles today are not seen as miracles, but explained through other means, like science, or are ignored because we are used to them occurring so often.

Many miracles are not seen as miracles because we simply refuse to acknowledge God for being God. And think about this: in order for there to be most miracle, there usually has to be a crisis of some sort.

The bigger the miracle, the bigger the crisis. The bigger the crisis, the greater the miracle will be. We live in a society which seems to very quickly scoff at God at every turn, and which refuses to acknowledge God's greatness and authority, but as soon as something goes wrong, BAM! boy is God to be blamed. "How could God do this to ME!"

"How can you claim that there is a loving God in the face of this calamity?" "Where is God now?" "This God of mercy and love, where was He as all this was happening?" This anger stops many people from seeing the miracles of life. The blaming, and accusing, the finger-pointing and the fist turned to heaven, stops people from seeing God working His miracles. And let's be honest: how many of us have prayed for a miracle, and yet when it has happened, we are too busy to stop and acknowledge that God has rescued us.

- Ever thought about miracles at a most basic level? Let me give you a very common example: Right now your heart is pumping at a rate anywhere from 65-85 beats per minute, more than a beat per second. Each of those beats involves an electrical message triggering three

centres in the heart. Within that second, your two valves open and close rapidly to allow the blood to go one way through your body, and one way only. The two sections of your heart pumps out enough blood to fill the gasoline tank of your car five to twelve times every day, depending on whether you drive a Cadillac or a golf cart. And that is just the action of your heart. At the same time, your body, while you are sitting here, is digesting your breakfast, and starting to convert sugars and fat to energy. You are producing enzymes from your stomach, liver, pancreas; you are producing hormones which regulate your temperature, your energy level, your blood sugar level, your drives and strength, your mood, and your level of consciousness. As you sit here, your body is regulating blood flow through arteries, arterioles, capillaries, venules, and veins - the entire system, if put end to end, would easily stretch to Florida. While you are sitting here, daydreaming about what your Pastor is saying, millions of synaptic reactions are occurring in your mind and body to create thought, to tell your muscles to keep you upright, to tell you when to shift positions. As you sit here, millions of cells are being created to restore your muscles, your blood, the fluid in your eyes, your skin is falling off the outside of your body as new skin cells are being regenerated. As you sit here, on these hard wooden seats,

your body is working its hardest to restore circulation to your legs, and to your (bottom) as you squish the cells from sitting on them.

- And that is only part of the miracle of you today. Look at your hand sometime, and you will realize the greatness of God's creation.
- I believe in miracles, but I also am willing to look for them. Creation was a miracle. Being diagnosed as having an illness, recovering from a cold, breathing, living up to God's potential for your life, all these are miracles.

(2) Jesus and the Present

- Not only did the miracle at Cana reflect the past, and the story of creation, but the miracle also reflected the here and now.
- Weddings were a very big event in the everyday lives of the people, more so then than now. Out of the working society, a drop of hope and celebration would emerge as the people revelled around the married couple. Weddings were not a one day affair. Both parts of the wedding took an entire week, and guests came and went, and returned to celebrate over the course of the festivity.
- A wedding was a highlight. The new couple hosts guests for the many days, making sure that there are ample refreshments. To run out of anything was a crude disaster which suggested dishonour and disgrace,

something which would be a life-long embarrassment to the host.

- There was, therefore, an immediacy in the story of the wedding at Cana from John chapter 2 which we sometimes miss. To run out of wine at this time, with all the guests being present was to disgrace and dishonour the host for life.
- And Jesus is asked to cover for the inadequately prepared host, and to protect the couple from criticism. In a few minutes, without anything to drink, the party would have been over, the people would have gone home. The joy popped. Dishonour and disgrace would have been left.
- Some people retell this story indicating a drink other than wine. Remember, though, that good, clean drinking water was not always plentiful during the time of Jesus. Milk, fruit juices and other drinks could not remain good in the heat. Fermented drink, like wine, actually has the ability to kill bacteria, and when kept in the proper wineskins and stored in the right place, remained good for a long time. Wine was the choice drink, drunk because it was safe and because it was a reflection God's providence, of God being the God of the harvest.
- We all have had times when we are in the same situation: more company than we expect; times when we have bought something, and wondered if it was enough; times when we need to have something from

nothing.

- And yet this miracle is not one of life or death. Some people look at their lives and their needs, and they feel that, even though they have a big problem, that it is not enough to bring it to God in prayer. The Miracle of Cana proves that one can bring any issue to God, and God will listen.
- And thus the people were not only impressed with the quantity of wine Jesus gave them (verse 6 - 6 big vats enough for another week), but also the incredible quality - the best wine of the week (verse 10).
- Can we go through life, and learn to recognize the greatness and miraculous power of God?

(3) The Messiah and the Future

- Not only did the miracle of Cana reflect the act of creation, and was an immediate miracle for the present, but it also reflected the future, the work of the Messiah, of Jesus, and His saving power to transform.
- There are many symbols here in this story: They went to the well empty, as many people are empty who needing Jesus. They filled their jars with water, just as people can fill their souls with Jesus, and find the life-giving power of Almighty God. But then there is a life-giving change, a transformation as the water is altered., just as your life will be

transformed by God when you drink from Him.

- This story is vital for showing us the coming ministry of Jesus. This story demonstrates the love and compassion of Jesus. This story shows us the saving power of Jesus.
- We are told in verse 1 that this wedding took place on the third day. The third day is an obvious pointer to the Messiah who arose on the third day. The third day is resurrection day, as we shall celebrate on Easter Sunday morning, the day that Jesus was ultimately exalted, as He arose from the grave, The Defeater of death.
- This village wedding points to the wedding banquet which Jesus refers to later in His ministry: a final banquet at the marriage of the Bridegroom, Jesus, to His bride, the Church who are those who love Him.
- The good wine is Jesus Himself, poured into jars - not ordinary jars, but verse 6 says that they are special jars, water jugs of Jewish purification ceremonies. Notice that these jugs, ones which are ceremonially cleaned and used for pure water in the houses of God, are now empty, just as the world was empty before Jesus, just as your life is empty until you pray to ask Jesus to fill you with Him, with His love, with His joy, with His hope. Now these jugs, symbols of the old means of getting

close to God, are filled with the new wine of Jesus and His power to give life - life that is abundant right now, and life eternal.

- Notice the quantity of the wine, the abundance that Jesus produces: this suggests the great loving compassion of Jesus, that God cares for everyone, and will pour out His goodness in abundance.
- And then, there is the wine. Jesus stood up at the last supper, any months later, and told His followers that the wine would represent His blood, and would be the New Covenant, the New Testament as His blood would wash away all the sins of all people for all time.
- Finally, know this: just as Jesus changed the water into wine, so too, He can change the old person inside of you to become the new creature in Christ Jesus. You too can, and must, be transformed through the living power of Christ.

CONCLUSION:

- In the beginning of time, out of the emptiness, Jesus created new life: a creation out of nothingness. The wedding at Cana reflected Jesus performing a miracle to show Him as the Messiah, the Saviour of us all. His blood saves us, washes us, and renews our soul, giving us abundant and eternal life.
- Are you willing to be remade in Jesus the Christ? Are you looking

around you, inside you, searching to see God's miracles? Are you

willing to see the God of Creation in life?

- Jesus stood by His mother, who was expecting Him to do something to help the host of the wedding. His miracle showed His power, His glory and His dominion, and proved that Jesus truly was, and is now, and always will be, The Lord, our God, our Saviour.