

CHRISTIAN MARRIAGE OF JACOB AND MORGAN ZIEROFF

John 2:1-11

The Guest Becomes the Host

Perhaps the most daunting task involved in planning a wedding is the guest list. Mom wants you to invite your uncle's cousin's sister's brother-in-law's army buddy's nephew. Grandma insists you invite that lady she talked to in the grocery store for the first time last week, but with whom she had a lovely conversation. Soon, your guest list is bigger than your high school was. No one wants to overlook someone they should invite, but, at the same time, since money doesn't grow on trees, you can only invite so many friends and relatives. Fortunately, like the couple in Cana, you have been sure to invite the most important Guest of all today, not only to your wedding, but into your marriage. *"A cord of three strands is not quickly broken,"* Solomon writes. And Christ today becomes the third strand in your marriage.

Many Lutheran families, when they bow their heads before a meal, pray: "Come, Lord Jesus, be our guest, and let these gifts to us be blessed." Jesus, in the book of Revelation, says, *"Here I am! I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in and eat with him, and he with me."* It is good and right to talk of our Lord being a guest at our meals and in our households. And it is most beneficial to have him there, for He always comes with the greatest gift a guest can bring. After all, we pray at meals as well, *"Give thanks unto the LORD; for He is good: for His mercy endures forever."* When Jesus is there, there He is with His mercy and love.

We see Jesus' mercy and love in the compassion He showed the couple at Cana when they ran out of wine. Believe it or not, weddings were an even bigger event at Jesus' time, oftentimes lasting days or weeks. A lot of preparation was necessary. A lot of supplies had to stockpiled. And, if something went wrong, there was a lot of embarrassment. Running out of wine would have been such an embarrassment. Remember, there wasn't Pepsi and Lipton and Sunny-D. There was water and wine, and even water wasn't always even to come by. Wine was a staple.

Mary, the Mother of our Lord, knew how disastrous running out of wine would have been, how humiliating it would have been for the couple, and so she asked Jesus to do something. Jesus response seems harsh, but it was appropriate, "Woman, what does this have to do with us?" Jesus had not yet performed His first miracle, and He was just beginning His ministry now. His first miracle would be performed to move His disciples to believe in Him, not as some sort of party trick. Jesus as the Messiah, not Mary as Jesus' Mother, would decide when and where He showed His divinity.

Jesus was a guest at the wedding, but, by His miracle, He would be the host, serving up a taste of His miraculous divinity to His guests, not just to impress them, but to point them to His saving message and person. And we see it worked, because our text ends: *"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."*—a faith, mind you, that would

take them throughout Israel, to Calvary, the empty tomb, the ascension on the Mount of Olives, and, ultimately, to martyrdom.

You have invited Jesus as a guest to your wedding today, and, more importantly, into your marriage. To my great joy, I have had the privilege of telling you quite a lot about Jesus in the past year. More importantly, I have had the privilege of introducing you to Jesus through Holy Baptism, Absolution, last Monday, Holy Communion, and in the Word. As Christians, you have opened the door for your Savior to come in and feast with you. Now, remember, that the Guest, when the Guest is Jesus, quickly becomes the Host. Rejoice that this Guest will become the Host of your marriage.

“They lived happily ever after.” Those words appear in fairy tales, but not in the Bible. In many languages, however, the word happy comes from the word “blessed.” Blessed, in Christian terms, means “saved,” means “on the receiving end of God’s gifts.” You both were baptized into a struggle with the sinful flesh. You have fought that struggle, sometimes better than others, with the help of Christ. Now, as a married couple, you get to battle against two sinful natures. Fight that battle with Christ as well. When your Host is in control, the sinful nature has no seat at the table, and that is a blessing.

In our text we see water turned into wine, and we rightly marvel, but Christ has set more miraculous water and wine before you in the Gospel. Relive your Baptisms together daily, by confessing your sins when you wrong each other and God and receiving forgiveness from each other and, most importantly, from God. Remember the mercy God has shown you in those saving waters, and reflect that love and mercy in your relationship with each other. Eat with your Host. Feast on your Host, as with simple wine you receive His Blood, together with His Body, that His life might be your life, that His mercy might save you from what you deserve, that His grace might give you what you don’t deserve. A good guest, which is what you are when Christ is part of your marriage, also always listens to the Host. Listen to Christ through His Word and His undershepherds, because He has marvelous stories to tell you, stories of His love, true stories, rich with the finest comfort.

The guest list is done. Who knows who you forgot. Thank God, however, that you did not forget to invite Christ. Now let the Guest become the Host. Receive His gifts with thanks, and cherish His gracious guidance. Christ chose a wedding to perform His first miracle, not to impress, but to point to His message and person so that those present might come to faith. By God’s grace, you do believe. Christ has turned your wedding into an occasion to rejoice by His very presence. Let Him do the same for your marriage. Amen.