

Written Copy: John 2:3-5 "What Is Jesus Concern?"

2nd Sunday @ the Epiphany

Sunday, January 16th, 2022

Text: John 2:3-5

³ When the wine ran out, the mother of Jesus said to him, "They have no wine." ⁴ And Jesus said to her, "Woman, what does this have to do with me? My hour has not yet come." ⁵ His mother said to the servants, "Do whatever he tells you."

Exegetical Statement

John tells us this event takes place 3 days after Jesus' baptism, where He was clearly proclaimed to be the Beloved Son of the Heavenly Father upon whom the Spirit had descended to show where His power and authority come from. Jesus is invited to this wedding because of Mary's connection with the bride and groom. She seems to have a "behind the scenes" role as she knows about the shortage of wine before the other guests do. The disciples are invited because of their relationship with Jesus. Mary goes to Jesus with a problem that could cut short what was to be a festive occasion. She knew that Jesus could somehow help but doesn't tell Him how to solve this problem. Jesus responds addressing her cordially but not relationally as His mother. How He reacts will not be according to this relationship. He will do a miraculous sign, but now is not yet the time for an open public display. He shows the blessing of the LORD upon marriage by solving this problem and doing so not in a stop-gap measure way, but by creating the best quality wine. He does this miraculous sign, not for all present, but for His disciples and the servants showing that He has the power and glory that only belongs to God Himself. He manifests Himself to be the one John the Baptist declared Him to be: The Lamb of God who has come to take away the sins of the world. He invites them to pay attention and observe how He will go about this, and to believe in Him

Focus Statement:

Jesus came to do the same work in my life that He was about at the wedding in Cana. He came to reveal Himself as the Beloved Son of the Heavenly Father who has come to fulfill the role given Him by the Father: to be the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world. In this miracle He demonstrates God's blessing and celebration of the institution of marriage. While doing so He reveals to those whom He has chosen that He is the Savior, and they believe.

Function Statement:

Why it's important to know:

With the Gospel emphasis on salvation for eternal life to come we can wonder just how much does God care about what happens in my life now? Does He respond reluctantly to my requests for help as He seemed to do with Mary?

What the hearer should do as a result:

Realize that Jesus is the powerful and Almighty God whose word spoken into our lives can solve our temporally issues, but more importantly creates and sustains faith unto life everlasting.

Subject Sentence: God's revelation for our temporal and eternal benefit

Introduction: Another Troubling Passage

Last Sunday we looked at a troubling aspect of our Gospel Lesson, where John the Baptist, in comparing himself and His baptism to the One to come, who is Jesus, and His superior baptism, described Jesus as baptizing with the Holy Spirit and fire. We concluded that just as occurred in Jesus' baptism in the Jordan, our baptism includes the descending of the Holy Spirit upon us. And His work in our lives by the power of Christ's death and resurrection works upon us like a cleansing fire, constantly removing the sin from our hearts. All this so that on the Last Day we will not suffer the fire of eternal damnation. Two Sunday's ago we had Jesus apparent disobedience in staying behind at the temple unbeknownst to Mary and Joseph who had headed out for home. Here we learned that Jesus stayed in obedience to a greater call, to be in His Heavenly Father's house doing His Heavenly Father's work

This week we have another troubling verse: **John 2:4 And Jesus said to her, "Woman, what does this have to do with me? My hour has not yet come."** In our ears Jesus response to Mary's statement in v3 "They have no wine" sounds cold and slightly uncaring. We know that this Mary is Jesus' mother, yet He does not address here by that relational title. Why is that? And His **"What does this have to do with me?"** sounds a lot like a response you or I might give when someone tries to lay a guilt trip on us in order to force us to do what we don't want to do. In other words, we hear Jesus responding like this: ***"Why are you bothering me with this woman? This is not my problem! Go bother someone else."*** And this bothers us because this is not how we imagine Jesus would ever respond, especially to His mother.

Examining the Context of Who He is and What He Came to Be

Part of the problem is we have the words, but not the inflection or facial expressions Jesus used when He said this to His mother. Coming out of our mouths this might possibly be scornful or uncaring. But to assume that this was Jesus' response is to look at Him through the eyes of the world as a man and not who He is proclaimed to be in Scripture: the sinless Son of God. So, Jesus' response is not one of meanness. But as God the Son incarnate who came to do the will and fulfill the plan of the Heavenly Father, He cannot be guilted into doing what is not part of the Father's plan and will.

And what of His addressing His mother as “Woman”? Coming out of my mouth, if I had ever responded to a request of my mom by calling her “Woman”, I would’ve received a slap across the face. But in the context of this story there is an explanation as to why Jesus didn’t call her “Mother”. Jesus in His human nature is the son of Mary. As He was growing up, He was obedient to her according to this God given relationship. But He is not just the son of Mary. From His conception on He has been, is, and will always be the Son of God, whose father is the Heavenly Father. And as we discovered two weeks ago, He must be about the business of His Heavenly Father, even if that stands against the wishes of His earthly Mother. When it comes to Jesus’ ministry of revealing Himself as the Savior of the world His mother holds no inside position. Christ did come to reveal Himself to her, but not to her alone. He came to reveal Himself to all men and women according to the will and plan of the Father.

And that brings us to “**What does this have to do with me?**” This is a hard verse to translate since a word for word translation is insufficient. The word for word translation is “**What to me and to you?**” Jesus is using a colloquial phrase where the meaning goes beyond the literal translation. It would be the same thing as if you were standing in front of Mary and said, “**Tell Jesus He needs to step up to the plate!**” Now, you would not be saying that Jesus needs to approach a dinner plate, or even grab a bat and prepare to hit the first pitch coming to Him. You would be saying in a way that we today understand to mean that Jesus needs to get busy and help out the situation. The way we can best understand what Jesus is saying in our language today is best translated as “**Is my concern also that of yours?**”

Well, is it? Should His concern be the same as Mary’s? Mary seems to be there as someone who has a special relationship to the bride or groom, or both. She is operating behind the scenes. She knows of the problem of insufficient wine before the other guests, or the master of the feast seems to know. She is in a position to speak to the servants so that they listen to her. She is concerned that this joyous celebration will turn sour when all find out that the wine has run out because the groom’s family did not prepare adequately enough, and that the celebration will end on a sour, embarrassing note. But should that be the main concern of Jesus?

Jesus points to the greater concern in His response to her, **“My hour has not yet come.”** What is **the hour** that He is referring to? The hour that He reveals who He really is. And according to the Father’s will and plan this revelation will be a gradual and well-designed one. **John 2:11 This, the first of his signs, Jesus did at Cana in Galilee, and manifested his glory. And his disciples believed in him.** This miraculous sign that He did end up doing has the main purpose of revealing of who He is to His disciples, but not the whole assembly of wedding guests. That’s because Jesus did not let these miraculous signs be the only witness to who He really is. He did them in conjunction to the Word He preached and taught. And as His audience expanded so would the number of those who saw these miraculous revelatory signs. Jesus would go on to do countless miraculous signs publicly such as heal the blind, the lame, the sick, cast out demons, still the storm, and raise the dead. But without His proclaimed Word about what these things mean, about who He really is, the people would misunderstand and fail to believe. A worthy example is when He miraculously fed the 5,000 plus with 5 loaves and 2 fishes. Even though He had taught them all day long they still, in their zeal for a Savior to cure the ills of this life alone, wanted to make Him their temporal king. Many who saw this miracle looked at Him as the Bread King, the one who could keep them from ever dying of sickness, and if they did die He would raise them back to life in this world. Their concern was only for their life in this world, with no thought of what is to come. Each of us at some time or another can relate to that.

But **Jesus’ hour** came most fully when He climbed onto the cross and became exactly what John the Baptist had witnessed Him to be: The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world. Only as a human being could Jesus’ life, death, and resurrection save any of us. Only as God the Son in human flesh could His suffering and death be sufficient for all men. Only God the Son could suffer the torment of eternal hell for you. Only God the Son could rise from death to live forever, never to die again, and give that promise to you. His hour fully came when He accomplished the mission the Father sent Him to fulfill, to reveal Himself to be the Savior of the world. And the most complete revelation of who He is will be witnessed by all human beings who have ever lived, even those who refused to believe in Him while alive on this earth. That will happen on the Last Day when He returns in all His glory, and in perfect submission and keeping of the Father’s plan.

What Should This Revelation Mean to You Today?

But what should that mean to you and I as we struggle through the problems and trials of this world? What should that mean to you when your supply of “wine”, or your supply of money, patience, or whatever other need you may be lifting up to Him falls short? If Jesus was a God who only cared about the big picture and not the smallest details of people’s lives, then that wedding in Cana would’ve have turned out very different. He would have told Mary, ***“Woman, that’s not my concern. Tell them all to go home and sober up.”*** But that’s not what happened. He loved and cared enough about that couple, about Mary’s concern, and the institution of marriage as a whole that He solved the problem in a most miraculous way. He created an abundance of wine. And not just your average run of the mill watered down wine. He created the best for them. And He did it in the exact way that best fulfilled the will, plan, and design of the Heavenly Father in His appointed ministry.

The same can be said for how He feels about you and your daily struggles. He cares for you very deeply. He cares about what you are going through. He knows your worries, your frustrations, and your pain. And He is interceding for you in the way that is best, not just for your life now, but for the rest of your life and your eternity to come. He wants you to have all that you truly need, and even some of those things you want. But even more so He wants to protect you from seeing Him as the genie in the bottle who takes care of life now in exclusion of your eternity. He will not allow anything into your life that will serve to pull you away from faith in Him. And He does all that and more for you by the power of His Word and the work His Spirit does through it.

Conclusion

At the wedding at Cana Jesus revealed Himself to be the God who celebrates and upholds the wonderful institution that is marriage by His attendance. He showed Himself to be the God who cares about the big and small problems in the life of His mother, the bride and groom, the wedding guests, and even in your life and my life, because He loves you just as much as He loves them. Yet He is also concerned beyond our present situation all the way through our life to that day when we must stand before Him. He came to reveal Himself to be the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world. He revealed Himself to you through His Spirit working through the Gospel given to you through Word and Sacrament. Is our concern always the same as His? No, often not. But He works to supply our needs and even our wants so that we never lose focus on His most important gifts He came to give us: forgiveness of sins, salvation, and eternal life, poured out as the free gift of grace, even more abundantly than the wine at the wedding banquet. He gives us all that we need for life now and eternal life to come. Amen.