

St. Luke Ev. Lutheran Church
Sermon by Pastor A. E. Schultz
Epiphany 2. Series C. John 2:1-11
January 20, 2013



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 in Cana of Galilee. He thus revealed his glory, and his disciples put their faith in him.

Dear Children of our Heavenly Father – precious in His sight for Jesus' sake:

In 1698 – which is a very long time ago – a lady named Charlotte-Rose originally published a story whose plot has been repeated again and again. According to Aarne-Thompson classification system for folktales it is type 310, "The Maiden in the Tower"! It is known almost everywhere for the familiar line, "Rapunzel, Rapunzel, let down your golden hair!" The story has to do with a rapunzel plant – did you know that – growing in a garden. A lady with a baby in her tummy longs for this plant – desperate to the point of death. Her husband breaks into the garden to gather some for her – on the third night – caught by the enchantress – Dame Gothel – who claims the soon to be born little girl. This little baby is held prisoner in the tower with no door and no stairs – visited again and again by the witch –

until rescued by the handsome prince! What a classic love story! There are not a few little girls that grow up – imagining the day when the handsome prince will come to rescue them. They long to be rescued and to ride off into the sunset – with the tag line – “They lived happily ever after!” Sometimes that works out. More and more often, though – it’s not that simple. Today – as we consider the Epiphany lesson of Jesus’ first miracle – we want to take this opportunity to hear law and gospel concerning marriage and the family!

Today God’s Word very simply says, “Jesus Blesses Weddings!”

1. With his presence – being there

2. With his present... his gift!

This year we are following the ILCW Series C Pericopes – the Series C Bible readings for the Sundays and the special days like Christmas and Ash Wednesday and Maundy Thursday and Good Friday and so – this is the year of the Gospel of St. Luke. We have 51 readings from Luke. Today is one of 13 times we are reading from the Gospel of John. We read from John on Christmas Day. Do you remember? John – the opening verses. **“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was with God in the beginning. Through him all things were made, without him nothing was made that has been made. In him was life, and that life was the light of men. The light shines in the darkness, but the darkness has not understood it. John 1:1-5** The Word was made flesh. The eternal Son of God became one of us – to save us from our sin and guilt!

We know very little about Jesus’ growing up. We know when he was twelve he stayed at the Temple – about his Heavenly Father’s concerns – while Mary and Joseph headed back to Nazareth. We remember that. And that’s about it – until Jesus was 30 and baptized in the Jordan by John the Baptist. **Here is my Son whom I love. With Him I am well pleased.** Now Jesus is anointed Prophet, Priest and King. Now Jesus’ public ministry begins as he preaches and teaches God’s Word. God’s Word says, **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.** Jesus accepted the invitation to a wedding in the city of Cana.

It was in the very beginning that God’s Word says, **The LORD God said, “It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper suitable for him. Now the LORD God had formed out of the ground all the beasts**

of the field and all the birds of the air. He brought them to the man to see what he would name them and whatever the man called each living creature that was its name. So the man gave names to all the livestock, the birds of the air and all the beasts of the field. But for Adam no suitable helper was found. So the LORD God caused the man to fall into a deep sleep; and while he was sleeping, he took one of the man's ribs and closed up the place with flesh. Then the LORD God made a woman from the rib he had taken out of the man, and he brought her to the man. The man said, "This is now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh. She shall be called woman for she was taken out of man. For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and they will become one flesh. Genesis 2:18-24 Again understand and appreciate the fundamentals. Marriage – as God established it – one man and one woman – truly single – who promise to live together as husband and wife until finally only death itself can separate them. One man – one woman – made one in Christ. This is God's plan. You leave your Mom and Dad – and are united to your spouse – no longer two but one! Married! Then "hugs and kisses". Then the babies – if your Heavenly Father so provides. This is God's plan. To wait until you are married for "hugs and kisses" is not old fashioned. It's God's plan. It is God's plan that what he has joined together – people don't separate! That's God's plan.

It is also God's plan for **husbands to love their wife like Christ loved the Church**. That means Jesus is setting the bar exceedingly high! **Husbands love your wife like Christ loved the Church**. Again – the fundamentals. One of the fundamentals of marriage is companionship. That means being in the same place at the same time. It means your marriage is exceedingly important. Time goes into what is important. If watching the Packers is important to you – you make time to watch the pre-game – the first half – the half time and the second half! If Jesus is important – you will make time for Jesus! Make time – to come to Church. February 13th is Ash Wednesday. That means mid-week Lenten Vespers are going to begin like 27 days from tonight/24 days from Sunday. Church is at 4 and at 7 with supper in-between. Make time for Jesus. Make time to read a Meditations – a devotion that will take you not more than 3 or 4 minutes to read. Make time to read your Bible. If you spent a few minutes less – watching the News – the people driving down the wrong way on the Milwaukee freeway – the people smothering their babies because they are

passed out drunk – the people who are shooting their neighbors – in the wee hours of the morning – again and again in Milwaukee. Watch just 15 minutes less of the people from Washington telling you what they think you want to hear – just 15 minutes less of the wars and rumors of wars – 15 minutes less of lies and dishonesty and arrogance and sinful pride – and read your Bible instead – your marriages will be stronger – your children more respectful – your worries fewer and your faith stronger – because the Gospel is a means of grace. The Holy Spirit will make God’s Word effective in your heart and in your life! Read your Bible and your prayers will be more about spiritual concerns and less about things and stuff. Read your Bible and you will not say you are too lazy to come to Church – because you will want to come to Church – to hear God’s Word and to come to Lord’s Supper – and to encourage your fellow believers!

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." If you have ever been the parents of the bride or groom – you know how important it is to have enough food and refreshments. It’s isn’t easy – and it isn’t cheap. The wedding Jesus was at – they ran out of wine. Jesus’ mom said to Him – **“They have no more wine!”** Always keeping the 4th commandment Jesus said, **“Dear woman, who do you involve me?...My time has not yet come!”** Timing is everything! God’s timing is always perfect. It is for us to **be still and know that he is God.** At just the right time Jesus will do whatever is for our spiritual and eternal good – in his time – according to his wisdom and grace and power and love!

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." Jesus turned well-water into the finest wine. It was in fact a miracle! Jesus could do that – make a gift of some 180 gallons of the finest wine! What an exceedingly generous

wedding gift! Here is Jesus' example! Be generous – not stingy – not cheap – not selfish but generous! When you have opportunity – share! As God has blessed you – share with others. Share – without worrying about getting back. Share and give – with child like confidence that Jesus will bless you with even more to share! Trust that Jesus' nail marked hands are able to supply all our needs! See Jesus' power as the very Son of God. Follow his powerful example!

We had 7 weddings at St. Luke's last year – one New Year's Day – one in July, August, September, October. I married my niece – Nancy's God-child in November. We had two weddings in December. We have some 5 maybe 6 weddings planned for this year already! I expect we will have many more than that! We have done weddings in Church – at a family reunion/picnic – by LaVerne Immel's ponds full of fish for little children to catch – on massive stones – out into the lake – in the park and in the forest – several by golf-courses. It is very fitting to have weddings outside – since the first wedding of all was outside – in the Garden of Eden. There is not another day in your life – that has so much effort put into it. People say again and again – we want to make everything perfect! There is not another day in your life – that we take more pictures. Everywhere there are people taking pictures – all kinds of clumps and bunches of people – families – generations – all kinds of combinations. We buy new clothes – we rent formal wear – all in an effort to make everything the best we can. We order a cake and take pictures of dessert! To be married is a wonderful thing. To marry someone who loves Jesus more than life itself – is the best! To be married to someone who loves you – like Jesus loves and forgive you – will mean that one day you will both celebrate at the forever wedding feast in Heaven. A wedding feast that will never end. That will be the best – because we will in fact – live happily ever after – for Jesus' sake. Amen! **To God alone all glory!** *Rev. Anthony E. Schultz*