

Grace to you and peace from God our Father and from our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Amen.

The portion of Scripture before us today is found in the Gospel according to Saint John, the second chapter beginning at the first verse, and we read in Jesus' name:

On the third day there was a wedding in Cana of Galilee, and the mother of Jesus was there. ² Now both Jesus and His disciples were invited to the wedding. ³ And when they ran out of wine, the mother of Jesus said to Him, "They have no wine." ⁴ Jesus said to her, "Woman, what does your concern have to do with Me? My hour has not yet come." ⁵ His mother said to the servants, "Whatever He says to you, do it." ⁶ Now there were set there six waterpots of stone, according to the manner of purification of the Jews, containing twenty or thirty gallons apiece. ⁷ Jesus said to them, "Fill the waterpots with water." And they filled them up to the brim. ⁸ And He said to them, "Draw some out now, and take it to the master of the feast." And

they took it. ⁹ When the master of the feast had tasted the water that was made wine, and did not know where it came from (but the servants who had drawn the water knew), the master of the feast called the bridegroom. ¹⁰ And he said to him, "Every man at the beginning sets out the good wine, and when the guests have well drunk, then the inferior. You have kept the good wine until now!" ¹¹ This beginning of signs Jesus did in Cana of Galilee, and manifested His glory; and His disciples believed in Him.

Heavenly Father, sanctify us by the truth, Your word is truth. Amen.

Dear Redeemed by the Blood of the Lamb,

The miracle of Cana has so much more significance than simply turning water into wine. I mean, turning water into wine is a miracle in and of itself... in fact I wonder how many of us could perform this same feat? However, once we look beyond the obvious miracle, there is a miracle that is a little closer to each and every one of us in this story... think

of where Jesus performed this miracle. He did not do it in relative obscurity with only a few people around Him, He did not do it in secret by merely waving His hand so no one knew who did it or what He did; no this miracle was done at a wedding... a wedding which He and His disciples were invited to... a wedding which during the days of Jesus could last for up to a week; this is where Jesus chose to perform His first miracle: the miracle of turning water into wine.

And it is with this in mind, the fact that Jesus performed His first miracle at a wedding, that we want to examine our text today and know that *Jesus blesses our marriages*.

In my short time in the ministry I have met many people and have been blessed to have them in my life. During my short time in the ministry I met a couple who was all set to be married. It was actually very cool to see their relationship blossom and grow. He sought her like only He could. He lavished gifts upon her and gave her something that only He could give, His love. He gave so much for her that it

broke everyone's heart when we found out that there had been cheating... that there had been another man.

The wedding day was all set and now... now who knows what was going to happen. I mean here they were all set to be married and she cheated on Him and what was He supposed to do? How was He supposed to handle the fact that He had given everything to this woman, His future bride, and she had cheated on Him.

It was then that a sort of miracle happened, As they were spending some time apart, He had her wedding gown sent to her. When she came home one day, she found a box sitting and waiting for her. When she opened it she found her wedding dress inside with a note that read, "I still want us to be together... Please marry me."

She was elated when she got this. Her fiance had forgiven her and now she could move forward with her life, knowing that she was going to be marrying the man of her dreams... A little while later they did end up getting

married, and then it happened again. She cheated on Him again. She had no real reason for it, it just sort of happened. She was devastated and He was crushed, yet again. However, He knew that He wanted this marriage to work and so He started to woo her all over again. He loved her through everything and he showered His love upon her... and to this day they are still married and living happily.

To be honest I've seen this story play out hundreds of times... if not thousands. This is the story of each and every one of us and our marriage our relationship to God. As He calls us in His own word, we are His bride. He has indeed lavished us with gifts and all the 'necessary' things in this life... and we cheat on Him. We turn our backs on Him and chase something that is a little more flashy or fun or exciting. Instead of worshipping the one true God, we worship idols of money and toys and land and stuff... instead of being married to our bridegroom, our everlasting and ever loving God, we marry ourselves to our jobs or our televisions or our favorite teams. Instead of

being faithful to our God and our Savior, we are faithful to no one... except ourselves. We are the bride in this story and we have many faults... and yet God still pursues us.

God sent His Son into this world to be our Savior, to be our bridegroom. He sent His Son to live a perfect life... a life that we could only imagine. God sent His Son to suffer and die an innocent death... the death that was meant for His bride, He took upon Himself. And three days later Jesus Christ rose from the dead to proclaim that His life and death were sufficient payment for all of us and for all of the sins that we have committed.

And when we are joined together, with our bridegroom, Jesus Christ, through faith, we receive everything that we need from Him. When we are joined together with Christ we receive the "white robe" the white dress of purity, as we are clad with our Savior's perfect and holy life. When we are joined with Christ He takes on all of our debt... all of our punishment... all of our penalty... all of our guilt and we receive His perfection, we receive

His redemption, we receive the forgiveness of sins that only He can offer. When we are joined to our Savior, our bridegroom, it is then that we receive the victory that is meant only for His faithful, for His bride.

Through our marriage to Jesus Christ we are now the perfect children of God... and God has adopted us as His children through this most blessed union.

And just like the bride in the story we fall... even after our marriage to our bridegroom, we fall many times. Yet, every time Jesus Christ is there to pick us up and bring us right back to Him. Just like Jesus spoke in the Gospel according to Saint Mark, "Therefore what God has joined together, let not man separate." And God has joined us together with Himself... and we pray that no man, nor manmade thing can ever separate us from the true love, mercy, and grace of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

And then there is that part about the miracle... Jesus turned water into wine. Jesus performed this miracle to bless and sanction the union that

was happening. Jesus wanted to bless marriage as one of His institutions: a bond of one man and one woman, for their entire lives, for companionship and for procreation. God wanted to show that He blesses the institution of marriage... not only then, but still to this day.

When we enter into marriage, when we stand before God and His church, when we say to each other, "Til death do us part," we mean it. God has so blessed us in this life and He even provides the opportunity for us to find a spouse should that be our lot. And if not... you are still married. You are married to your Lord and Savior, the one who has redeemed you from all your sins... the one who has cleansed you as only He can... the one who has forgiven you.

Jesus turned water into wine and as a result we are told that He "manifested His glory; and His disciples believed in Him." By performing His first miracle He was declaring that He was God, that He was blessing this union, and that He was going to make it survive and last. It is when we trust in Him and lean on Him for the

love, support, and encouragement that we need... well then like His disciples, we too believe in Him. We believe in Him because of the great miracle that He has performed, He has blessed our marriage to the lamb, He has given us His Son to be our bridegroom, and He has allowed us to be His bride.

Thanks be to God. Amen.

And just like the first miracle was able to extend the wedding in Cana... so the miracle of the forgiveness of our sins allows us to extend our time with Christ. We not only get to live with Him for our short time this side of heaven, but when our final day comes we will finally get to enter into that great wedding banquet waiting for Christ and His bride, the church.

Thanks be to God that He has blessed our union, not only to our spouse, but more importantly to Himself. Thanks be to God that He has provided the most important thing, His Son, so that our marriages can continue, just like the wedding at Cana. And thanks be to God that He has chosen me to be His bride and that He continues to bless our marriage.