

Hom 2 Ordinary C 2019

There is so much I could talk about today. Our story of Jesus changing water into wine at a wedding is saturated with symbolism and teaching. This is the first of six signs or miracles in John's Gospel all of which are meant to identify Jesus as the Son of God. The identity of Jesus is the most important teaching from this miracle story, but, there are many other messages here. Let me offer you just one very simple thought from this story for you to take home with you this weeken.

Jesus is at a wedding and since his mother is there I assume so are other members of his family. They run out of wine at the party and when Mary finds out about it she goes to Jesus and tells him. Jesus orders the servants to fill six very large stone jars which were used exclusively to keep water for washing one's body. Every Jewish family would have been familiar with this wash water. Jesus then instructs the servants to draw some of the water out and to take it to the chief steward of the affair to taste. When the chief steward tastes it he is confused. Why would anyone keep the best wine until now he asks after the party has been going on for awhile when everyone knows the best wine is always served at the beginning of a party so everyone can appreciate it more.

So what is the one simple thought I want everyone to take home with them? Here it is. Jesus takes something ordinary and makes it wonderful. This is the touch of the Master's hand. Jesus does this here with ordinary water. He makes it into something more wine. Did it every occur to you that this is exactly what Jesus does with our ordinary lives. We are like that ordinary wash water. We are each just one person out of a world population of 7 ½ billion. All people are born of the flesh, all of us. Jesus takes our ordinary lives and does something wonderful. He sends his Holy Spirit into us and we are born again and just like the water becomes wine something becomes of us when we receive the spirit.

You see on one level this story is not really about wine at all. It is about you. Your life could be just water but it isn't. Your life is wine because Jesus is part of it. Jesus came into your life and your whole world was changed. The way you view success or failure has changed because of Jesus. The way you are in the world has changed precisely Jesus is part of your life. Just as wine is different than water you are different than the person born because of Jesus. That is what the touch of the Master's Hand does it gives a value to your life you didn't know existed before Jesus.

You know Myra Brooks Welsh has written a poem with that same title, "The Touch of the Master's Hand." Some of you may have heard it.

“‘Twas battered and scarred, and the auctioneer thought it scarcely worth his while

To waste much time on the old violin, but he held it up with a smile.

What am I bid, good folks, he cried, who will start bidding for me?

A dollar, a dollar, then two, only two? And two dollars who'll make it three.

Going for three, but no...

From the room far back, a gray haired man came forward and picked up the bow

Then, wiping the dust from the old violin, and tightening the loose strings,

He played a melody pure and sweet, as sweet as the angel sings.

The music ceased, and the auctioneer, with a voice that was quiet and low,

Now, what am I bid for the old violin, and he held it up with the bow.

A thousand dollars, who'll make it two? Two thousand and who'll make it three;

Three thousand once, three thousand twice, and going, and going, and gone

The people cheered, but some of them cried, we do not quite understand.

What changed its worth? --Swift came, the reply, the touch of the master's hand.

Jesus touches the wedding and lifts it not just with the miracle but also by his presence. He takes this ordinary wedding and he transforms into that which is extraordinary. He takes a fisherman by the name of Peter and transforms him into the great preacher of Christendom. He takes a studious, but quite insecure young clergyman by the name of John Wesley and uses him as the litmus for one of the world's great revivals. He takes a young frail and frightened girl by the name of Teresa, and transforms her into a Pulitzer Prize of Peace by the name of Mother Teresa. He takes that which is ordinary and transforms it.

Everyone else serves the cheap wine near the end but he saves the best till last. The lesson was not lost on the disciples who joined him at the wedding that night in Cana. Don't let it be lost on you!" Beginning with the poem to here is taken from Brett Blair's *Saving the Best Till Last* Sermon found on Sermons.com for January 20, 2019. Also found in ChristianGlobeNetwork, Collected Sermons. By Brett Blair

You are the wine in this story. You are the miracle. Jesus says in the bible: "Behold, I am making all things new" (Revelation 21:5). You have been created a second time! "So whoever is in Christ is a new creation: the old things have passed away, behold, new things have come" (2 Cor. 5:17). Jesus by his word alone has made you into the sons and daughters of God. Jesus has put God's own spirit in you. In last week's sermon I quoted the prophet Isaiah. "God says you are precious to me... You are mine" (Isaiah 43).

Don't ever forget that you have been touched by the master's hand. You are no longer ordinary. You are born of the spirit.

If you stand in wonder at water made into wine think about how much more wonderful is what has happened to you. There is something inside you that was not there before! God's own spirit. Light. Fire.