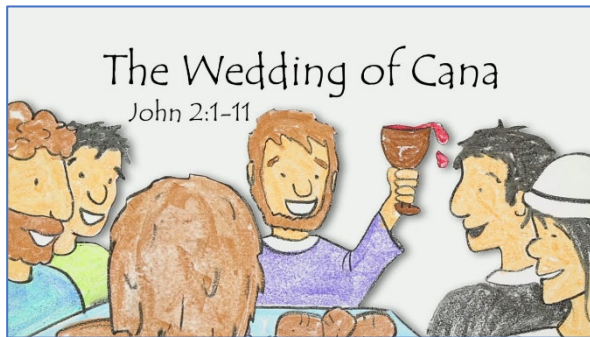


July 3, 2022

“Jesus Turns Water into Wine” /John 2:1-10



Before message, let me share a little bit of my life’s journey with you. So you will better understand where I am coming from.

Now I am pastor. But I was a man, who had never thought that I could be a clergy person. Even I never thought that I could be a Christian. **It is a miracle made by God.**

God called me after college, when I worked for one of the leading corporate companies in Korea. Even at that time I had no awareness that it was the call from God to ministry. I knew nothing about call. Is there such a thing? I had no idea of what it seemed like. I was still brand new to church only for five years. I know nothing much about the church and clergy things. But there were gentle voices filling my heart.

I grew up in a traditional family of Korean Confucianism. My father and mother were farmers. They were of traditional good virtue and earned respect from villagers. My mother often said to me, Jae, wherever you go, please remember this. “You are a son of the Lew family. Respect and honor are what you would do for people whoever they are. Good manners coming from the heart of virtue is the key to set you up.”

Later in college, though I majored in Economics, my interest was additionally in what is life about. Is life about eating, drinking, studying, getting a job and creating a family? Is there anything else? I gradually came to realize that something profound and fundamental was missing in me.

My question was this: What really matters to humankind? Are these visible things all about life? Anything beyond the visibility? **It was, in our term, spiritual thirst.**

After many months of questions and pursuits, one day, I made up my mind to go to mountains to become a monk, a Buddhist monk. Around that time, I was invited to a church Bible study group. I met some Christians who looked real Christians. Prior to that, I thought that Christians were all fakes, who followed their own desires in the name of God's blessings and grace. But that day, the ones that I met were different from the ones that I have speculated.

God came to me, knocking the door of my heart. Then thankfully I accepted Jesus as my savior. I committed myself to God, who has become first the role model to be servants, before asking us to be servants to others. To this God of trinity, I am blessed and honored.

Now I am here, feeling grateful and blessed. As Paul said, I am a person indebted a lot to God and others. It is thanks to the grace of God. The life that Jesus gave on the cross moves me. My response is to follow Jesus as much as I could with the sense of joy, gratitude, and honor.

Thank you for your great welcome. I am honored and blessed to walk with you to serve our divine God and all the people that God has created as the ones of dignity and honor. This is enough for the first Sunday. It is time to let me go with the message coming from the gospel of John 2, the first miracle at Cana.



At Cana, a small village on a hill of northwest side of Galilee, there was a wedding taking place. Jesus and a few of his first disciples were there to celebrate the wedding together. As the wedding got more excited and appreciated, something happened.

One of the important elements at the wedding, the wine was gone. The wine ran out. However, nobody noticed but one, who was the mother of Jesus.

At the wedding, no wine meant dishonor to the guests and disgrace to the hosting family. It was not only the parents of the bride, but also bride who should have taken that dishonor. Who would save this wedding? Who would help the bride and bridal parents to move on for the important life's moment?

No more wine means that something very important is missing. Something profound is missing. Who would recognize the missing at the wedding? And then the question will come to us too. **Who would help us recognize what we are missing today?**

Now you know the story. The mother of Jesus, who recognized that missing, came to Jesus, saying “the wine is gone. Would you handle this situation? I know your time is not yet to come. No one will see what you are doing. I honor you for your time.

But, interestingly enough, even at that time, mom is mom. Even to our Lord Jesus, mom was mom. Mary asked the wedding servants, why don't you fill the jars with waters? The servants without any notice followed the words of Mary. Now Jesus had no choice.

Now Mary said, my friends, why don't you take that water to the host of the wedding?

What happened then? It is said, this is the best wine! For wedding, usually, first the good wine is served, later is served the least wine. But this wine is better.

I believe being in the hands of Jesus, our life gets better. The presence of Jesus in our hearts will make our lives moving in necessary direction. Amen.

With his storyline we are all aware, I have two points that I would like to make for this week's journey of faith.

1. Not having something crucial can be usually regarded as bad. **But when Jesus is present, even though we are missing something, it is not bad. Rather it is good.** It is a time to enter a new phase of our life's journey, the new era of sacredness and sacramental journey of the divine. Something spiritual!
2. How was the first miracle made happen? We need to see what the mother of Jesus did? “My son, the wine is gone.” **The answer is asking!** Asking Jesus is what Mary did. Spiritual life goes with asking, and it get our relationships with God enrich.

To many people, asking may not be regarded as a good manner to take. So, we try not to ask as much as we can. We do not want to bother others as possible as can be. We reserve ourselves too much in the name of courtesy and manner.

But we know, asking is not a bothersome act. ***It is an act of faith. Without faith, without trust, we do not ask.*** So when someone comes to you for asking, be happy. Be grateful. You are honored by that person. You are trusted.

God loves to serve. God loves to listen, because our God knows, any asking to God is an act of faith. That is what I have found on this journey of Christian life. Our God loves to serve. When we come to him with whatever burdens or whatever requests, God would say, Thank you for coming to me. I am listening now. What would you ask? What do you need? I am here for you.

This week whatever need we have, by asking God, let us enter the realm of God. ***What we lack is nothing to hide. It is rather a blissful moment. Our God is the God who loves to listen to you.*** Jesus' presence turns water into wine. Next Sunday let us all brings the new stories, new experience of wines that Jesus touches and makes.

Amen.