

January 16<sup>th</sup>, 2022

Isaiah 62: 1-5; Psalm 36: 5-10; 1 Corinthians 12: 1-11; John 2: 1-11

Epiphany, 2, c

So often I have heard the term “grace upon grace”, and I never really knew what exactly that meant. With this gospel lesson today, I think I have the answer. Jesus and His mom and his brothers and sisters are at a wedding. At the reception the wedding party ran out of wine. Jesus’ mother tells Him that they have run out of wine, and we are not sure why she told him. Did she tell Him because she wanted him to do something or was it just letting Him know?

Jesus at first tells her it was not time for who he really is, to be revealed. And it does make you wonder if Jesus goes on to say to His mom, “Well, if they are out of wine, why don’t they just go and get some more.” But somewhere along the way, Jesus does have a change of heart. He saw six empty stone jars. He then had the servants fill them with water, which would be from 20-30 gallons of water in each. Then he had them take a sample to the chief steward. Once the steward took a taste, he realized that it was not water that he was tasting, but wine, wine of the highest quality. In fact, the steward said to the bridegroom, who apparently was in charge of having wine at the wedding, that he had never been to a wedding where the best wine

was served last. The reason being, he said, is that the guests were usually too drunk at the end of the wedding reception to appreciate good wine.

Our lesson then goes on to say, that after watching all of this unfold, Jesus' disciples *believed* in Him, meaning, we assume, believed He was the Messiah, their Savior, the one they had all been waiting for, for so long a time. His mother as we know from the birth stories, already knew not only was he the Savior they had long been waiting for, but was actually the Son of God. And because she knew this about Jesus, maybe that is why she said something to Him that the wedding party had run out of wine. Whether she was expecting a miracle, we are not sure, but somehow, she just knew Jesus could probably take care of the problem.

But what I find interesting, is that there is nothing more in the scriptures about this encounter with Jesus' mom and the miracle of water turned into wine. It is like, there is no wine, and then there is, and that's it, never to be mentioned again.

So, this got me to thinking of *the quiet power of the grace of Jesus*. Other than recognition by the servants of what Jesus had done, there is nothing. A little blip in the wedding. Jesus' mom comes to Him. Jesus fixes it without anyone other than the servants knowing.

After the wedding, we read that Jesus, his mom, brothers and His disciples left and went to Capernaum and remained there a few days. There is nothing about people flocking to Him wanting a miracle or wanting to touch His garment. Jesus just quietly takes care of a problem at the wedding without hardly anyone taking notice, then stays a little while longer, perhaps enjoying the wine He just produced, and then goes home.

“Grace upon grace”, a wedding runs out of wine and the bridegroom would be mocked from then on because of it. Jesus’ mom finds him and tells Him. Without any flare at all, Jesus calls the servants over, has the jars filled with water and the water becomes the best wine one could buy. And guess what, only the book of John records this miracle, or sign as John calls it. It does not seem this miracle was well known, so, it makes you wonder if even the bridegroom knew what Jesus had done? Grace upon grace without ever being recognized.

Have you ever thought of what grace upon grace is in your life? Have you even ever thought you had grace upon grace in your life? Most every evening with dinner I have a glass of wine. With that wine always comes a toast. Sometimes there is a long pause before the toast, because I’m trying to think of something for which I am thankful, of something for which I can make a toast. Lately I’ve toasted the heat

in my house, my tires that keep me on the road in the snow, coats and gloves that keep me warm when I'm outside. Grace upon grace, abundant goodness.

The glory of God, grace upon grace, abundant goodness can be witnessed in events in which we engage with regularity. Without a doubt, we all could take just a few moments and recall the glory of God being evident in our lives, even when perhaps we were the only ones who knew it.

There is a picture in my office of The Lord's Supper. I have mentioned it before. Jesus is holding bread. Surrounding Him are men, women, and children. That's not what is recorded in the scriptures is it, or in most pictures of The Lord's Supper. But don't you think that was more what The Lord's Supper was like? When you look at that picture, you experience the glory of God, abundant goodness, not only on the face of Jesus, but on the faces of all that surround Him. They are relaxed, happy, looking at Him or one another. You find yourself wishing you were there.

But we are, aren't we? This is what we see in our gospels, the glory of God *where we are*, grace upon grace, in weddings, in funerals, in reunions, in solitude, in watching tv, in reading a book, in taking a walk, in visiting, in going out to lunch with a friend. The glory of God, God's abundant goodness, grace upon grace, is where we are.

Amen,

Pastor Scales