

2 Epiphany 2010
Good Hope Lutheran Church
John 2

The sermon text today is the Gospel lesson, found in John chapter 2, the very first sign Jesus performed, His very first miracle: changing water into wine, at the wedding in Cana, of Galilee. Kept the text handy, read it over a time or two now, and at home this week; and the Lord be with you.

Let's pray: Lord Jesus, we thank you for the ministry you carried out in days of old—the miracles you worked the mercy you showed—all for people who were after all sinners, just like us. Work a miracle in our lives Lord. By the power of your death and resurrection, take us and shape us and transform us into your servants here on earth, that we might be your friends forever in heaven; Lord Jesus in your name we pray, AMEN.

The sermon this morning, is going to be more of a straight-forward Bible study. I'm going to take John chapter 2, and I'm going to go through it more or less line by line and verse by verse. I'm going to pull out some details that you may or may not have noticed, and then we're going to spend a little bit of time talking about each one of them. So, if you have your bulletins handy, turn with me to the Gospel lesson, John chapter 2, and let's look at verses 1 – 3.

There was a wedding at Cana, in Galilee. Cana, a tiny town, small enough to make dear little Arlington look like The Big Apple somehow. And Jesus was there as a guest, so was His mother, so were His disciples. They ran out of wine, which for the family hosting the wedding would be enormously

embarrassing. Now, time out. When we stop to consider the problems of the world—wars, famines, diseases, tsunamis—when we consider the problems of the world, a *social faux pas* may not sound that important. But that's only because you're not the one who's about to be embarrassed. Please always keep in mind the feelings of the people around you, protect one another's feelings as Jesus did, and remember. No problem is too large for the Lord, no problem is too small either.

Back to the text. You'll notice, that Jesus was there all along. He was there all along, but people only noticed Him when they wanted something. Do you need me to go on, or can you finish this one by yourself?—Jesus was there all along, people only looked at Him when they wanted something, we do that too. The Lord of heaven and earth is by your side each and every day, ready to forgive and help and guide and all the rest, but we don't turn to Him till we have a test in Algebra. We don't turn to Him, till we have a test in the hospital. Or whatever, some other crisis in life, turn to Him now. Now, while there's time, before the emergency, He's there for you in a pinch, yeah. But Jesus has so much more to offer you than a bail out. Jesus has so much more to offer than a bail out, and maybe today's the day to start finding out just exactly what all, He's got in store for you?

Verses 4 through 8. After His mom talks to Him, Jesus ever the dutiful

Son intervenes. He tells the servants to fill these gigantic jars with water, water that Jesus will then turn into wine. Cool, but please notice. Jesus worked the miracle, but He could not do it until the people there were obedient, and did what He commanded. Again, Jesus worked the miracle, but couldn't till people there were obedient, in other words if the servants had not obeyed and put the water into the jars; there would have been no wine. It works that way in our lives too. Jesus is the one who works the miracles, but what miracle do you expect Him to work for you without your obedience? For example. Jesus will work the miracle of forgiveness and reconciliation in your life, in your family, but how can He begin to do that— if you're never going to apologize? Jesus can work the miracle of giving your life meaning and purpose—in a random, chaotic world your life can have meaning and direction, Jesus can do that!—but how do you expect to find the miracle of meaning and direction in your life if you are not humbly, patiently, persistently in worship and prayer and Bible study, like we know the Lord has told us we're supposed to be? Again, Jesus can provide some fiscal sanity in your life. I mean Jesus did not come to earth to be a financial guru but He does provide daily bread; and He will provide fiscal sanity in your life too, but not until you take the 9th and 10th commandments seriously, and begin sorting out the difference between wants and needs. The 9th and

10th commandments are about coveting, by the way—page 63 in your pew Bible—but how do we expect the Lord to “heal our finances woes” if we are not mindful of what He has commanded us to be and do? In sum. Jesus works the miracles, but what miracle is possible in your life. Without first *giving* Him your life?

Verses 8 and 9. The water was changed into wine. That was really kind of nice, the water was changed into wine, here’s the question. If Jesus can do that with water, what do you suppose He can do with your life? If Jesus can take ordinary water and turn it into the best wine this caterer had ever tasted, what do you suppose He can do with YOU? What can He change YOU into—a better husband and father? A more caring wife and mother? A more faithful friend, a compassionate neighbor, a steadfast witness in word and deed to the Gospel of Jesus Christ—if Christ can change water into wine, what can He change you into? I once heard somebody somewhere say in a joking sort of way, My goal in life is to become the man my dog thinks I am. Ok. How you going to get there on your own. How are your New Year’s resolutions working out, anyway? Here’s the key: Jesus, who died and rose again. Jesus, who died and rose again, your life. In His hands.

Finally, verse 10. The caterer—the Bible says steward, we’d understand it better I think by saying caterer—the caterer said Holy cow! Most people

serve the best wine first, but you have saved the very best for last! You have saved the best for last, our God you see has given us life in this world, and all the good things that go with it. Food, family, friends. Wedding celebrations, and a glass of bubbly to toast the happy couple. God has given us life and the good things of life—but He's saved the very best for last. Christ has died, Christ is Risen, Christ will come again, and when He does. When that day finally gets here. He has promised us all and who believe a place in His Father's house forever. The best is yet to come, He saved the best for last—the Kingdom is ours forever.

So may it be for all of us, in the name of Jesus Christ AMEN.