

WEEKLY SERMON

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Anyone for a party?

'Jesus did this, the first of his signs, in Cana of Galilee, and revealed his glory; and his disciples believed in him.' John 2.11

It's embarrassing isn't it? That Jesus' first miracle isn't the touching story of the healing of a sick person or perhaps the feeding of the hungry, but rather the provision of an over-abundance of fine wine for a crowd who were already quite well oiled.

What then is this story all about?

The First Miracle at Cana stands alongside the Visit of the Wise Men and the Baptism of Jesus three great events we celebrate in the season of Epiphany where the identity and glory of Jesus is revealed. So what does the miracle at the wedding in Cana reveal about Jesus?

First, that he is the Lord of creation. The so-called 'nature miracles' in the Gospels point us to Jesus not only as Redeemer but also as co-Creator with the Father of all that exists. Even the laws of science are subject to him because he created them.

Second, that Jesus recognised and valued marriage, though he himself was single. The Bible recognises two states of life, faithful marriage and celibate singleness, both of which are quite counter-cultural in today's society – where both marriage and singleness are under-valued.

Third, Jesus' provision of abundant fine wine points forward to the abundance and joy of the messianic banquet that the Jews longed for, when people of all nations would gather and feast in God's kingdom. The picture of that banquet given to us in Revelation 19.6-10 describes it as 'the Marriage Supper of the Lamb'. Revelation is also attributed to St John, and so the narrative that begins with Jesus and his disciples at a family wedding feast ends with the great wedding feast of heaven, with the multitude of disciples adorned as a Bride ready to be united with Christ her spouse.

That is some party to look forward to! But how can we be sure that we shall be included in that great company? The answer is by being obedient to Jesus. In the words of Mary his mother to the servants, 'Do whatever he tells you.'

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