

Sermon for the 3rd Sunday after Epiphany

Pastor Mike Schuessler

Text: Luke 2:5

“His mother said to the servants, ‘Do whatever he tells you.’”

Weddings are wonderful occasions. A man and a woman proclaim their love and commitment to one another before God and the community. Family and friends gather to share in their joy, as they promise to love, honor and cherish one another. It is to such an event that Mary and Jesus were invited, at Cana in Galilee. Jesus was even allowed to bring his friends. How shocking, then, to find that all the wine had been consumed. How embarrassing it would be for the happy couple to have to tell everyone that the party was over. But Mary has a plan.

Mary remembers when she and her husband Joseph were preparing for their own wedding. She remembers her unexpected pregnancy and the angel explaining that her child would be God the Son. Mary knows that Jesus has the power to fix the current problem. She says to Jesus, “They have no more wine.” She says to the servants, “Do whatever he tells you.” It seems that Jesus is at first hesitant. He explains that his time has not yet come. Yet he bids the servants fill the jars with water and the water changes into wine.

So why did Jesus do this miracle? He turns water into wine to reveal his glory and his disciples put their faith in him. Jesus turns water into wine because he had compassion for people who were in need. Jesus loved the people at the wedding feast, because Jesus is God and God is love. Jesus is a good Jewish boy who knows and obeys the commandment to honor his father and his mother. Jesus turns water into wine because his mama told him to. Jesus is also God.

But Jesus does not always listen to his mother. While teaching and healing in St. Peter’s house Jesus was interrupted by his mother who wanted him to come home. When forced to choose, Jesus had to honor his Father in

heaven. He chose to follow God’s plan. Again, at the foot of the cross, Mary watched with a breaking heart as her son was dying. Perhaps she longed to command him to come down. “Jesus, you listen to your mother and come home right now, do you hear me?” Jesus himself had asked his Father if there were a way to let the cup of suffering pass by. “Yet not my will, but yours be done.” Jesus entrusted himself to his Father’s care and stayed on the cross to be our savior.

Sometimes we want to tell Jesus what he should do and how things should be. When faced with a challenge we have our own plans. Even Peter told Jesus not to die on the cross. But Jesus always does what’s best for us. Jesus is our loving God who has power to turn water into wine and feed thousands with just a few loaves of bread and small fish. He can calm storms, heal the sick and raise the dead. He forgives our sins.

When I was five years old I climbed a big tree in my backyard for the first time. My mom was afraid I might fall and get hurt so she wanted to stop me. My dad told her to let me climb the tree. He wanted her to let me grow through the experience. God allows us to grow as we experience new challenges. We are tempted to avoid things that make us uncomfortable. As the bride of Christ, the church entrusts herself to Jesus, the bridegroom. He promises to be with us and help us through the difficult times. The one who has power over all creation stands ready to use that power to work all things for our good. He does this because he loves us. Jesus is able to heal broken relationships, raise the spiritually dead to new life, and provide the best of refreshment when it seems there’s nothing left. Thank you, Jesus, for taking care of us. Amen.