

Everyday Miracles
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Epiphany 2C January 17, 2010
Based on John 2:1-12

Whenever I hear the miracle of Jesus turning water into wine, I can't help but think of the story where the man runs a stop sign and is pulled over by a police officer. As the officer writes the ticket, he smells alcohol on the man's breath. When the officer looks into the car, he notices a half-empty wine bottle in the beverage holder.

"What are you drinking?" the officer asks. "It's holy water," the man says, matter of factly. The officer grabs the bottle and sniffs it. "Sir, this smells like wine to me," the officer says.

"Hallelujah!" the man shouts, "Jesus has done it again!"

The miracle story of Jesus turning water into wine is so familiar to us that it is easy to miss some of the underlying truths that the story conveys.

For instance, did you notice when Jesus decides to make his move, so to speak? It's not at the actual wedding *ceremony*, but rather at the *celebration* following the ceremony. One might assume that if Jesus is going to reveal the glory of God that it would be during the actual ceremony – during the exchanging of the vows or perhaps during a prayer of blessing on the couple. But no, the Bible says, "This miraculous sign at Cana in Galilee was the first time Jesus revealed God's glory." It wasn't until the party *after* the ceremony that Jesus fully revealed the glory of God.

So often we go about life and forget that God has promised to be with us always. Jesus is not just with us here in this place. Jesus is with us everywhere, even in the most mundane moments of our daily lives.

I imagine Jesus waving at us and saying, "You who... over here... remember me?" Remember Jesus' promise: I am with you always. Jesus promises to be our ever-present, trusted guide in our journey of faith.

Is that how you are experiencing Jesus? As One who makes himself known in the ordinary moments of your life – as you are washing dishes, or driving to work, or tucking your child into bed? Jesus is there. That's the promise Jesus makes to us.

If we aren't sensing Jesus with us, even during the mundane moments of life, then we need to start being more observant. We need to ask God to open our eyes and mind and heart in order that we might be blessed by sensing Jesus' true presence.

Another truth that we often miss in this story is in the simple phrase, "the wine ran out." Sure, it must have been embarrassing to the hosts that the wine ran out well before the

end of the party. But I sense a spiritual condition being conveyed in that statement: “the wine ran out.”

Think about the history of Israel. At this time in their history they have been around as a nation for close to 2000 years. Think of all the things they had been through:

Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.

Joseph and the hundreds of years of slavery in Egypt.

Moses and the Exodus. The wandering in the wilderness and the giving of the Law.

Joshua and the conquest of the Promised Land. The years of tribal wars to gain possession of the land.

The rise of the Kings: Saul, David, and Solomon.

The challenging words of the prophets.

The civil war and division of the Kingdom. The Babylonian captivity.

The return from captivity and the rebuilding of Jerusalem. Although the Jews attempt to gain their independence once again, in the end it never happens.

It is into this world and mindset that Jesus enters. Truth be told, the nation's wine had run out. It felt like God has abandoned Israel. Jesus' disciples along with the entire nation had lost hope. It seemed as though the wine had run out.

The same thing happens in our lives, does it not? The wine runs out. Something happens in our lives which makes us question the goodness and wisdom of God. A loved one dies. The pink slip comes. The medical tests reveal unfortunate news. The unthinkable happens. We know the feeling. The wine runs out. And what do we do? We run to Jesus.

Isn't it unfortunate that all too often we don't run to Jesus until we have a pressing need? In the gospel today, Jesus is not approached at the wedding party until there is a wine emergency. Must it take an emergency in our life in order for us to run to Jesus? Must prayer only be a 9-1-1 call?

Jesus desires for us to run to him regularly – not just in emergencies, but every day, sharing the thoughts of our hearts – every joy, every concern; every certainty, every doubt. Only when we regularly run to Jesus can we develop a strong, enduring relationship with our Lord and Savior.

Jesus desires a relationship with us in order to bless us. Jesus wants to be our trusted guide in our journey of faith. We have to be willing to fully trust Jesus' lead in order to find our way to our heavenly home.

This week, I want you to be on the look-out for specific ways in which Jesus is making himself known to you. Be mindful of how Jesus is revealing his presence, his glory, his power in your daily life. Because God's Word is a LIVING Word, because Jesus Christ is RISEN from the dead, we can trust that the glory of God which was revealed at the wedding celebration in Cana can be revealed anywhere, anytime.

The stories of the Bible are not just tales about the past. Such stories open our eyes of faith to help us see what we might expect God to do in our lives this very day. Because Christ, through the Holy Spirit, has promised to be with us always, miracles that reveal God's glory should not only be anticipated, but expected.

Just like the people did in Cana, Jesus wants us to turn to him when we encounter challenges in our daily lives. When all hope seems lost, let us turn to Jesus and trust in his love. Let us believe that God has the power and the desire to work miracles in our lives.

Thank goodness God is in the miracle business! Despite all of our rebellion, our limitations, and our stubbornness, God still chooses to send his Son Jesus to die for us on the cross. Perhaps the greatest miracle of all, though, is that God has chosen us – us of all people – to go out into this world and to tell others about Jesus Christ.

When we don't feel qualified enough or courageous enough to do that, God performs yet another miracle in our lives and gives us the courage and the words we need to share our faith. When we open our hearts and allow God's Spirit to lead us, we begin to see things happen that can only be described as "miraculous."

Thank goodness God is in the miracle business! For even though our human condition brings us closer to death every day, we need not fear. For even in death, God offers us the miracle of everlasting life.

Thank goodness God is in the miracle business! Just as it happened at Cana, Jesus wants to make sure that *we* know he is present with us – in Word and Sacrament. Jesus promises to make his presence known to us – through water splashed, bread broken, wine poured. Jesus is with us, guiding us in the right direction, providing for our every need, showering us with God's love and grace.

May we, like the people in Cana, be strengthened in our faith through the miracles that Jesus works in our daily lives. May Jesus give us eyes to see his glory as it breaks forth in our daily lives.

And all God's people said, "Amen."