

SERMON 17 JANUARY 2016

READING: John 2:1-11

REFLECTION

Verse 11 “What Jesus did here in Cana of Galilee was the first of the signs through which he revealed his glory; and his disciples believed in him.”

Last week we ended the service by singing “Joy to the world, the Lord has come.” Jesus is indeed our key to JOY as we see in our reading this morning.

Our reading is very intriguing, especially when we view it with our 21st century eyes.

Why did they panic? If there is no wine, well go and buy some more. There is plenty of wine in the world. Surely the world will never run out of wine.

Unfortunately, in Jesus’ day it was a totally different story. In his day weddings lasted seven days and the bridegroom and his family had to make sure all the guests have enough to eat and drink. If he did not succeed in doing this, he ruined his family name, their honour. He would have been regarded as shameful by not being a good host. In Jesus’ day it was all about shame and honour!

And then in our reading the inevitable happens. The hosts have no more wine to give the guests. The name of the family is on the verge of being ruined.

No wonder Jesus’ mother frantically asks Jesus to help.

So what does Jesus do? He reminds his mother that He is sent by God and under God’s command. He is making it clear that He did not come to obey her, but to obey God. To us again this sounds a wee bit disrespectful. But actually in the context of Jesus it was not. Jesus’ mother understood clearly what Jesus was saying when she says to the servants to obey Jesus.

And then Jesus orders the servants to fill the 6 stone jars with water to the brim. They obey Him and do what He told them to do. Then He says to them to draw some water and give it to the head servant to taste. When he tasted it, he called the groom and basically told him off for giving the best wine last! In those days you gave your guests the best wines first, because they could still appreciate it.

John concludes our reading by stating that this was the first miracle of Jesus, showing everyone that He was indeed sent by God.

So what does our reading then mean? Jesus brought JOY to the wedding feast again. His first miracle happens in an ordinary daily setting of his time. He saved the honour of the family and brought JOY to all – the hosts and the guests.

Sometimes we lose our JOY too. A friend said the other day he feels like the taste of flat coke! Other people have said that they feel like balloons with no air.

I think these are good descriptions of how we at times are feeling.

The question then begs, what do we do when we feel like the taste of flat coke? Are we stationary like a car with a flat tyre? Usually when we do get a flat tyre we would immediately call for help either from the AA or the RAC or friends and family. It is time that we do the same with our Spiritual lives especially when we have lost our JOY. It is time that we do what Jesus' mother did – call on Him for help.

Because when we do, He will fill you and me with JOY. We are JARS of CLAY too – we can so easily become empty.

We can so easily be BROKEN – we are vulnerable and cannot survive one second on our own.

But then we need to OBEY his commands. And He said to LOVE is the greatest COMMAND. And we know it is not EASY to love especially if we follow GOD'S love. God's LOVE meant sacrifice, WALKING the extra mile and EVEN taking a blow on the cheek. But if we LOVE like God intends us to do, then HE will fill us with JOY.

ONLY God can give us JOY. NO extravagant party, NO Burns Night, NO precious whisky, NO precious wine, NO costly clothes, NOTHING on this earth can make you and me truly happy. JOY comes from within, once we follow JESUS and DO what He told us to do namely to love, to have hope and to keep our faith in HIM.

Even Robert Burns knew and experienced this. In his poem "Tam o' Shanter" he says in the final verse:

"Now, who this tale of truth shall read,
Each man, and mother's son, take heed:
Whenever to drink you are inclined,
Or short skirts run in your mind,
Think! you may buy joys over dear:
Remember Tam o' Shanter's mare."

And we all know what happened to his horse Meg! If you do not know ask John Campbell or Robin Miller.

So let us seek for the JOY that helps us through pain, suffering, broken relationships, the JOY that can help us to see the rainbow through the stormy rains, to know that NO promise of God is ever vain. The JOY to know that we do not belong to this earth but to God and that through faith we will be united with Him in His kingdom for ever....

Let us start today by obeying Jesus biggest commandment because if we do we will always have JOY!

Amen