

CANON DAVIS MEMORIAL CHURCH
Sunday, January 17th, 2016 - Second after Epiphany



Readings: Isaiah 62:1-5; Psalm 36:5-10;

1 Corinthians 12:1-11; John 2:1-11

First Reading

A READING FROM THE BOOK OF ISAIAH

For Zion's sake I will not keep silent, and for Jerusalem's sake I will not rest, until her vindication shines out like the dawn, and her salvation like a burning torch.

The nations shall see your vindication, and all the kings your glory; and you shall be called by a new name that the mouth of the Lord will give. You shall be a crown of beauty in the hand of the Lord, and a royal diadem in the hand of your God. You shall no more be termed Forsaken, and your land shall no more be termed Desolate; but you shall be called My Delight Is in Her, and your land Married; for the Lord delights in you, and your land shall be married. For as a young man marries a young woman, so shall your builder marry you, and as the bridegroom rejoices over the bride, so shall your God rejoice over you.

ISAIAH 62:1-5

PSALM 36:5-10

pg. 748

- 5 Your love, O Lord, reaches to the heavens, * and your faithfulness to the clouds.
6 Your righteousness is like the strong mountains, your justice like the great deep; * you save both man and beast, O Lord.
7 How priceless is your love, O God! * your people take refuge under the shadow of your wings.
8 They feast upon the abundance of your house; * you give them drink from the river of your delights.
9 For with you is the well of life, * and in your light we see light.
10 Continue your loving-kindness to those who know you, * and your favour to those who are true of heart.

God of justice and of mercy, open the eyes of sinners that they may see the light of your truth, know the power of your love, and share in the bounty of your heavenly table; through Jesus Christ our Saviour.

Second Reading

A READING FROM THE FIRST LETTER OF PAUL TO THE CORINTHIANS

Now concerning spiritual gifts, brothers and sisters, I do not want you to be uninformed. You know that when you were pagans, you were enticed and led astray to idols that could not speak. Therefore I want you to understand that no one speaking by the Spirit of God ever says "Let Jesus be cursed!" and no one can say "Jesus is Lord" except by the Holy Spirit. Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit; and there are varieties of services, but the same Lord; and there are varieties of activities, but it is the same God who activates all of them in everyone. To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good. To one is given through the Spirit the utterance of wisdom, and to another the utterance of knowledge according to the same Spirit, to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healing by the one Spirit, to another the working of miracles, to another prophecy, to another the discernment of spirits, to another various kinds of tongues, to another the interpretation of tongues. All these are activated by one and the same Spirit, who allots to each one individually just as the Spirit chooses.

1 CORINTHIANS 12:1-11

Gospel

THE HOLY GOSPEL OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST ACCORDING TO JOHN

On the third day there was a wedding in Cana of Galilee, and the mother of Jesus was there. Jesus and his disciples had also been invited to the wedding. When the wine gave out, the mother of Jesus said to him, "They have no wine." And Jesus said to her, "Woman, what concern is that to you and to me? My hour has not yet come." His mother said to the servants, "Do whatever he tells you." Now standing there were six stone water jars for the Jewish rites of purification, each holding twenty or thirty gallons. Jesus said to them, "Fill the jars with water." And they filled them up to the brim. He said to them, "Now draw some out, and take it to the chief steward." So they took it. When the steward tasted the water that had become wine, and did not know where it came from (though the servants who had drawn the water knew), the steward called the bridegroom and said to him, "Everyone serves the good wine first, and then the inferior wine after the guests have become drunk. But you have kept the good wine until now." Jesus did this, the first of his signs, in Cana of Galilee, and revealed his glory; and his disciples believed in him.

JOHN 2:1-11

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

Most people on planet earth know of Jesus Christ. Many know a little bit about him and his life. But if we want to know more, how do we go about doing that? If he were a guy down the street and applying for a job, one way the potential employer would have to get to know Jesus better would be through a job interview.

Certainly many of us are no strangers to job interviews. How many times have we had to prepare for this strange but necessary step in acquiring a job. Necessary for us — necessary for the employer. For whatever may look good on paper can be disastrously bad at the job site. One very good way to come to know potential staff members a bit better is to interview them face to face. The tone of voice, the words, the facial expressions, the body movements, and more all can tell the interviewer much. Yes, there are more indicators as well. We should not forget references and the level of writing skills on the application form. Also important for some types of jobs are the accomplishments of the applicant.

People seeking employment can feel like they are in an awkward position when it comes to an interview. One's situation can seem to be conflicted. On one hand applicants are supposed to *blow their own horns* in a manner of speaking. Applicants want all to know about all the good things they have done and are doing. At the same time, interviewees do not want to come across as a braggarts or as arrogant. Confidence is sought — while a bullying nature is not!

There are more areas of confusion, as well. There is the question of whether to make job application videos for example? Some employers see these as great signs of a willingness to take the initiative where it counts. Others see it as a waste of time and resources bent on only emphasizing applicant attributes and glossing over their shortcomings. They would rather see time better spent in careful dialogue. One's reputation as an effective employee can also carry a lot of weight.

Of course more can be said about the hiring process. But in the final analysis — there are no guarantees. There is always a risk factor — a risk factor for the employer and a risk factor for the potential employee. It is a two-way street where ideally both parties are happy with their choice to enter into a contract.

In today's Gospel reading we find that we are being introduced in another way to Jesus at the beginning of his ministry. We also find the New Testament readings to be passages which at first glance seem to have very little to do with each other. As we hear of Jesus turning water into wine in the Gospel — we also hear from the Epistle about how each of us have been given individual gifts from the Holy Spirit of God. We are encouraged to put these gifts to use for the "common good". Somehow an interrelationship between the two lessons was seen by the developers of the Revised Common Lectionary. And upon reflection, I think I see it also. Perhaps you also see it.

On the surface of things, we have in the Gospel Reading a story about Jesus' first recorded miracle. Some are quick to point out that, as miracles go, this was a rather simple straight forward one for starters. In this story we hear of: Jesus being advised of a problem by his mother; his initial reluctance to become involved; his following of his mother's request by the taking of common available elements to quickly provide the needed wine; the abundance of wine provided in the miracle; how great it tasted; and how pleased everyone was with it. We also learn that, whatever our former impression of Jesus may have been, he was not about to refuse an invitation to a good party.

He presumably also had no problem with wine being served at a function. Our Lord shared a number of characteristics with ordinary folk! He seems in many ways to be a very approachable regular guy in this story. And we are pleased to see this.

Toward the end of the story of the Wedding feast at Cana, the summary result of all that went on is explained in a very few words — *Jesus did this, the first of his signs, in Cana of Galilee, and revealed his glory; and his disciples believed in him.* What is Jesus revealing to us in this story? How can we come to know more about him from what we have just heard? What are his actions and what do they tell us!

Consider the following from this story that starts with Jesus, his mother and the disciples going to a wedding party.

1. Jesus has willingly placed himself in the midst of people.
2. Right from the beginning things seem to not go well for those who organized the party.
3. Jesus rightly sees the problems to be not of his own making, but of the folk putting on the party.
4. He also sees the need for fixing, and lovingly has compassion for the gathered folk, and acts on that compassion.
5. Jesus uses what is at hand (30 gallon stone jars, water & servants).
6. Jesus does not act alone — he invites people in the form of servants to share in the miracle.
7. With abundant grace Jesus makes way more wine than needed.
8. Jesus acts with little notoriety — few are aware of any miracle happening at all — the only clue is that the wine tastes better than it should at the end of a party.
9. Jesus moves on in his life and ministry revealing more of his glory until the greatest revelation in his resurrection.
10. Jesus fully uses his gifts as bestowed through his Father and the Holy Spirit.

In the few short words of this wonderful story much is revealed from the beginning about the Jesus we worship.

Jesus is portrayed as being one to not shun being a part of what we do as people. In fact he is seen as being comfortable in the midst of gatherings. But when one is a people person, one has to expect to come face to face with people-related problems as well. Jesus knew this and did not shy away, but in love, compassionately made/makes himself available to be part of the solution. Moreover, he often willingly involves people when miracles and/or other actions are necessary. Christ relies on our using the gifts Paul mentions as coming from the Holy Spirit. Jesus also acts with abundant love and grace. For most miracles in our lives and the lives of our communities, Jesus also acts often without our even noticing.

Our Lord is not limited to the above description. In his loving ministry, he also provides us with countless examples and understanding of the love and the wisdom of God. Our Lord Jesus Christ is worth seeking out

- is worth getting to know better
- is one who we are to love.

We are so thankful for the gift of Christ!