

May the words of my mouth and the meditations of our hearts be acceptable in your sight, O Lord our Rock and Redeemer. Amen

Why this miracle?

I mean, the other gospels do not speak about this event.
So why did John record this miracle as Jesus' first?

Certainly Jesus performed more serious miracles;
important miracles.
Healing the sick
casting out demons
raising the dead.

Especially as we have watched the horrific events in Haiti unfold this week,
we know that there are a lot more pressing needs in the world than worrying about whether the drink
at some wedding runs out.
So why this miracle first?
Why record what could seem a frivolous act on Jesus' part?

A wedding reception; a glorified party
changing water into wine.

We would expect Jesus to be more dignified
we would expect Jesus's first miracle to take place in a holier setting.
Not hanging out at a wedding reception worrying about whether there was enough wine.

Think about how your guests would feel if they got to the reception, ready to have fun,
and they found that Jesus was seated at their table....

Even as a pastor (as someone who is perceived to work for God,
even as a pastor, going to wedding receptions can be tricky.
I find that my presence makes the other guest uncomfortable.
They get nervous about their drinks,
they start to tell raunchy stories and then look my way,
embarrassed and suddenly have to run off to the bathroom.

I've gone so far as to tell couples,
“please don't invite me to the reception. Believe me, I only upset your guests”

But maybe Jesus is showing us just the opposite here.
Maybe Jesus wants us to know that he wants to be in the everyday stuff of our lives.
Maybe Jesus wants us to know that he's not just with us in the serious stuff of life;
he's also with us in the celebrations;
in the weddings, and birthdays, and family gatherings.
In the new driver's license, in the good report cards, in team pasta parties.

Jesus' doesn't want to be relegated to what we perceive as the “holy things” and
“holy places” of our lives.
He is with us in all things.

The word “holy” means belonging to God.

If we belong to God, then Jesus' rightful place is right next to us through all of life's experiences.
Even changing water into wine.

Which in fact, was not frivolous after all.

you see, what most of us present day hearers don't know
is that Jesus' action was less about partying and drinking wine,
and more about the requirements of hospitality.

In the Jewish law, hospitality was a requirement.

Jews were required to provide the best for their guests.

And not just their selected guests,
they were also required to take in any travelers that happened
through their towns.

Hospitality was not a nice thing.

Nor was it a choice.

It was a religious law.

So the deeper story here is that Jesus was defending the honor of his hosts.

So as not to have then disgraced,

Jesus provided more wine;

so that the wedding celebration could continue,

not for a few more hours, but for the four more days that remained in the celebration.

So that the new couple would not be shamed.

John's Gospel begins by telling us that

Jesus, God's true Word, became flesh and lived among us.

And how did He live among us?

Jesus came and fully immersed himself in our human existence.

Not just hanging out in the synagogues

not just befriending the religious types

but instead, coming among us in our everyday experiences.

In the ordinary stuff of life.

In our sorrows and our joys

Jesus and his mother were at that wedding as guests.

The family of the wedding couple must have invited them to join the celebration.

When's the last time you invited Jesus into your life?

Not just your “church life”

but your everyday life?

Your family dinners,

your bedtime routines with the kids

your sports competitions

God has come among us to help us live life to the fullest.

And living to the fullest is about becoming ever more aware of God's presence and purpose for our lives.

Perhaps that's why we are not always so good at being evangelists in our daily lives.

We are waiting for the right “holy moment” to talk about God.

We are afraid that our friends and coworkers will think that we are “Holy-rollers”

We are thinking that our goal is only to get people to come and join our church.

But what if it's not about that.

What if being true witnesses for Christ

is simply about pointing to God in the everyday things.

What if being evangelists is simply about “sharing the good news” of how God is making a difference in our lives?

What if it's about pointing out the everyday miracles among us.

Particularly the most amazing miracle that the God of the universe loves us in all our everyday challenges and joys.

As you leave here today and begin a new week,

why not invite God to be a part of your everyday life?

Go out this week expecting to encounter Jesus in the ordinary stuff.

He'll be there. He always is. Amen