Grace to you and peace from God our Father and our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

**Do Whatever He Tells You**

**John 2:1-11**

2nd Sunday after Epiphany

01.16.2022

We all know the story of Jesus making wine at the wedding of Cana. Each Gospel lessons for this whole Epiphany season is about epiphanies, or we could call them revealings. Each is a glimpse of the Divinity of Jesus. Last week we saw Jesus in the temple as a twelve year old boy astounding the teachers in the temple. Today, Jesus’ first miracle gives us a glimpse of the Divinity of Jesus – He changes water into wine.

While this is indeed an incredible miracle, I thought we could consider this text from another direction. Mary tells the servants, “Do whatever he tells you.” It doesn’t take long, and Jesus tells them to fill the water jars present for the right of purification, with water. After doing so, Jesus tells them to take some out of one of the jars and give it to the master of the feast. (it would be better translated as steward). Did they know it was wine? It is our best guess that they drew out what they thought was water in a clay jar.

What an amazing thing to have happen. “Do whatever Jesus tells you,” little did they know they would be a part of a great miracle turning at least 120 gallons of water into wine.

Dear friends, the words of Mary apply to you as well. Why? You are all servants of Christ Jesus. So, “Do whatever He tells you.”

“Do whatever He tells you.” (Mt. 6:24 & 33) Jesus says: “No one can serve two masters, for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and money… But seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be added to you.” You always put the things of God first, even in every financial concern?

“Do whatever He tells you.” Mt 22:37-39 Jesus says: “Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the great and first commandment. And a second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself.” God’s Word and prayer guide every decision you make, right? And of course, there isn’t anybody whom you do not love, right?

“Do whatever He tells you.” Mt. 5:23-24 Jesus says: “If you are offering your gift at the altar and there remember something against your brother, leave your gift there before the altar and go. First be reconciled to your brother, and then come and offer your gift.” Of course you would never leave any bitterness in your heart against another person for whom Christ died, unreconciled would you?

“Do whatever He tells you.” Mt 5:27-29 Jesus says: “You have heard that it was said, ‘You shall not commit adultery.’ But I say to you that everyone who looks at a woman with lustful intent has already committed adultery with her in his heart. If your right eye causes you to sin, tear it out and throw it away. For it is better that you lose one of your members than that your whole body be thrown into hell.” Since you all have two eyes, none of you has ever had lust of the eyes, have you?

“Do whatever He tells you.” Mt 5:43-45 Jesus says: “You have heard that it was said, ‘You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.’ But I say to you, Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, so that you may be sons of your Father who is in heaven. For he makes His sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust.” But Jesus, none of the good people of this congregation has any enemies, they love everybody.

Yes, in our text, Mary, Jesus’ mother said to the servants, “Do whatever He tells you.”

And they fill water jugs and Jesus turns the water to wine. Jesus’ first miracle in John’s Gospel points to Baptism and the Lord’s Supper. And right now you are shaking your head, “Pastor, how do you get Baptism and the Lord’s Supper out of this miracle?”

John’s Gospel is the easiest Greek to understand of all four of the Gospel, but he always has the deepest and most refreshing theological meaning. Here is Jesus, at a wedding which is about to be a bust, and He uses water and wine to make it a joyous celebration to last.

You all know that heaven is constantly spoken of as a wedding banquet. Baptism and the Lord’s Supper are the means by which Christ gives us His blessings and makes the wedding banquet a celebration which we will enjoy for eternity. Open you ears and see it?

In regard to God’s relationship to you, you have been commanded, “Do whatever He tells you.” How’s it going? You already told me how it is going with you, just as I’ve told you how it is going with me. How? Weren’t you listening, “I, a poor miserable sinner, confess unto you all my sins and iniquities with which I have ever offended you.” Yeah, I know, it is not going so well. And if we were left with Mary’s instructions as the last word to us, it would not be good news at all. We have not done as Jesus has commanded and we deserve the wrath of God as the wages due for our disobedience.

But as servants of Christ, Mary’s command to do what He tells you does not end with a word of command – nor with one of condemnation. Mary knew Christ’s desire to be gracious and bless the wedding banquet.

Jesus did as His father told Him in order to bless the wedding banquet. He never committed adultery, nor did He ever lust in His heart. He sought first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness – for you, for me, and for all people.

Even though He gave authority to all earthly rulers, He submitted to those same rulers, even when they made decisions that unjustly brought Him pain, suffering, and finally death.

All creation was His footstool, all wealth was His, yet He became poor in seeking out your righteousness.

When those who hated Him, who made Him to be their enemy, persecuted Him – He loved them.

When they jeered and laughed at Him as He struggled for breath nailed to the cross and dying – He forgave them.

With His own innocent blood and bitter suffering and death, He was reconciling to Himself all those who despise Him, who hate, who thought Him their enemy.

And so I invite you to let Mary’s words come into our ears, “Do whatever He tells you.”

Jesus says: “He that believeth and is baptized, shall be saved.” The waters of your baptism continue to cover you, for in Christ you are a new creature. Baptism is your bond and the seal of forgiveness Jesus purchased and delivers to you. As you daily remember your sin, daily remember your baptism – that while you were yet a sinner, Christ died for you, that He has come to you, and that He has made you His forgiven child.

Let Mary’s words continue to ring our ears, “Do whatever He tells you.” Jesus says: “As the Father sends me, so I send you. Whosoever sins you forgiven, they are forgiven.” Did you hear the words Christ commanded His ministers to speak to you? Did you hear them spoken to you and in them, the sacrifice that He made to purchase your forgiveness was applied to you to cover the sins you laid before Christ? Those sins are gone – believe it!

Let Mary’s words continue to ring our ears, “Do whatever He tells you.” Jesus says: “Take eat, this is My Body; take drink, this is My Blood, shed for you for the forgiveness of sins.” You eat! You drink! You partake of and receive the very body pierced and the very blood He spilled to purchase your forgiveness. You eat and drink your forgiveness, Christ dwells within you, expelling all sin from you.

Let Mary’s words continue to ring our ears, “Do whatever He tells you.” Jesus says: “Peace be with you!” As Christ says, so it is, you have peace, a peace you cannot fully comprehend – an eternal at the wedding feast of the Lamb. Amen.