



THE SECOND SUNDAY AFTER
EPIPHANY
Study Notes for the Christian Layperson

by: Rev. Travis Loeslie

Collect of the Day:

Almighty and everlasting God, who governs all things in heaven and on earth, mercifully hear the prayers of Your people and grant us Your peace through all our days; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

Introit:

Psalm 66:1-5, 20 (antiphon: Psalm 66:2; 92:1)
— *It is good to give thanks to the LORD*

Psalm:

67 (antiphon: v. 1) — *May God be gracious to us*

Old Testament Reading:

Exodus 33:12-23 — *Moses intercedes for the people*

Gradual:

Psalm 107:20-21 — *He sent out His Word and healed them*

Epistle:

Ephesians 5:22-33 — *Wives and husbands*

Verse:

Psalm 148:2 — *Alleluia. Praise Him, all His angels; praise Him, all His hosts. Alleluia.*

John 2:1-11 ESV

Author and Date:

The Holy Spirit inspired St. John to pen his Gospel. Traditional dating of John is around 90 AD. John's Gospel was written with the end "that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in His name" (John 20:31).

¹ **On the third day there was a wedding at Cana in Galilee, and the mother of Jesus was there.** ² **Jesus also was invited to the wedding with his disciples.**

- This account begins with Jesus, as He attends a wedding at Cana. In Jewish custom, wedding feasts usually lasted a week. Mary was with Jesus, and the disciples were with Jesus as well.
- Jesus is early in His ministry. By attending this wedding, Jesus dignifies the wedding as a God-pleasing event. The couple must have been delighted to have such a guest.

³ **When the wine ran out, the mother of Jesus said to him, "They have no wine."** ⁴ **And Jesus said to her, "Woman, what does this have to do with me? My hour has not yet come."** ⁵ **His mother said to the servants, "Do whatever he tells you."**

- The thirsty guests finished off the wine. Surely the bridegroom must have started to get nervous. The wedding party was just getting going and the wine was out! These were no teetotalers, neither were they a bunch of drunks. They were rejoicing in the event of a wedding.
- Mary takes the problem of the lack of wine on herself. She goes to Jesus. Jesus' phrase, "Woman, what does this have to do with me?" sounds harsh, but it is to say something greater. It's not yet Jesus' "hour." His time is not yet.

- Jesus' hour will come when He goes the way of the cross (John 3:14; 8:28; 12:32). There He will answer for the sins of the world. That hour will bring in the salvation of the world. That hour is not yet.

⁶ Now there were six stone water jars there for the Jewish rites of purification, each holding twenty or thirty gallons. ⁷ Jesus said to the servants, "Fill the jars with water." And they filled them up to the brim.

⁸ And he said to them, "Now draw some out and take it to the master of the feast." So they took it.

- The water jars remind us that these people were still under the Law. They had to purify themselves by washing for the wedding and for the meal. Jesus uses these water jars to His advantage, showing us here that His attitude toward the Law is to use it to serve the neighbor in love. Just as Jesus is "Lord of the Sabbath," here He does what no other teacher would dare to do: He turns the water of the purification jars into wine. Jesus may have looked like a wine-bibber and a libertine to the legalists. But He is the Lord of the Law and all creation.

⁹ When the master of the feast tasted the water now become wine, and did not know where it came from (though the servants who had drawn the water knew), the master of the feast called the bridegroom ¹⁰ and said to him, "Everyone serves the good wine first, and when people have drunk freely, then the poor wine. But you have kept the good wine until now."

- The master of the feast was impressed with this wine. Jesus shows that He is the true Creator exerting His omnipotence, transforming the water into wine. Jesus is the Word (*Logos*) whom the Father spoke forth of old to carry out the creation of all things (John 1:1). Jesus does a miracle, wholly in character with Jesus' activity in creation. Jesus serves the good wine!

¹¹ This, the first of his signs, Jesus did at Cana in Galilee, and manifested his glory. And his disciples believed in him.

- This first "sign" of John's Gospel, it is regarded as His first miracle in His ministry. This is very important for us. Jesus manifests His glory. He shows us that He is divine. It is an epiphany of divine glory. He shows us that His divine and human natures work together in the unity of His person to exert omnipotent force over creation.
- Jesus' disciples believed Him. The miracle confirmed their faith in Jesus. He is truly the Messiah of God. By faith in Him, every disciple of Jesus is justified before God. We can take great comfort in this Gospel.
- On top of that, Jesus does this sign at a wedding. He shows that weddings are a time of great joy for God and man alike. Jesus stands to support His institution of marriage. Jesus brings joy and delight to the marriage. This is what He does for the marriages of His people. Jesus sweetens marriage and every cross that comes in it. A Christian marriage is the greatest gift, which Jesus Himself comes to help and support.
- Jesus is the true Bridegroom, who comes to lay down His life for the Bride, the Church. He sacrifices Himself for her. He takes all her filth and wickedness on Himself. He gives her His innocence, and covers all her sins. She is regarded as righteous and holy again. This is the joy and great benefit of faith in Christ. Praise God for such a sign as this! God shows His delight in men and sweetens their crosses in life.

