**Asking God for a Blessing**

Based on [John 2:1-11](https://biblia.com/books/esv/Jn2.1-11)

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Second Sunday after the Epiphany

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It is customary that, when a man wishes to ask a woman’s hand in marriage, he has a few matters to attend to first. Perhaps he’s worked out the proposal in his mind and heart and come to the conviction that he wishes to pledge himself to this woman for better or for worse until death parts them. But first he ought to have a plan for their marriage, he must get a ring and work out the manner of the proposal, and he ought to ask for her Father’s blessing.

I don’t know where the custom of asking for the Father’s blessing came from. But it is of immense import and comfort to know that Our Heavenly Father has blessed the holy estate of matrimony. In the beginning he created it saying “For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and cling to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh.” And he commanded “Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth and subdue it.” Marriage is part of God’s design, he approves of it, sanctifies it. And whatever struggles there are in the relationship or in having and raising children, we know that those who marry and have children have God’s blessing, and he condemns no one for accepting and presuming to make full use of any good gift that he has prepared.

In today’s Gospel, we hear how Jesus blessed the marriage of a couple in Cana, both with his presence and attendance, and by performing his first miracle there. When the host ran out of wine, Jesus miraculously turned water into wine saving the couple disgrace while at the same time manifesting his glory as the Christ who had come to save his people from their shame of sin, and restore them to a right relationship with God through the joy of his own wedding feast.

Jesus was invited to a wedding in Cana. When the wine ran out, Mary—knowing who her son is—went to Jesus expecting a miracle. Jesus either rebukes or simply reminds her that saving this wedding is not his purpose. His purpose is to save the world and that was not to happen that day. Mary doesn’t take this as a rejection, but assumes Jesus is going to help and bid the servants to obey him. He then proceeds to turn twenty to thirty gallons of water into wine, and very good wine at that.

***We learn from this example that Jesus helps those who ask of him in faith.*** There is not a single passage in scripture where someone asks Jesus for help, *in faith*, where he refuses. Once, a Caananite woman asked Jesus for help in healing her demon possessed daughter, Jesus didn’t say yes, but didn’t say no either. He simply says that the purpose for which he was sent was to do miracles among his own people, and that “**It is not right to take the children’s bread and feed it to the dogs**” . But the woman persists, “**Yes, Lord, even the dogs eat the crumbs that fall from their masters**’ table.” She persisted, undeterred, and Jesus commends her faith and heals her daughter.

In the same way, Jesus mother Mary, came to Jesus for help. ***Lack of wine might seem trivial compared to a demon-possessed daughter, but the magnitude of the problem is never the issue, it is the extent of the saviour’s compassion.*** Again here, Jesus doesn’t immediately say, “Yes mother, I will help”, but he doesn’t say no either. Mary persists, undeterred, and says to the servants “do whatever he says.” Jesus does help and saves the wedding from shame and embarrasement, and provides.

***Jesus helps those who ask of him in faith.*** It may seem presumptuous, even arrogant that Mary would simply *assume* Jesus was going to help, even though he didn’t seem eager to do so. But faith does *seem* presumptuous to those who don’t have it. But we know that God helps those who ask him anything in faith, in His Name, in the Name of Jesus.

If one of my children were to come up to you and asks you to buy them an ice cream, that would seem presumptuous, even awkward. You’re not their parent. But if any of them come to me and ask, that is natural, expected. Even if I say no; they certainly had the right to ask.

When you were baptized into Christ Jesus, you became a child of God. Perhaps you are a dutiful child; maybe you have become a prodigal son. In either case, through that baptismal sign, your status has changed because God officially chose to adopt you into his household. The unbaptized have no such status. God may hear their prayers, but it is presumptuous for someone who hasn’t been formally adopted by God to ask him for anything. But as the catechism teaches, “God tenderly invites us to believe that he is our true Father, and we are his true Children, so that, ***with all boldness and confidence,*** we may ask him as dear children ask their dear father.

John the Apostle says, “And to those who did receive Jesus Christ, he gave them the right to become sons of God.” It is not presumptuous for us to pray and ask God for anything. And God doesn’t grudge our asking, only that we ask *in trust* and recognize that what we need more than anything is to be his justified and holy people. Jesus says, [**11**](http://biblehub.com/luke/11-11.htm)What father among you, if his son asks for[***d***](https://biblehub.com/esv/luke/11.htm#footnotes) a fish, will instead of a fish give him a serpent; [**12**](http://biblehub.com/luke/11-12.htm)or if he asks for an egg, will give him a scorpion? [**13**](http://biblehub.com/luke/11-13.htm)If you then, who are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will the heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him!”

Praying itself seems presumptuous, but only to those who don’t know the Heavenly Father, through His Son. But persistence in prayer is also a scandal to those who believe God to be a distant and grudging stranger. Adults can be lazy, ask once and are offended if they have to ask again. But the kingdom of God is made up of children. But to those who are the sons and daughters of God, persistence is natural to a child. And Jesus also tells a parable about an unjust judge, teaching that God’s children ought *always* to pray and not lose heart. [**2**](http://biblehub.com/luke/18-2.htm)He said, [**7**](http://biblehub.com/luke/18-7.htm)And will not God give justice to his elect, who cry to him day and night? Will he delay long over them? [**8**](http://biblehub.com/luke/18-8.htm)I tell you, he will give justice to them speedily.

Jesus first miracle was blessing a wedding with wine. Of course, God blesses marriage. He sent his Son into the world to marry his bride, the church. Therefore, as we approach the Lord’s Table this day

**7**Let us rejoice and exult

and give him the glory,

for the marriage of the Lamb has come,

and his Bride has made herself ready;

**8**it was granted her to clothe herself

with fine linen, bright and pure”—

for the fine linen is the righteous deeds of the saints.

**9**And the angel said to me, “Write this: Blessed are those who are invited to the marriage supper of the Lamb.” And he said to me, “These are the true words of God.”