



SERMON DISCUSSION GUIDE  
FOR ALL SAINTS SMALL GROUPS

"The Good Wine "	Rev. Tim Frickenschmidt	November 7, 2021
<p><b>OLD TESTAMENT READING</b></p> <p>Song of Songs 1:2, 5-6; 4:1</p> <p>Let him kiss me with the kisses of his mouth! For your love is better than wine... 5 I am very dark, but lovely, O daughters of Jerusalem, like the tents of Kedar, like the curtains of Solomon. 6 Do not gaze at me because I am dark, because the sun has looked upon me. My mother's sons were angry with me; they made me keeper of the vineyards, but my own vineyard I have not kept! 4:1 Behold, you are beautiful, my love, behold, you are beautiful!...</p> <p><b>EPISTLE READING</b></p> <p>Ephesians 5:15-20</p> <p>Look carefully then how you walk, not as unwise but as wise, 16 making the best use of the time, because the days are evil. 17 Therefore do not be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is. 18 And do not get drunk with wine, for that is debauchery, but be filled with the Spirit, 19 addressing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody to the Lord with your heart, 20 giving thanks always and for everything to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ...</p> <p><b>GOSPEL READING</b></p>	<p><b>All Saints Sunday</b></p> <p>The Church celebrates the tension between sorrow over the deaths of her saints and the joy of their homegoing at this time of year by turning from the November 1 memorial service, when we read the names of saints who have died in the previous year, to a celebration of the eternal life of the church. We welcome new members and celebrate baptisms on the first Sunday following All Saints Day. Ultimately, why do we celebrate? Why does John tell the story of this first miracle of Jesus's public ministry in the course of a wedding celebration, the first party we see in the New Testament? This celebration story serves as a metaphor for all of Jesus's ministry and message: The world's wine will always run out, but the wine of Jesus brings joy--true joy, festival joy--and never runs out.</p> <p><b>The End</b></p> <p>The wine has run out. The master of the feast must make sure that there is enough wine because when the wine ends, the party ends. This crisis, more than just a social embarrassment, mirrors Jesus's judgement on the world. The world's wine always runs out, whether in work, in marriage, or in partying and pleasure. The life that the world affords always ends at some point, contrary to the Robert Earle King song. The party really does end; that is reality.</p> <p><b>The Miracle</b></p> <p>John chooses this miracle of Jesus's first public act, done in the midst of his new disciples, to introduce Jesus and to define his ministry by it. But why this miracle, a rather frivolous show of generosity, set in the middle of a party, underwhelming in nature but excessive in scope—about 4,500 glasses of wine, the best wine? Jesus reveals his entire life's goal by this miracle before he even starts towards achieving it. His goal is joy, true joy, festival joy. People want to have fun, but Jesus wants us to have real joy. He challenges us as if to say, "If you want to reject me, fine, but don't do it because you think I am a killjoy, because you think life with me is somehow joyless."</p>	

John 2:1-11 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. 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." 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. 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." 11 This, the first of his signs, Jesus did at Cana in Galilee, and manifested his glory. And his disciples believed in him.

### **The Hour**

Jesus ironically answers his mother, who has called his attention to the wine running out and calls her "Woman." Meaning no disrespect, he is troubled by what he knows will be his own "wedding day" to come, when he will be wed to his believers, and blood, not wine will flow from Him to cover our sins. He fully recognizes the cost of becoming joined to his bride, and it is everything—all his blood. He knows already that this day is coming, and he is prepared to pour out his whole life to be joined to us forever.

On All Saints Day, we remember that this sacrifice truly extends to all those who love him, not just the beautiful or worthy, but the tired, the disobedient, the disillusioned, the weak, the poor. Grahame Greene says that God especially finds us in our failure and our loss. "The world needed a God to die for the half-hearted and corrupt." For those still trying to find life in the wine of this world, Jesus is able to make a saint where before there was no saint. For those who say, "Not for me," he answers with infinite, unending, ineffable joy.

### **Discussion**

1. Consider a joyless life. How do we all try to fill in this void and generate happiness on our own? What happens to us if we give up on trying to find joy? Is there someone you know who has given up on life? Pray now for him or her and ask Jesus to enter their lives and bring joy.
2. Now consider the difference between joy and happiness. What gives you happiness? Joy? Where does the line fade between the two, if at all? Discuss the transforming power of the Holy Spirit in changing our response to the events of life, the ups and the downs.
3. Consider the events of the life of Jesus, and thank Him that his joy comes from knowing us, and not from his sufferings. Does this knowledge change the way you think about your fellow human being? Think of someone who is far away from Jesus and pray for Him to come into his or her life.

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