

1/17/2010

THE PRAYER OF THE DAY Almighty and everlasting God, who governs all things in heaven and on earth, prepare us as the bride of Christ for service in this world and eternal life in heaven; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

THE OLD TESTAMENT LESSON Isaiah 62:1–5

(As the bridegroom rejoices over the bride, so shall your God rejoice over you.)

1 For Zion's sake I will not keep silent, for Jerusalem's sake I will not remain quiet, till her righteousness shines out like the dawn, her salvation like a blazing torch. 2 The nations will see your righteousness, and all kings your glory; you will be called by a new name that the mouth of the LORD will bestow. 3 You will be a crown of splendor in the LORD's hand, a royal diadem in the hand of your God.

4 No longer will they call you Deserted, or name your land Desolate. But you will be called Hephzibah, and your land Beulah; for the LORD will take delight in you, and your land will be married. 5 As a young man marries a maiden, so will your sons marry you; as a bridegroom rejoices over his bride, so will your God rejoice over you.

THE EPISTLE LESSON 1 Corinthians 12:1–11

(The Spirit bestows many gifts but for one purpose—that God may be glorified and His Church edified.)

1 Now about spiritual gifts, brothers, I do not want you to be ignorant. 2 You know that when you were pagans, somehow or other you were influenced and led astray to mute idols. 3 Therefore I tell you that no one who is speaking by the Spirit of God says, "Jesus be cursed," and no one can say, "Jesus is Lord," except by the Holy Spirit.

4 There are different kinds of gifts, but the same Spirit. 5 There are different kinds of service, but the same Lord. 6 There are different kinds of working, but the same God works all of them in all men. 7 Now to each one the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good. 8 To one there is given through the Spirit the message of wisdom, to another the message of knowledge by means of the same Spirit, 9 to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healing by that one Spirit, 10 to another miraculous powers, to another prophecy, to another distinguishing between spirits, to another speaking in different kinds of tongues, and to still another the interpretation of tongues. 11 All these are the work of one and the same Spirit, and he gives them to each one, just as he determines.

THE GOSPEL LESSON John 2:1–11

(The first miracle of Jesus at Cana of Galilee, where He turned water into wine.)

1 On the third day a wedding took place at Cana in Galilee. Jesus' mother was there, 2 and Jesus and his disciples had also been invited to the wedding. 3 When the wine was gone, Jesus' mother said to him, "They have no more wine." 4 **"Dear woman, why do you involve me?"** Jesus replied. **"My time has not yet come."** 5 His mother said to the servants, "Do whatever he tells you."

6 Nearby stood six stone water jars, the kind used by the Jews for ceremonial washing, each holding from twenty to thirty gallons. 7 Jesus said to the servants, "Fill the jars with water"; so they filled them to the brim. 8 Then he told them, "Now draw some out and take it to the master of the banquet." They did so, 9 and the master of the banquet tasted the water that had been turned into wine. He did not realize where it had come from, though the servants who had drawn the water knew. Then he called the bridegroom aside 10 and said, "Everyone brings out the choice wine first and then the cheaper wine after the guests have had too much to drink; but you have saved the best till now."

11 This, the first of his miraculous signs, Jesus performed at Cana in Galilee. He thus revealed his glory, and his disciples put their faith in him.

THE SERMON

Jesus Helps Those in Need, Go to Him for Someone

INTRO - A couple of years ago Dave Nufer, and Josh, and I were fishing for silver salmon and not catching any. After a while we saw a guide we knew, Andy Couch, pull up near to us. Everyone in his boat caught their limit in one hole we wouldn't have thought was a good place to fish. As he was leaving we went to talk to him. He told us where and how he was fishing. We fished in that hole and we caught out limit. Before I go fishing, I ask advice from people who might know more. Those hints or tips are valuable and can make a difference.

I. Before we get to the meat of this sermon, please learn tip, or a quick valuable lesson from Jesus. The young married couple in our Bible lesson was in trouble. But, they didn't wait till they were in trouble before they went to Jesus. They invited him to their wedding first. When they were in trouble He was already there for them. The lesson for married people, for all people, work on your relationship with Jesus now. When trouble comes Jesus is already there.

INTRO 2 - Now to the main lesson for us from today's story. About 15 years ago a number of books came out called, "Random Acts of Kindness." These books recommended a person do something kind for another person without telling them. One such idea was to that as you go through the drive through at a fast food restaurant you pay for the people behind you. Imagine you buy your meal, and leave another \$20.00. Tell the person at the window, please use this for the meal of the person behind me, if there is any left, keep it for yourself. And, if you would do something for me, please tell them, "God Bless You." That would surprise a person, show kindness, and share the love of Jesus. Not a bad idea.

I. In our lesson we see someone help another person anonymously, by going to Jesus himself for them.

A. In our lesson this young married couple was in trouble.

1. In those days when a wedding happened the groom and his friends went to the home of the bride and had the wedding. Then they brought her to the grooms house and partied. These parties sometimes lasted a week or even two.
2. Being part of this town these people had obviously been to the weddings of other people. They had a social and even legal obligation to provide an equally good party for others. In fact, if they didn't there are some records that suggest they could even be open to a law suit.
3. Imagine starting out your marriage with the shame of failing a social obligation. Even worse, imagine starting out with the debt of a lawsuit. If you hadn't had enough money to provide for the first wedding, how would you find enough to pay a second time, more than you could afford a first time.
4. They were in trouble.

B. But someone came to their aid, anonymously, with a random act of kindness.

1. Mary went to Jesus and told them the problem. Mary knew all she had been told by the angels about her son, he was the promised Messiah, the Son of God.
2. Still, she may not have known everything about her son. She may not have known that He would die and rise to save the world from its sins, and to offer eternal life in heaven to all people through faith in Him.
 - a. She probably didn't expect the response of Jesus to her. **4 "Dear**

woman, why do you involve me?" It was actually a somewhat rude response.

b. She probably didn't understand Jesus' statement, "**My time has not yet come.**" But, Jesus had to fulfill the prophecies of the Old Testament, and God had a plan for him.

3. Nonetheless, Mary went to Jesus, and even though it was a different response than He expected, Jesus helped the people Mary went to Him about. He turned water into hundreds of gallons of wine.

II. Who do you know who is in need? Do you know someone having trouble with family, or a substance, or work, or other personal issues? Do you know someone who is ill, or has marriage problems, or who does not have faith in Jesus? How about the people in Haiti devastated by that earthquake this week?

A. You may not be at the wedding with Jesus where you can talk to Him face to face, but you can talk to Him.

1. Jesus is the Son of God, God Himself.

2. He is the Lord of the universe, full of love and mercy to die for all people, full of power to rise again defeat the devil Himself and death.

3. Jesus tells us to come to Him in prayer.

B. I've heard even Christians say, well, if we can't do anything else, "at least we can pray", actually diminishing the power of prayer.

1. Jesus calls us to go to Him in prayer. Time after time he calls us to pray, to trust God, to pray without ceasing, to go to Him

2. Jesus promises to answer prayer. **7 "Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you.**

3. One of the very best things you can do for someone is to pray for them, better at times even than giving money, or helping in another way.

4. When you pray you allow God Himself to help someone, in a better way than we know, in His wisdom and power and mercy.

C. A couple of weeks ago I told you I would be focusing on how Jesus wants us to act and live as Christians. What holy lives should we be living? It may not seem like much, but it is a big thing, go to Jesus on behalf of someone else, and let Him work. Prayer should be a daily part of our lives, and prayer for others a holy act of kindness

CONCLUSION - I have a personal prayer list, and many of you are possibly on it. I pray for those in trouble, those with ill health, I pray for health and strength, for faith and for families. I am convinced that God hears and answers all those prayers in ways that He knows best in His wisdom. One of my favorite ways to pray for God is to thank Him for prayers answered. I have kept my prayer lists for the last 4 or 5 years. They are in the back of my devotional book. There are so many people I wanted to help, but they were beyond my ability. I prayed for them . . . and God has answered in wonderful ways.

Today, through the example of Mary, God calls us to a random act of kindness for someone else. Go to Jesus in prayer for them.

