

## **Lent Day 3**

Friday February 16, 2018

**Reading:** John 2:1-12

<sup>6</sup> Nearby stood six stone water jars, the kind used by the Jews for ceremonial washing, each holding from twenty to thirty gallons.

### **Reflection**

Have you ever tried to invite someone to enter the kingdom of God? Maybe you've explained the need for Jesus's sacrifice and given an invitation for that person to put their trust in Jesus as Lord and Saviour. The times I have tried to do this myself, I've received the response, "I'm a good person!" The thinking that seems to be behind the statement is: God should have no problem taking me because, all in all, I'm not that bad. I don't hurt people intentionally. I'm a decent person. In short, they shouldn't need the grace of God because they should (in their own opinion) be found acceptable based on their own merits. And, if we're really honest, it's not just them out there who think this way. We Christians are just as guilty. We view salvation as an event that happened back then and since then God has been pretty lucky to have us; we may have need grace to get in, but we stay in because we are so good.

Jesus changes water into wine. This is perhaps the most well known miracle, maybe because so many groups try to use it for their agenda. What I want to highlight is what water he turns into wine. The jars that Jesus orders to be filled with water are jars used for ceremonial washing. This was important to the Jewish people as being clean and unclean were important categories. To be clean meant you were able to worship, but to be unclean meant unable to worship. This was a part of what it meant to be good and acceptable to God in that day. Jesus takes that water and produces wine — good wine. Wine is a symbol of God's kingdom and God's blessing, so it is significant when Jesus takes the ceremonial cleansing water and changes it into the wine of the kingdom, a symbol of the new age now present.

This is significant for us and for those we share Jesus with because it points to the reality that our merit is not how we get in or stay in. Rather, it is by God's grace alone in Jesus Christ. Our good, sadly, is not good enough. Not because God is a wrathful tyrant, but because he is holy. Just like a mother isn't a tyrant because she won't allow you to sit down to eat until your hands are clean. God goes further than the mother because he makes not just the hands clean but the whole person. So, participating in lent isn't about producing merits God will finally accept us by, but is a participation in the transformation he is producing in us from good to his.

### **Prayer**

Lord, cleanse us and we will be clean, wash us and we will be whiter than snow. We thank you for this great work which you have done in Christ Jesus and we pray that you will continue to bring us to your kingdom. Amen.