

Sermon – John 2.1-11 (Epiphany 2 – 2022)

Let us pray: Lord God, heavenly Father, we thank You, that by Your grace You have instituted holy matrimony, in which You keep us from unchastity, and other offenses: We beseech You to send Your blessing upon every husband and wife, that they may not provoke each other to anger and strife, but live peaceably together in love and godliness, receive Your gracious help in all temptations, and raise their children in accordance with Your will. Grant that we all might walk before You in purity and holiness, put our trust in You, and lead such lives on earth, that in the world to come we may have everlasting life, through Your beloved Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one true God, now and forever. Amen.

Grace to you and peace from God, our Father, and our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. Amen.

On the third day there was a wedding in Cana of Galilee, and the mother of Jesus was there.

² Now both Jesus and His disciples were invited to the wedding.

³ And when they ran out of wine, the mother of Jesus said to Him, "They have no wine."

⁴ Jesus said to her, "Woman, what does your concern have to do with Me? My hour has not yet come."

⁵ His mother said to the servants, "Whatever He says to you, do *it*."

⁶ Now there were set there six waterpots of stone, according to the manner of purification of the Jews, containing twenty or thirty gallons apiece.

⁷ Jesus said to them, "Fill the waterpots with water." And they filled them up to the brim.

⁸ And He said to them, "Draw *some* out now, and take *it* to the master of the feast." And they took *it*.

⁹ When the master of the feast had tasted the water that was made wine, and did not know where it came from (but the servants who had drawn the water knew), the master of the feast called the bridegroom.

¹⁰ And he said to him, "Every man at the beginning sets out the good wine, and when the *guests* have well drunk, then the inferior. You have kept the good wine until now!"

¹¹ This beginning of signs Jesus did in Cana of Galilee, and manifested His glory; and His disciples believed in Him.

These are Your words heavenly Father. Sanctify us by the truth. Your word is truth. Amen.

Dear fellow redeemed,

Think of the love stories you might find in any tv series or movie made in the last 20 years. Now there are some that remain fairly innocent and don't really go any farther than a kiss. There are *many* where they shack up or fornicate, and abuse the gift of sex, which God has

given only to the marriage relationship. But how many movies made in the last 20 years shows a love story where a boy and girl fall in love, live chastely, and remain chaste into marriage. Any in the last 30, or 40 years, or more?

If any exists, they are rare. That is not a story that is often told. Instead the storytellers often tell a story of rising sexual tensions and passions, which manifest in fornication.

The culture has normalized this, so that many try to follow the example, and expect such passions in their own relationships. And in these relationships, the personal goals are more frequently self-fulfillment rather than self-giving for the sake of the other.

God established marriage in the Garden of Eden as the lifelong union of one man and one woman. God has joined them together to be one flesh. To this union alone God has given the gift of sex for intimacy and so that children may be born to and be raised by their biological parents. Even after the fall, this remains God's design. But to the world, God's design is vanilla and even offensive. There were those who scoffed at Tim Tebow, whose chastity was publicly broadcast. There were those who reviled Mike Pence, when it became known that he safeguarded his marriage by never allowing himself to attend a business meeting one on one with a woman. But they honored marriage.

And as ordinary as marriage may seem, we ought to honor God's design for marriage, too.

It is worthy of great honor. Christ honored marriage by His presence at the wedding in Cana, and also by performing His first recorded miracle there. It was a wedding celebration they were enjoying. According to the custom of the day, the couple would have had been betrothed, which was tantamount to marriage, yet they did not yet live together as husband and wife. The groom was busy preparing a home for his bride. Once all was prepared, he would come and get his bride and bring her with the wedding party to their new home where they would have a long celebration with family and friends. So this was a significant time in the life of the couple. Here began their life together as a married couple. And here, the eternal Word is present in the flesh. Almighty God is sitting among them. The Creator of marriage is with them, honoring their marriage, blessing them with His presence, and saving them from the shame of running out of wine.

He shows us that the 6th Commandment ought to be kept, that marriage should be carefully entered into, and that marriage and chastity should be fought for.

God gives us the 6th Commandment as well as the other Commandments, because He wants us to know what is good and right which He wills us to do, and also so that we may look into the mirror of God's demands for perfection, and see our many blemishes, in order that we may know our need for a Savior. But He also give us the Commandments because He loves us and these Commandments are given for our own good.

Through the 6th Commandment, God protects marriage, and when marriage is protected, children are protected, families are guarded. And when families are healthy, this strengthens communities.

We have seen, and will continue to see where the 6th Commandment is broken, damage frequently follows in its wake. It is clearly shown in Scripture. Men who married more than one wife invited much trouble into their lives from their wives, but also between the children of their wives. You also have the example of David and Bathsheba, and the subsequent sins that this led to. It is evident today. Pornography trains people to objectify others for their own gratification, and harms peoples' abilities to form healthy relationships. Sexual licentiousness causes hurt and loneliness. Cohabitation trains couples to live selfishly, and reduces the chances of a lasting marriage. Divorce creates instability in children's lives. Fatherless homes increase children's chances of promiscuity, alcohol and drug abuse, and criminal activity. Homosexuality, deprives children of a father and a mother. Selfishness in a relationship creates unhappiness. And rejection of the roles of husband and wife leads to conflict in the home.

Where are the voices in society that are pointing out the root of many of the ills of society? There are few, because the overwhelming message of society is follow the appetites of your sexual desires. Live selfishly. Seek your self-fulfillment first, before that of your spouse and your children.

And so we find to be true this quote attributed to G.K. Chesterton, "The most extraordinary thing in the world is an ordinary man and an ordinary woman and their ordinary children."

Chastity and marriage is truly to be honored! God established a good thing! Christ honored these things by His presence at the wedding of Cana. He gives us the 6th Commandment because he loves us.

God loves the little children. He intends children to be born to their biological father and mother, and to be raised by them. This will give the children the best chance of stability and safety in their lives. The best gift parents can give to their children is training in God's Word,

that they may know Christ their Savior, and know His will. But after that, parents can give their children the gift of a good marriage filled with faithfulness, love, and selflessness.

Yes, we hold marriage and chastity in high honor, but yet, there is guilt, knowing that we have not honored these as we ought. In thought, word, and deed, we have sinned against the 6th Commandment. Whether they are sexual sins, or acts of selfishness at the expense of a spouse, or not honoring the marriage of our parents. We have hurt others, and we may also be ones who have been hurt.

But Christ had perfect honor for the marriage estate and for chastity. In fact, He was the perfect groom, giving His life in selfless love, for the bride, the Church. By His death, there is complete forgiveness for you. His righteousness clothes you, that you may be pure again. In Him, you have healing. You

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost.

But this Commandment is so abused today, in so many ways that the 6th Commandment is the one that takes the longest to go through in catechetics.

And the temptations against the 6th Commandment are powerful to lead people not only into sin, but they also have left a swath of casualties of the soul in their wake.

And so we strive, whether married or single, to keep our hearts, bodies and minds, chaste and decent, keeping the marriage bed undefiled.

And we strive

Corruption because of broken homes

Mass school shooters. Fatherless homes

Offensive.

Against normalcy. Don't get sensitized, but remain offended by the f

G. K. Chesterton once said, "The most extraordinary thing in the world is an ordinary man and an ordinary woman and their ordinary children."

But Christ honored marriage .

Several years back I was having a discussion with someone about homosexuality. He was arguing that Christians are selective about which Bible passages they hold to. He said that

we are obsessed with passages that condemn homosexuality, but ignore other passages, such as ones that forbid the eating shellfish or of wearing clothes made of mixed fabrics.

I explained to him about the different kinds of laws in the OT, and that not all the laws of the Old Testament are binding today. I'll bring this up later. And then, I told him about the passages in the New Testament relevant to homosexuality, such as Jesus repeating the words of Genesis that defined marriage as a man being joined to his wife and becoming one flesh with her. There are also the words of Paul in Romans 1 speaking of homosexuality as vile passions, and then 1 Corinthians 9 where he says that homosexuals and sodomites will not inherit the kingdom of God, and also 1 Timothy 1, where Paul calls sodomites lawless.

Then the fellow completely dismissed the passages I brought up including Jesus' words that I mentioned, and responded "but where in the Bible does *Jesus* say anything about homosexuality?" Well, I had to remind him of his original accusation that he may see who really is the one picking and choosing which Scripture to follow.

The public debate over homosexuality and gay marriage has dwindled considerably in recent years, though there remains little flares of debate here and there. The statistics may show us the reason why. In 1996, 27% of the American population supported the legal recognition of gay marriages. (And we understand that gay marriage is an impossibility by definition.) The pressure to accept homosexuality and gay marriage was on. In 2011, the majority of Americans supported the legal recognition of gay marriages. Four years later, the public's support rose to 60%. This was the year of the Supreme Court's Obergefell decision, which required all states to recognize gay marriage. And though the public debate is

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit. As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be, forevermore. Amen.