



## First Baptist Church At The Villages

Jesus: Seeing & Believing • Miracle at Cana • John 2:1-11 •

For Use by Groups 2/23 through 2/29/2020

### MAIN POINT

Jesus turned water into wine in order to display His glory and compel us to believe in Him.

### INTRODUCTION

As your group time begins, use this section to introduce the topic of discussion.

**Has there been a life event that left you saying, “That was a miracle!”**

**Do you think people in general are skeptical of miracles? Why or why not?**

**Why do you think it is important to study Jesus’ miracles?**

Miracles point us beyond the amazing things Jesus did and reveal the amazing God He is. This study looks at a miracle Jesus performed at a wedding celebration. Studying this passage will help us see Jesus’ glory and call us to faith in Jesus as God’s One and Only Son.

### UNDERSTANDING

Unpack the biblical text to discover what the Scripture says or means about a particular topic.

| Have a volunteer read John 2:1-5.

**Why do you think Mary turned to Jesus when they ran out of wine?**

**What was Jesus saying to His mother in His response? Would you have expected Him to respond differently?**

Some people might misunderstand Jesus’ reply to His mother (v. 4). Although Jesus words may seem harsh to us, He was respectfully clarifying that His life and mission would be determined by His Heavenly Father, not earthly relationships. Mary had a clear picture of how Jesus could

help her friends. However, in that moment of crisis, she didn't seem to have the same grasp on the reason Jesus had come into the world. As He reminded her, His work had to be done in a way that accomplished His mission.

**What might have happened if Jesus were not thinking about His mission when asked to do the miracle?**

**Does the interaction between Jesus and Mary mean we should not involve Jesus in our everyday concerns and needs?**

**When we approach Jesus with our concerns, how can we show Him we understand there is more at stake than just what we want?**

Jesus would only perform a miracle if it signified His role as the Messiah. Mary couldn't expect Him to provide wine just to help out her friends in their crisis. Providing wine would have to accomplish an eternal purpose. Such a miracle would have to single Him out as God's One and Only Son who had come to extend the gift of salvation to all people everywhere.

| Have a volunteer read John 2:6-11.

**Jesus had just said it wasn't His hour, so why did He perform a miracle anyway?**

**What happened between the time the servants filled the jars with water and the chief servant had a taste?**

Jesus didn't hesitate to meet the need that Mary brought to Him. Once she shared it with Him, He turned His attention to meeting it by instructing the servants to fill six stone water jars. After the servants filled the pots to the brim with water, Jesus performed a miracle. He turned the water into wine, and the chief servant made the first declaration about it. The chief servant must have been responsible for making sure the guests enjoyed themselves. Tasting the sample that had been given to him, he registered his surprise at the quality of the wine and complemented the groom for providing it. He went on to point out that usually the best wine was served first.

**How does Jesus' power slip in quietly when we're unaware? How can we be more aware that Jesus is working? What difference would it make in our lives if we were more aware?**

**What does Jesus' meeting this need teach us about Jesus' concern for our needs and His ability to meet them? Does this mean that Jesus will meet every need we bring to Him in the way we desire? Why or why not?**

Jesus' response to Mary's request gives us a glimpse into His interest in our concerns and struggles. He could have ignored Mary's request for help, indicating that He considered her concern to be a trivial matter not worthy of His attention. But that's not what happened at all. He addressed the need she brought to Him, which showed His concern for a family on the verge of embarrassment and shame. His response demonstrates His concern for what concerns us. No issue or need in our lives is too small for Him.

**How did Jesus do far more than satisfy the partygoers' thirst or cover the host's shame? How does Jesus supply far more than enough for you?**

**How have you discovered that what Jesus offers is far superior to what the world offers?**

**How does Jesus' first miracle encourage us to hang on until the end? What difference should it make in our lives to know there are more and better things to come?**

Reflecting on the miracle leads us to see the wisdom in making Christ the Lord of our lives. If He has the power to turn water into wine, we can count on Him to turn our sorrow into joy as we serve Him. In addition, we can rest in the assurance that He's concerned about what impacts us. Therefore, we can trust Him to guide us through our struggles in a way that will glorify Him.

## APPLICATION

Help your group identify how the truths from the Scripture passage apply directly to their lives.

**Read John 2:11 again. How does Jesus want us to go beyond the miracles? What does He want us to see about Him?**

**How have you seen God's glory in a way that has led you to trust Jesus more deeply than you did a year ago? Ten years ago? Last week?**

**Do you think we need miracles to deepen our understanding of God? If not, then what do we need?**

**How has this study shown you Jesus is more than a miracle worker? How has it strengthened your desire to focus on His mission rather than your ambitions?**

## PRAYER

Close your group time in prayer. Pray that we would see Jesus, not just as a miracle worker, but as our Lord and Savior who loves us and wants us to look more like Himself. Pray that we would be concerned about His mission and not our own desires.

# COMMENTARY

| John 2:1-11

2:1-5. John's Gospel says Jesus performed His first miracle at the wedding in Cana. According to Bible scholars, a few towns in the Galilean area at that time might have been this Cana. It was probably the village fewer than 10 miles from Nazareth, Jesus' home town. Like the Nazarenes, the people of Cana weren't wealthy. Most of the residents probably were farmers or craftsmen.

The lack of money made things like weddings difficult to afford. The groom's family usually hosted the celebration, which could last as long as a week or more. They had to supply enough food and drink for their guests to enjoy themselves the whole time. This would have been very expensive. To make the situation more stressful, running out of food and drinks early was very embarrassing. Hospitality was very important to people in Jesus' time, and it brought tremendous pride to a host family. Not being able to provide for their guests would be shameful.

Jesus' mother, Mary, understood the shame her friends would feel if they ran out of wine. Apparently she had come to the wedding to help the family with the details related to the celebration. When the news reached her that the wine was gone, she was very concerned because she loved her friends.

Of course, Mary didn't have any way of helping her friends, so she asked Jesus. No one else at the wedding feast knew Jesus like His mother. The years after Jesus' birth had given her plenty of time to think about everything that had happened when He was born. Years earlier, the angel Gabriel visited her to tell her that she would bear God's Son (Luke 1:26-38). From that moment on, she must have watched Jesus very closely to see just who He would grow up to be.

Mary knew Jesus could help her friends, but she didn't seem to understand why Jesus had come into the world. As He reminded her, His work had to be done in a way that accomplished His mission. Therefore, He would only perform a miracle if it showed He was the Messiah. She couldn't expect Him to provide wine just to help out her friends. Providing wine would have to accomplish an eternal purpose. Such a miracle would have to show Him to be God's One and Only Son who had come to give the gift of salvation to all people everywhere.

Jesus was talking about His mission by saying that His hour had not yet come. When He talked about His hour, Jesus was thinking about the time of His death and resurrection. For Jesus, His hour meant dying on the cross and rising again. In everything that Jesus said and did

throughout His ministry, He never forgot that He would face the cross. That meant He would provide wine at a wedding only if it would help Him complete His mission.

As He reminded His mother of His mission, Jesus spoke to her with respect and kindness. In the original language, the term woman showed Jesus' love for His mother. He used the same word of love when He spoke to His mother from the cross.

With His response to Mary, Jesus shows us something important. We should think carefully about the needs we bring to Jesus. When we look at them in light of God's will and the need to bring glory to His Son, we are able to evaluate them properly. Like Mary, sometimes we forget our Savior's mission and our need to glorify Him in everything. Mary's response to Jesus shows us something important about her relationship with Him. She brought her need to Jesus, and then she trusted Him to take care of it in the right way. That's why she told the servants to do whatever Jesus told them.

2:6-10. Jesus didn't hesitate to meet the need Mary brought to Him. Once she shared it, He turned His attention to meeting it by telling the servants to fill six stone water jars. John pointed out that the water pots had been placed there for the purpose of ceremonial purification practices. For instance, one of the most common purification ceremonies using water was hand washing (Mark 7:3). Jewish people in that day considered water stored in clay pots as unclean and not good for ceremonial use (Lev. 11:33). However, water kept in stone pots was thought to be free from contamination, which made it fine to use in purification ceremonies.

After the servants filled the pots with water, Jesus performed a miracle. He turned the water into wine, and the chief servant had the first response. The chief servant must have been responsible for making sure the guests enjoyed themselves. Tasting the sample that had been given to him, he was surprised at how good it was and complemented the groom for providing it. He went on to say that usually the best wine was served first.

As the banquet continued, the guests would usually be served older wine that didn't taste as good. But the groom and his family had done something special by waiting to serve the best wine. As a result of the happy surprise, the guests would enjoy the taste of the fresh wine. At the same time, the poor host family would enjoy the honor of having provided it for guests. Because of what Jesus did for Mary, we know that He is interested in our concerns and struggles. He could have ignored Mary's request for help if He thought it wasn't important, but that's not what happened at all. He addressed the need she brought to Him, which showed His concern for a family that might be embarrassed. Notice that Jesus took decisive action to fix the problem. Jesus is concerned about what concerns us. No issue or need in our lives is too small for Him.

Notice that during this time, Jesus didn't call attention to Himself. He kept silent when the chief servant talked about the quality of the wine. He wanted to remain in the shadows, unwilling to say anything about His miracle. Only the servants who filled up the water pots knew that something miraculous had happened. Perhaps Mary smiled in the quiet satisfaction that came with knowing Jesus had performed the miracle, but she didn't say anything either.

Jesus' silence makes the reason behind the miracle that much more difficult to understand. When Jesus performed a miracle, He had a definite purpose in mind. Apparently the purpose of the miracle at Cana wasn't to show everyone at the wedding celebration His miracle-working power. Otherwise He would have said something about it at the celebration. He had an excellent opportunity to make such a declaration, but He didn't. Yet, the miracle served a valuable purpose for people devoted to Jesus. It taught a life lesson that His disciples might not have grasped at the moment. But over the course of time, it would become clearer to them as well as to us.

Many Bible scholars agree that Jesus provided a symbol for the disciples when He turned the water into wine. The miracle symbolized the difference between the lifeless religion of the Jews and a growing relationship with Jesus. The banquet with no more wine represented the spiritual emptiness of the people of Israel during that time. By contrast, the wine Jesus provided symbolized the fresh joy and blessing that came with knowing and following Him. While the Old Testament provided glimpses of God to His people, Jesus Christ alone provided the perfect picture of Him. Devotion to Christ would turn someone in a dead religion into a person who can experience new life that's full of true joy and lasting fulfillment.

2:11. John referred to Jesus' first miracle as a sign. At the wedding celebration, He did more than merely turn water into wine. Like a sign on a road that pointed a traveler toward a city, Jesus' miracle pointed to the fact that He was God's Son—the Messiah that the people of Israel had been waiting for. Other signs would be given along the way to show that God had kept His promise and sent His Son who would provide the way of salvation.

Jesus revealed God's presence in Himself when He turned the water into wine. At that point, people could see that He was a man, but He was also God. Obviously, the miracle had made quite an impact on Jesus' disciples. They could see that the miracle signaled His identity as God's Son and displayed His glory as the Messiah. What they saw had a significant effect on them. John said that it caused them to believe in Him even more. Previously they had placed their trust in Him as the Messiah and devoted themselves to following Him. However, their faith in Him still needed to grow. The miracle they beheld helped strengthen their faith in Him as God's Son.