

Jesus Turns Water into Wine

John 2:1-11

PPT Title

Jesus Turns Water into Wine

Main Point: Jesus performed miracles to show people that He was God.

Key Verse: *That was the first of Jesus' miraculous signs. He did it at Cana in Galilee. Jesus showed His glory by doing it. And His disciples put their faith in Him.* - John 2:11

Props: Oven mitts from last week; Small tub of water, small bowl of dirt, towel; One glass pitcher full of water, one ceramic jar or pitcher with red powdered drink mix secretly at the bottom, ladle, plastic cup

BACKGROUND/REVIEW

Say: Jesus had stepped into time to come to the earth. Though He was almighty God, He willingly allowed His infinite power to be harnessed for a time. Do you remember how we illustrated this last week? **Teacher:** Put on the oven mitts from last week. Jesus came into the world as a human baby. The boy Jesus grew up. He obeyed His earthy parents (Luke 2:51) and He abided in His heavenly Father. This week we begin to study Jesus' life as a grown man. Today we will watch as the gloves come off. Remove the mitts.



Ask: Who can remember the name of Jesus' cousin? (Hint: He was Elizabeth and Zechariah's son.) *John.* **Say:** John was a very special person. He was chosen by God to prepare the way for Jesus. When John was a grown man, he lived out in the wilderness and preached that the Messiah was about to come. Many people believed what John said, and followed him. Others did not like what John said (Matthew 14:3-4).

One day, when Jesus was 30 years old, John saw Jesus walking toward him. Listen to what John said about Jesus:

John said, "Look! The Lamb of God! He takes away the sin of the world!" - John 1:29b

Several of John's followers believed that Jesus was the Messiah, so they started to follow Jesus (John 1:37). They were called Jesus' disciples.

THE FIRST SIGN (John 2:1-11)



Say: Three days later, there was a wedding at Cana in Galilee. Jesus' mother, Mary, was there. Jesus and His handful of disciples were also invited. The Bible lists five disciples at this time (John 1:35-49). It seems that Mary may have been helping with the wedding feast. Perhaps she was friends with the young couple's parents, or maybe they were even related. Weddings were a fun and joyous occasion back then, just as they are now. In Bible times, weddings were a huge celebration that could last up to a week (Judges 14:12). Guests would eat and drink and celebrate the new life that the couple was beginning together. Can you imagine providing food and drinks for all those guests for several days? (**Teacher:** For young children, you may want to say: Just like a birthday party usually has cake, a wedding in Jesus' time usually had a special drink called wine.) For some reason, at this wedding feast, the couple ran out of wine. Maybe the couple did not plan very well. Or maybe the couple could not afford to buy enough

wine to last throughout the celebration. Running out of wine would be very embarrassing for the couple. Also, with nothing left to drink, guests would have left early, cutting the celebration short.

When the wine was gone, Jesus' mother said to Him, "They have no more wine." - John 2:3



Mary brought the problem to Jesus. She was one of the few people who knew exactly who Jesus was. She knew that He was the Creator of the universe (John 1:3). Even though Jesus had not yet performed any miracles (John 2:11), Mary knew that creating some wine would be no problem for Him. Mary did not specifically ask Jesus to do a miracle. She just mentioned the need for more wine. As always, Jesus had a very interesting reply.

"Dear woman, why do you bring Me into this?" Jesus replied. "My time has not yet come." - John 2:4

Jesus had grown up in Mary's care. He loved her and obeyed her. Yet, at this time He made it clear to her that He must follow God's plan above all other things. He said, "My time has not yet come." This meant that the time was not quite right for it to be made known to all people that He was actually God in a human body (John 1:14). Soon the time would be right, but not on that day at that wedding feast.

We know that Jesus could read the thoughts of men and woman (Luke 5:22). It seems that Jesus was reading Mary's thoughts. It may be that Mary wanted Jesus to perform a great miracle that everyone could see, even though she was careful not to say so. Even after Jesus answered her, Mary still hoped He would do something to help the wedding couple. She spoke to the servants and said, "Do whatever He tells you." (John 2:5 NLT)



There were six stone water jars nearby. Each jar could hold 20 to 30 gallons of water. These water jars were used for special washing. The Jews were never supposed to eat without first washing themselves (Mark 7:3), and they washed again after they ate.

Teacher: Show your small tub of water. As you describe the trip to the ceremony, rub some dirt on your hands. **Say:** The guests would have come to the wedding along a dusty road. If they rode on donkeys, they would have had to stop along the way to care for their animals. When they arrived at the wedding feast, they would dip their dirty hands into the water to wash off the sweat and grime of the day. Dip your hands into the water to wash them. Dry your hands on the towel.



Jesus said to the servants, "Fill the jars with water." So they filled them to the top. - John 2:7

Say: Think of how heavy one full gallon of milk is. When you add the weight of the water to the weight of the stone jar, each full jar might weigh over 300 pounds. More than likely, the servants used smaller jars to go to the nearest well and bring back water to fill the large jars.

Then He told them, "Now dip some out. Take it to the person in charge of the dinner." - John 2:8

Filling the water jugs so guests could wash themselves was a normal part of a servant's job. However, dipping out some of the wash water to serve as a drink to someone was VERY unusual! This would be like offering a cup of bath water to a guest in your home! Jesus told the servants to give a cup of this water to the table master. He was in charge of the dinner. The table master's job included deciding what food to serve at a feast, and tasting the food and wine before it was served (Strong's Concordance). Can you imagine being the servant who had to hand a cup of washing water to the man in charge?





Amazingly, between the time the servants poured ordinary well water into the large jars, and the time the servants scooped out a cupful for the table master, it turned into wine! **Teacher:** Show the kids your ceramic pitcher or jar (with powdered drink mix secretly at the bottom). Tilt the jar to make the point that it is empty. You may even stick your hand in the jar to prove it is empty. Next, take your pitcher of water and pour it into the ceramic jar. Then dip in a ladle and fill a plastic cup, so the kids can see your colored water or "wine."

The person in charge tasted the water that had been turned into wine. He didn't realize where it had come from. But the servants who had brought the water knew. Then the person in charge called the groom to one side. He said to him, "Everyone brings out the best wine first. They bring out the cheaper wine after the guests have had too much to drink. But you have saved the best until now." - John 2:9-10

Jesus not only cleaned what was once dirty, but He made it into something wonderful! Jesus transformed the dirty water into the BEST wine! The table master was very impressed with how good the wine was - and tasting wine was part of his job. Normally, if a wedding couple could not afford great wine throughout their feast, they would start with the best wine they could afford. As the guests ate and drank, and became full, the servants would serve less expensive wine. But, after tasting the wine that Jesus made, the table master pulled the groom aside. He told the groom that he could tell that he had saved the best wine for last. **Ask:** If there were six jars of this fine wine, and each jar could hold 25 gallons, how many gallons would there be? *150 gallons!* **Say:** Jesus blesses in abundance! Without Jesus stepping in, the groom would have run out of wine, and would have been embarrassed and ashamed. After Jesus took matters into His hands, the groom was known as the most generous party host in town.

Application: It is deep within Jesus' nature to turn bad things into good. Just as He turned dirty hand-washing water into the best tasting wine, He can turn anyone's life into a beautiful thing! Sometimes when we look at ourselves or other people, we see the "dirt" and problems. When Jesus touches a person's life, they become clean and they receive a new life (Matthew 8:3). Jesus can turn anyone's life into something wonderful when they trust and obey Him.

Note to Teacher: *In this first miracle of our Lord, Jesus takes something not so great and turns it into something very wonderful. He takes that which is the cause of drudgery and makes it the source of great delight. The Old Testament Law required various kinds of washings. All of these were to demonstrate to the Israelites how deeply sinful and unclean they were, and thus how unfit to enter into God's presence. These washings were drudgery, yet the Israelites were to do them in obedience to God's law. By the time legalistic Judaism added even more washings, Judaism was a laborious religion. Jesus took this ceremonial cleansing water and made it into wine. Jesus took that which was a pain and made it into a pleasure. Jesus took that which Jews would have found unfit to drink, and He made of it the best wine that has ever passed the lips of man.*

What a picture this is of the superiority of the New Covenant to the Old, of grace to law. Because He came and perfectly fulfilled the law, meeting all of its requirements, our Lord was uniquely qualified to die for sinners on the cross of Calvary. The salvation He procured through His sacrifice on the cross of Calvary makes it possible for men to leave the drudgery behind and to enter into the joy of His salvation.

Our Lord is able to take that which is less than desirable (for drinking, at least) and make it into a vintage wine, the finest man has ever tasted. He is able to take fallible men like Peter, James, John, Andrew, Philip, and Nathaniel and make them into apostles. He is able to take the "weak and foolish things of this world"—people like us—and transform us so that people marvel at God's grace and power. What a wonderful Savior!

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Jesus did help the couple with their wine shortage, as Mary wished He would. But He did not perform this miracle in full site of all the guests. Because He knew it was not yet God's perfect timing for everyone to find out who He was, He did this miracle quietly. The only people who knew what had happened were the servants, Mary, and the few disciples who were with Him.

Note to Teacher: Consider the God of perfect solutions. The wedding predicament was that the bride and groom needed a miracle, but the time was not right for Jesus to be made known. So, Jesus performed a private miracle. Only Mary (who already knew who He was), the servants (who were certain not to talk to the wedding guests), and the disciples (who had already begun to follow Him) saw what He did.

The ultimate predicament was that of mankind. We were separated from God because of our sin. God did not want us to be separated from Him, but there was nothing we could do to reconcile ourselves to Him. So, God sent His perfect Son, the only One who could fulfill God's own requirement.

The last verse in this passage of Scripture is:

*That was the first of Jesus' miraculous signs. He did it at Cana in Galilee. Jesus showed His glory by doing it. **And His disciples put their faith in Him.*** - John 2:11

This was the first miracle Jesus performed. The Greek words for "Jesus showed His glory" could also be said this way: "Jesus made His hidden majesty and kingly perfection to become known." (Strong's Concordance G5319, G1391) When the handful of disciples who had begun to follow Jesus saw His glory, **they put their faith in Him. This was a turning point for the disciples.** In fact, it was the most important moment of each of their lives! Suddenly, these men saw who Jesus really was. At that moment, they knew He was more than a great Teacher. **They knew He was the Messiah, and they placed their trust in Him.**



Application: The book of John describes many of the miracles that Jesus performed. At the end of the book, the writer tells us exactly why these amazing events were recorded.

PPT Verse

*These (miracles) are written down so that **you** may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God. **If you believe this, you will have life because you belong to Him.*** - John 20:31



The disciples saw what Jesus did and they put their faith in Him. **Teacher: Hold up your Bible.** John wrote down these miracles for **US** - so that **you and I** would have the same opportunity to place our faith in Jesus. Over the past several weeks, we have learned about how our sin separates us from God, and leads to death (Romans 6:23). And we have learned that there is nothing we can do to make things right with God (Ephesians 2:9). But God doesn't want to be separated from us. God provided a way for sins to be covered. In the Old Testament, God required His people to offer an animal sacrifice because the life in the blood of the animal covered the death of their sin (Leviticus 17:11). We also learned that long ago, God promised that He would send a better way - a permanent solution to our sin problem (Isaiah 53:5, Galatians 3:8).

For the next ten weeks, we will learn all about the life of Jesus - the fulfillment of God's promise. Listen, and learn, and pray for God to show you truth. Just as the disciples faced a turning point in their lives, each of us must come to the same point. Each of us may see things that God does, or hear about His wonders, but **we too must come to a turning point in our own lives where we choose to put our faith in Him.** The Bible says that Jesus is the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world. If you place your trust in Him, your sin will be taken away, and you will have new life (Romans 10:9).

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