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Sunday School Lesson

TOPIC:

“The Beginning of Jesus’ Miracles”

John 2:1-12

VERSE DISCOVERY: John 2:1-12 (KJV, Public Domain)

Prepare

- **Believe or Don't Believe game opener.** Do an internet search of extreme or what would seem to be unbelievable facts. Have ideas that are real and some that are false. These ideas can be from multiple sources such as unusual or weird stories (within reason), different weather events, historical facts or clothing, natural phenomenon, and so forth. Things that may seem outrageous but are hard to tell if it's true or not.

Make paddles to use for this game. It can be something as simple as paper plates attached to large craft sticks, or you can use the paddle printable found on site. Have enough to give each student or team two paddles each. On one paddle, have the word Believe written on it, and on the other paddle write the words Don't Believe.

On a chart, chalkboard, or whiteboard write the name of your students (or teams if you have a larger class) to keep score. Start presenting the ideas you found from your internet search. Ask your students on the count of three to show, using their paddles, if they believe or don't believe the statement you just made. The student or team who has the most correct answers at the end of the game wins.

Lead into the lesson: *When discussing the miracles of Jesus that are recorded in the Word of God, we must believe that they are one hundred percent true. Many who came to Jesus for their special needs to be met knew that He could do something to remedy their situation. Today, we hold on to the truth of those wonderful miracles He performed, and we let them encourage our own faith walk.*

- Another idea for opening the lesson would be to do an internet search for object lessons based on miracles.

Explore – Full Lesson Available on pages 6-12

It's a Miracle!

It's a miracle! That is a word many use loosely, leaving the true meaning in the abstract form or a watered-down version of the true power that reigns within it.

When discussing the word "miracle," what comes to mind? Do you think of something extraordinary? Something that makes you do a double-take? Something that makes you scratch your head in amazement and wonder?

While we may have those reactions to certain things in life, a true miracle is something that is heavenly hand-crafted. It is something where you know if it had not been for God's divine intervention, His holy touch, the outcome of what you were hoping and praying for would have been totally different.

The wedding in Cana became an event that forever displayed what the nature of a true miracle is. This event showed Jesus totally transforming the structure of one thing and completely making it something else. There is absolutely no way, outside of supernatural means, you can put plain water into clay or stone pots and draw out red wine. It just cannot be done. Even if one adds other elements to the water, it will still only produce something similar in taste and color, but not the real thing.

The only element Jesus used was His miracle-working power from heaven. The Bible explicitly tells us nothing was in the pots but fresh water filled to the brim by the servants. That's it. But Jesus, seeing the need that was in front of Him, stepped in, and divinely altered what they had into what was needed.

We don't know how He did it, but if it could be explained so easily then I would have to question if it was a miracle at all.

As stated above, miracles leave you with no doubt who has worked in this situation or touched this life. Miracles ask for us to just accept what we have witnessed to be true, knowing that God has done something wonderful which cannot be explained according to our finite wisdom and understanding.

When Jesus performed miracles, people marveled and were amazed. They praised God. And a host of other varied reactions, but not once have I seen them take Him to the side and say, "Explain to me how you did that?"

Do you think the widow of Nain demanded of Jesus to know how He raised her son from the dead (Luke 7:11-16)? No, she just joyfully accepted it. Her son was alive again! And that was all that mattered. How about the Centurion whose servant was healed (Luke 7:1-10)? No, he just accepted it and took Jesus at His word.



The same reaction came from those who were delivered from evil spirits, those who were blind, mute, or lame, and then made whole – they all accepted the healing, accepted the miracle, and did not demand to know how He did it. They knew it was a miracle!

When God visits and miracles flow, lives are dramatically touched, changed, and healed for the better, and more than any thought possible. Miracles were real, alive, and true in the Bible-era days, and today, God can still work a miracle in your life. Just believe.

***“Jesus said unto him, If thou canst believe, all things are possible to him that believeth”
(Mark 9:23).***

That's a miracle!

Activities

- Our lesson points out Jesus' ability to take the simple elements of H₂O and make them something completely different: wine. In this story highlighting the beginning of Jesus' miracles, how does it reassure your faith in what He can do in your life? Use the **Adult Journal Page** to write your response. Save your response to meditate upon when faced with life's challenges. Children can be the author of their own acrostic poem inspired by the world Miracle on the **Kid's Journal Page**.
- Younger students can draw a picture Jesus turning the water into wine using the **Draw the Scene** worksheet found on site.
- Alternate activity sheets available on site for those who want printed materials such as **Word Search, Crossword, etc.**

Review

- Commit to memory the base verse from the lesson: ***“This beginning of miracles did Jesus in Cana of Galilee, and manifested forth his glory; and his disciples believed on him.” John 2:11***
- Fill out the review sheet provided (page 13)
- Find a memory verse review game to play to reinforce this portion of the lesson.



Life

It may not be water into wine or any other noted miracles of the Bible, but if we stop and take the time to look around our world, we would see miracles before our eyes every day. In a moment of quiet reflection, write the miracles you see before you on a **Blank Journal Page** provided on site. Pray, and thank God for the miracles you get to experience that flows from His goodness in your life. "Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning" (James 1:17).

TOPIC:

“The Beginning of Jesus’ Miracles”

John 2:1-12

VERSE DISCOVERY: John 2:1-12 (KJV, Public Domain)

As romance filled the air and the town rejoiced in the jubilant affair, the birthing of miracles was about to take place.

Brides and grooms have many different ideas and wishes for their special day. Some people like nighttime candle-lit themes, while others like weddings outside at the beach. For some, the ceremony is short and sweet. For others, like the Jews in Jesus’ day, it could be a weeklong celebratory event involving everyone they knew.

No matter the weddings you have seen or even dreamed of, this wedding in Cana, on that day, was set apart from the rest as an absolute original, never to be repeated again. It became more than the wedding of the century. It became one whose story has been told time and time again.

What marked this wedding as a worthy-to-be-passed-down story had nothing to do with design, theme, or the expense of the affair. But, because the extraordinary happened during this seemingly ordinary event, this wedding is remembered forever in history.

TAKE IT TO JESUS

John 2:1-4 “And the third day there was a marriage in Cana of Galilee; and the mother of Jesus was there: And both Jesus was called, and his disciples, to the marriage. And when they wanted wine, the mother of Jesus saith unto him, They have no wine. Jesus saith unto her, Woman, what have I to do with thee? mine hour is not yet come.”

At this wedding, **“the mother of Jesus was there”** in attendance already, supposed by some that she was personally involved in the celebration. It could be that she was a relative or a close friend of the family who had members that were to be married that day. Jesus also was **“called, and his disciples, to the marriage”** giving even more reason to believe that

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Mary and Jesus had close ties with these newlyweds. As the festivities got underway, at some point, Mary and supposedly the hosts of the affair realized there was a shortage of an essential staple present at these events, the **“wine.”**

This family in this remote village (where purchasing more wine in abundance, at a moment's notice, was probably not an option) would know no small embarrassment at the lack of wine during such an auspicious occasion. This could be viewed as a huge social blunder and a reason for scorn and derision for the family involved. Not to mention the possibility of the bridegroom and his bride being mocked on what was supposed to be the happiest day of their life.

They are the ones who were to be celebrated that day, yet because of this misstep in failing to carefully plan for the event and the number of people in attendance, they would be ridiculed, to say the least. Such an error in a culture known for these elaborate feasts and gatherings (weddings during that time could last up to a week), where hospitality was key, would not soon be forgotten. They had social obligations and expectations from those in attendance that needed to be filled.

Mary, whom we are already supposing to have close ties to the family with the dilemma, does what any good Christian should do when facing a crisis: she took the problem to Jesus.

She approached Him and said, what seems to be in a pretty straightforward fashion, **“They have no wine.”** Can one image her wringing her hands as she realizes the scorn this family could face when the blunder becomes known? Then, could it be that the worry lines that started to stretch across her face began to disappear as she laid eyes on her son, the Son of God, who held all the answers she needed?

Why else did she seek out Jesus? She knew He could do something to remedy the situation. There is an old saying that “familiarity breeds contempt,” meaning those closest to you do not respect you as much as others would because they know too much about you. But, in this case, it is because Mary knew emphatically the realness of who Jesus is and His true identity, that she had no qualms about seeking His help in the time of this desperate situation.

Jesus respectfully replied to His mother's query for help, saying, **“Woman, what have it to do with thee? mine hour is not yet come,” (vs. 4).** There is a right time and season for all things. Isn't that what the book of Ecclesiastes tells us (see Ecc. 3)? Therefore, would not He

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who was present before time began and will be present when time on this earth comes to an end have a good handle on when it is the right time for Him to act or not?

Jesus has always had a keen idea on His “hour” (compare Matthew 26:18, 45 and John 12:23). What He was asked to do and what He was about to do would usher in a no turning back moment, propelling Him full speed ahead into His earthly ministry toward that end result found on Calvary’s hill. Everything had to be done precisely and according to His “hour.” This would be a visually identifying moment for Him that would begin to reveal, publicly, His true identity not only to His mother but to the world in wait for the Messiah to appear.

DO WHAT HE SAYS

John 2:5-8 “His mother saith unto the servants, Whatsoever he saith unto you, do it. And there were set there six waterpots of stone, after the manner of the purifying of the Jews, containing two or three firkins apiece. Jesus saith unto them, Fill the waterpots with water. And they filled them up to the brim. And he saith unto them, Draw out now, and bear unto the governor of the feast. And they bare it.”

His mother was not put off or dismayed at His response. In fact, she acted confidently in faith that He would offer some solution to the problem at hand. Turning to the servants who were present with her, she simply stated, “**Whatsoever he saith unto you, do it**” (vs. 5).

Did she overstep herself? I don't believe so. I believe if she had, Jesus would have simply chosen not to perform the miracle at all. In fact, I think she acted with the boldness of all she knew Him to be.

From time to time, throughout His life growing up, she must have pondered the time when she received the news from the angel Gabriel of the Child she would give birth to. Back when he initially spoke to her, informing her that He “shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest” (Luke 1:32). Back when he spoke, “that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God” (Luke 1:35), her mind must have traveled from time to time. It may be possible that thoughts such as these have carried her through some difficult days and gave her pause to remember that He, her Son, being the “Son of God,” was everything that God was and is.

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Social obligations and expectations aside, she knew in her heart that He could fix the problem at hand because of who He was and confidently told those in service to follow His orders. With that, we are supposing she went on about the business of helping out with the wedding, leaving everything in the hands of Jesus.

If you will allow me to interject here for a moment, didn't Mary do exactly what the Word encourages saints to do with every problem: take it to Jesus and leave it there? Are we not told in Psalm 55:22 and 1 Peter 5:7 to "cast" our burdens and cares on the Lord? Give Him what is troubling us because He cares about the problems we face? Mary became a great, real-life illustration of how to do just that.

Now, back to our lesson.

Jesus answered her request. Noticing the **"six waterpots of stone"** at hand for ceremonial **"purifying of the Jews,"** Jesus instructed the servants to **"Fill the waterpots with water."**

Each of these vessels held about 20-30 gallons of fluid, depending on the size and shape of the vessel. They were there for the purpose of ritual washings. Here, they may have been made available for guest to wash their hands before eating. Possibly water from these vessels would be poured out and used for some guests who may have had their feet washed upon entering the house, as we see explained in other Bible stories (ex. Jesus washing the disciples feet at the Last Supper).

No matter the reason they were there, now they would become vessels for the Master's use. Jesus was going to employ these ordinary containers to hold and pour out a miracle for people to enjoy.

The first step toward that miracle is to do exactly as Mary said. To reiterate, she said, **"Whatsoever he saith unto you, do it."** The servants who would carry out the details of this miracle had to obey the voice of Jesus. No obedience = no miracle. (Side note: This almost became a hindrance in Naaman receiving his healing from leprosy when he initially refused to do as instructed until one of his own men pushed the idea that he should follow and obey the voice of the prophet - see 2 Kings 5 for full story).

Obedience enjoined with faith equals miracles. On many occasions of performing miracles, Jesus just did what needed to be done and healed, delivered, or set free. At the same time, on

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other occasions, His instructions being followed was pivotal in receiving said miracle (see John 9:7). Therefore, **“they filled them up to the brim,” (vs. 7).** The servants carried out Jesus’ commands leaving no room at the top. Jesus said fill them up and fill them up they did.

Jesus then instructed them to **“Draw out now, and bear unto the governor of the feast.”** We do not know if the servants could visibly, at this point, still see water in the pots or if they saw wine. The **“governor of the feast”** was the man in charge of all that was taking place during the celebration. Were the servants actually being asked to serve the governor water to drink from a cleansing pot? They may have wondered.

EXPERIENCE THE RESULTS

John 2:9-12 “When the ruler of the feast had tasted the water that was made wine, and knew not whence it was: (but the servants which drew the water knew;) the governor of the feast called the bridegroom, And saith unto him, Every man at the beginning doth set forth good wine; and when men have well drunk, then that which is worse: but thou hast kept the good wine until now. This beginning of miracles did Jesus in Cana of Galilee, and manifested forth his glory; and his disciples believed on him. After this he went down to Capernaum, he, and his mother, and his brethren, and his disciples: and they continued there not many days.”

I personally believe that there still appeared to be water in the pots to the servant, and this too was a step of faith in obedience. The reason I believe this is because verse 9 tells us, **“but the servants which drew the water knew,”** indicating that it was still water when they took it out of the vessels and gave it to the governor. They, and the governor, were astonished at the results (even though the governor did not previously know where the wine came from – vs. 9).

Pulling the **“bridegroom”** aside, the governor exclaimed, **“Every man at the beginning doth set forth good wine; and when men have well drunk, then that which is worse: but thou hast kept the good wine until now,” (vs. 10).** The governor was under the impression that the bridegroom had kept the best for last. But this wasn’t the case at all. The bridegroom and his party ran out of supplies to keep the celebration in full operation. They were finished and set up to be a social embarrassment.

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Jesus stepped in to rescue and remedied the situation in what is noted as the **“beginning of miracles”** He did in **“Cana of Galilee.”** Jesus did not save the best for last. He totally transformed the ordinary into the extraordinary, making water become the best wine anyone had ever tasted. This, my friends, is a bonafide miracle. He supernaturally made what wasn't into what was before them now.

The real end result was not to get the best tasting wine possible. Rather, when those disciples who were with Him saw what He did, it encouraged and strengthened their faith in Him, and they **“believed on him”** all the more.

In what seems to be a minor miracle (I think not) to some, compared to others that would shortly follow, really was something terrific that **“manifested forth his glory”** to those around Him. Jesus was not a mere man trying to gain a crowd to follow Him. These men witnessed His power in action for the first time, and it was astounding. No one who was not approved by God, no one who was not God in the flesh could alter the structure of something as simple as water, and create it to be something totally different as wine.

We must keep in mind that what was given to the governor was not water that tasted like wine; rather, it was real, and official wine. Normally, this comes about through the grapevines with fruit that has been harvested and pressed and aged for a time. But when Jesus gets ahold of simple H₂O, He created it to be something it wasn't or didn't have the structure to be. That's a miracle!

No wonder their faith was encouraged by what they saw. This was one of the purposes for the miracles that Jesus did. They validated Him to the world seeking a Savior. Later in John 10:38, Jesus says, “Though ye believe not me, believe the works: that ye may know, and believe, that the Father is in me, and I in him.”

Only the Son of God can do such things as these, and that's a cause for belief in Him, all by itself.

After the wedding celebration, Jesus **“went down to Capernaum, he, and his mother, and his brethren, and his disciples: and they continued there not many days,”** (vs. 12). From this point on, Jesus became fully engulfed in His earthly ministry.

“Capernaum,” at this time, was a respite before heading to Jerusalem for the Passover celebration (see John 2:13).

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It was there at Jerusalem where Jesus became displeased and angry over what was going on in His Father's house and flipped the tables of the merchants (see John 2:16). The disciples that were with Him at this time were clued in even more to His true identity by what they witnessed (see John 2:17), and even more miracles were performed that attested to the fact of who He really was (see John 2:23).

“**Capernaum**” later would serve as a major place of activity during His earthly ministry, including more miracles. It was there where the centurion asked for help for his servant, and Jesus sent healing his way (see Matthew 8:5-13). It was there, where Peter was instructed to look in the mouth of a fish for money to pay tribute (see Matthew 17:24-27).

What started with wine would eventually end with His blood flowing from Calvary's cross. The truest of all miracles performed by the Lord who washed our black sins whiter than snow through His red blood offered as a Lamb sacrificed in our place.

Amazing!

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TOPIC:

"The Beginning of Jesus' Miracles"

John 2:1-12

Please Answer the Review Questions Below

1. **T or F.** Jesus performed many miracles before turning the water into wine. (John 2:11)

2. Jesus' _____ said, "**They have no wine.**" (John 2:3)

- A. Disciples B. Brothers C. Friends D. Mother

3. Describe the differences between water and wine.

4. What makes those difference so important to this miracle?

5. Ancient Jewish wedding celebrations could last up to a _____ long.

- A. Day B. Week C. Month D. Year

6. **T or F.** The wedding where Jesus' first public miracle was performed was in Capernaum. (John 2:1, 12).

7. Describe the effect this miracle had on Jesus' disciples (John 2:11). How does it impact your faith?

