

January 30, 2013

Water into Wine

John 2:1-12

**LESSON FOCUS***"Call upon Me in the day of trouble; I will deliver you, and you shall glorify Me."* Psalm 50:15

Some call it a magic trick, to others it was a casual favor to a friend, but to John it was the way in which Jesus showed forth His glory.

On the third day a wedding took place at Cana in Galilee. Jesus' mother was there and Jesus and His disciples had also been invited to the wedding. When the wine was gone, Jesus' mother said to Him, "They have no more wine." "Dear woman, why do you involve me," Jesus replied, "My time has not yet come." His mother said to the servants, "Do whatever He tells you."

Nearby stood six stone water jars, the kind the Jews use for ceremonial washing, each holding from 20 to 30 gallons. Jesus said to the servants, "Fill the jars with water," so they filled them to the brim. Then He said to them, "Now draw some out and take it to the master of the banquet."

They did so and the master of the banquet tasted the water that had been turned into wine. He did not realize where it had come from although the servants who had drawn the water knew. Then he called the bridegroom aside and said, "Everyone brings out the choice wine first and then the cheaper wine after the guests have had too much to drink, but you have saved the best till now."

This, the first of his miraculous signs, Jesus performed in Cana of Galilee. He thus revealed His Glory and the disciples put their faith in Him. (**John 2:1-11**)

**What Was That Again?**

Aside from the fact that changing water into wine requires supernatural ability, the most astonishing thing about this miracle is that because of it "He thus revealed His Glory and the disciples put their faith in Him." Helping a friend with a beverage problem as a favor to His mom? Many commentators put this miracle way down their list of great things Jesus did, if they include it at all, but John put it first and attached considerable significance to it. Must be more going on here than meets the eye.

The 3rd day of the week is Tuesday on the Jewish calendar and is still the preferred day for weddings in Israel. That's because on the original 3rd day, God pronounced things "good" twice; the only time He did so in the 7 days of Creation. Therefore the 3rd day is known as a day of double blessing, the best day of the week to begin a new life. Also Jewish wedding feasts lasted for 7 days, and to run out of wine so early would have been embarrassing to say the least. That's probably why Mary asked Jesus to get involved in something that was really not their concern.

And lastly the stone jars held water normally used only for ceremonial washing, a symbolic act of cleansing from sin, not for cleaning off the dust of the road or other dirt. They were placed at the door so a person would not enter a friend's house in a ceremonially "unclean" state and contaminate the

house. By dipping their fingers into the water and wiping them dry, a person would symbolically “wash away their sins” and be ceremonially clean. When we say, “I’m washing my hands of this matter,” we really mean we’re trying to absolve ourselves of any responsibility for it. The phrase comes from this practice, which was soon to be immortalized by Pontius Pilate in the matter of Jesus’ trial and conviction. Some believe that this water would also have contained a sprinkling of ashes from a red heifer, in case anyone had inadvertently touched something dead (**see Numbers 19**).

Jesus commanded unnamed servants to completely fill 6 (the number of man) jars that were stone, cold, and empty (a model of our unregenerate hearts; **Ezek. 36:25-27**) with water. In **John 16:5-14** the Holy spirit is described as One who would not speak of himself, but only of Jesus. In fact the only name by which we know the Holy Spirit is actually His job description; Comforter (KJV) or Counselor (NIV). This title is derived from the Greek word parakletos, which can also be translated intercessor or advocate. These servants are a model of the Holy Spirit, Who accomplishes the work of regeneration in our hearts (**Titus 3:4-7**), filling us with Living Water (**John 7:37-39**).

The water, normally used for ceremonial cleansing, immediately turned to wine and so that which had formerly only temporarily cleansed a person from sin now became symbolic of the Blood of Jesus that washes us clean forever (**Luke 22:20**). The master of the banquet remarked that the bridegroom had saved the best till last signifying that the New Covenant that permanently cleanses us (represented by the wine), is far superior to the Old Covenant that only temporarily set aside our sins (represented by the water). Thus by this miracle Jesus truly did reveal His Glory and you can see why the disciples put their faith in Him.

## **BIBLE STORY**

### **The Wedding at Cana**

**John 2:1-12**

Read from your Bible. Ask students to find it in a Bible too. Those that can read can follow along. Choose the passages you would like to read aloud. Use visuals to help tell the story.

*“His disciples put their faith in Him.”* John 2:11 (CEV)

### **The Wedding at Cana**

**John 2:1-12**

**Have you ever gone to a wedding? Imagine having Jesus be a guest. Today we will read how Jesus helped at a wedding.**

**Once there was a wedding in a town called Cana. Since Mary and Jesus knew the bride and groom, they were invited to the wedding. Jesus’ disciples were invited, too.**

**Everyone was happy to see the bride and groom get married. All the guests went to the groom’s house for a big celebration. In those days wedding celebrations would sometimes last several days.**

**At the wedding dinner, they ran out of wine long before the celebration was over. Now all the guests would have to drink water. Mary knew Jesus could help. She told Jesus, “There is no wine.” Jesus assured Mary that God provides for all needs when He knows the proper time to help has come.**

**Mary told the servants, “Whatever Jesus says to you, do it.” Jesus told the servants to fill the water pots with water. This was a big job. There were six huge water pots and each one would hold as much water as a bathtub. The servants did as Jesus said and filled each pot to the very brim with water.**

**Then Jesus said, “Take some out now and take it to the master of the feast.” The servants obeyed. Something wonderful happened to the water. It turned into wine! The master of the feast tasted the wine. He did not know where it came from. The servants knew that it had come from the stone pots that they had filled with water. They knew that Jesus had changed all the water into wine.**

**The master called the bridegroom and said, “Every man serves his best wine first, and then later serves the cheaper wine, but you have kept the best wine until now!”**

**This was the first miracle Jesus performed. He changed the water into wine to show His glory as God’s Son. His disciples believed in Him as the Son of God.**

**Dear Jesus, We thank You for showing us by Your miracles that You are God. Help us to pray to You about all our needs. Help us to trust that, as God, You can always help us. Thank You for taking away our sins. We are so happy You have promised to take all Your children to heaven one day. Please keep us faithful until that day. Amen.**

## **BIBLE CHALLENGE**

Read this passage from your Bible. Ask students to locate it in a Bible too. Help them learn this verse.

***“His disciples put their faith in Him.”*** John 2:11 (CEV)

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### **Treasure Seekers**

Form four teams and designate one child in each team as the "Seeker." Give each team a small bag of individually wrapped candies, and have each team use a nonverbal signal to communicate with their teammates, such as clapping, snapping fingers, or stomping feet.

Have each team's Seeker leave the room. Remove all tripping obstacles from the room by clearing the floor. Then have each team hide its candy in the room.

Bring the Seekers back in and blindfold each one. Have the Seekers move around the room. Whenever a team's player gets close to its candy, the team members use their nonverbal signal to communicate loudly. No one can talk. As a Seeker moves farther away, the team signals quietly. Play until all the Seekers find the candy.

Afterward, *ask*: How were our Seekers able to find the candy when they couldn't see? How could the Seekers have found the candy if their teammates hadn't helped? How does Jesus help us in the same way that the teams helped the Seekers?

Pray: Dear God, thank you for the birth of your son Jesus. Thank you that he came into this world to guide us to you. Amen.

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### **Wedding Gift Wrap Race**

For every four children, you'll need one box, one roll of gift wrap, one pair of child-safe scissors, a roll of ribbon, a roll of tape, and a gift bow.

Form teams of four. Give each team its supplies. Tell kids that they're to wrap an imaginary gift for the wedding couple. They have to decide what gift they'd like to give and wrap it beautifully in the shortest time possible.

When the race is over, have group members show the wrapped boxes and tell what gift they chose. You can honor groups with awards such as "the most inventive gift," "the fastest wrap," "the most beautiful ribbon," or "the best placed tape." Make sure that each group receives recognition.

## GAMES

### Game 1: Stressed Out!

Studies show that kids' lives are filled with an increasing amount of stress. This game teaches children that God wants their life to be stress free and can help them release the stress in their lives before they reach the point of bursting.

Give each child a balloon to inflate and tie off. Have children each place the balloon under one of their feet.

**Say: I'm going to call out things that can cause stress in your life. Maybe the thing I call out causes a little stress for you. If so, put a little pressure on your balloon. Or perhaps the thing I call out causes a lot of stress for you. If so, put a lot of pressure on your balloon. Don't release the pressure between things that I call out.**

Call out things that can cause stress in a child's life, such as parents fighting, a test at school, a family move, being sick, a pet dying, too much to do, breaking a friend's toy, and so on. Continue to call out stresses kids face until the list is exhausted or the balloons are broken.

Have kids turn to a partner and discuss these questions: **Which thing made you put the most pressure on your balloon? How did you feel as you pressed on your balloon? How do you feel when you're stressed in real life? Perhaps that's how the host of the wedding felt when the wine was gone.**

Read aloud Philippians 4:6.

**Ask: How can God help us deal with the stress in our lives?**

**Say: Let's do what God tells us to do when we're anxious or stressed. Let's pray for one another right now.**

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### Game 2: Throwaway

Heed the wisdom found in the Bible and throw away discouragement and your concerns with this fun game and help kids understand God's wisdom by having a fun-filled paper fight.

Help kids understand wisdom by having a paper fight with their written concerns. You'll need a Bible, paper, pencils, masking tape, and a large trash can.

Have kids take several sheets of paper each. Say to the kids, "In this game, we start by writing one thing you're concerned about on each sheet of paper. You might write 'grades,' 'family,' or 'friends'-anything that upsets or discourages you. Don't put your name on your paper. This is strictly between you and God, and we're going to learn His wisdom in dealing with our concerns."

When each of the kids has written at least three to five things, have them wad their papers. Then form two equal teams of kids and have the teams face each other on opposite sides of the room. Use masking tape to create a dividing line on the floor between the teams.

Say to the kids, "On 'go,' throw all your concerns onto the other team's side while trying to keep the other team's concerns off your side. The object of the game is to get as many concerns as possible on the other team's side in one minute. Go!"

When the time is up, put a large trash can in the middle of the room. Say to the kids, "This time, you'll have 30 seconds to work together to get all the concerns into the trash can. Go!"

After the game, have a child read aloud 1 Peter 5:7, a verse helping us have wisdom in dealing with our concerns. Then ask, "Was the way you treated your concerns in this game like or unlike the way kids really treat their concerns? Explain. How does God give you wisdom? How does that wisdom and working together help with concerns?"

**Talk about today's Bible lesson: Jesus turns water into wine. How did the wedding host feel when the wine was gone? Why?**

## SCIENCE ACTIVITY

### Jesus Turns Water into Wine (John 2)

1. Water is something we use all the time: in the shower (draw shower), cooking, swimming, drinking.
2. Jesus used water to do something extraordinary one day! That's right! He used water (say "W-A-T-E-R" as you write the word "water") to perform a miracle.



Step 1: draw shower



Step 2: write "water"

3. You see, Jesus was at a wedding banquet and they ran out of wine. And wine was important for a good party in those days. Jesus' mom, Mary, asked Jesus to help. He did. Jesus told the servants to take the six 20-30 gallon water jars and fill them with water. They did. Then he told them to draw some out and take it for the master of the banquet to taste...the banquet master was so amazed at the taste, he said, "Everyone brings out the choice wine first and then the cheaper wine after the guests have had too much to drink; but you have saved the best until now." AND THAT WAS THE FIRST MIRACLE THAT JESUS PERFORMED!! It was at this time that his disciples put their faith in him...because Jesus took regular old WATER, the same stuff that drips out of our pipes, (draw drip and add lines around the word)
4. ...and turned it into WINE (turn the message over.) Like I said, when the disciples saw Jesus do this miracle, they put their faith in him. Can you look at your life and say that you know there was a point that you put your faith in Jesus? Don't be like the disciples and have to see a miracle...do it now!



**step 3:** add drip and lines

**step 4:** turn the drawing upside-down