

Changing The Water To Wine

John 2:1-11

Introductory questions

What have been some of the happiest moments in your life? Did you know that Jesus enjoyed spending times like these with His friends?

What does this sign teach about Jesus' power?

Jesus has power over nature.

What human need does Jesus satisfy?

Sooner or later the "wine" runs out. Jesus wants to give you a happiness that lasts forever.

How did the people respond?

This was Jesus' first miracle. The disciples *saw* and *believed*.

Seeing is believing.

Final comments

Jesus didn't come to take away our happiness. On the contrary, He offers us a greater happiness. (What a great wedding present this was for this couple and their friends).

Additional lessons

What does this teach us about Jesus' relationship with His mother? Would she give the same counsel today? Everyone is looking for happiness. Where do *you* think it can be found? Why do so many people think that Jesus is a "wet blanket?" (See John 10:10).

Textual explanatory notes

"*Woman*" (verse 4): is a term of respect, similar to "ma'am," it clarifies the new relationship between Jesus and Mary. "*My time*" (verse 4): Jesus was following a divine chronological order. In the Bible, "*wine*" symbolizes happiness, blessing, abundance. It was a common drink of that day due to contaminated water.

Healing the Official's Son

John 4:46-54

Introductory questions

If someone in your family were gravely ill, what would you be willing to do to help him or her recover?

What does this sign teach us about Jesus' power?

His power is not limited by distance.

What human need does Jesus satisfy?

The restoration of family.

How did the people respond?

The official *believed* in the word of Jesus *without seeing* the miracle.

It is better to believe *without seeing*

Final comments

"*I believe because I see*" is the poorest level of faith because it requires an endless series of proofs if it is to survive. Do you have to see in order to believe?

Additional lessons

We see three levels of faith illustrated here:

1. Seeing is believing (verse 48)
2. Believing in the words of Jesus (verse 50)
3. Believe in the person of Jesus (Verse 53).

Textual explanatory notes

The distance between Cana and Capernaum was about 15 miles. "*The fever left him*" (verse 52): indicates a complete restoration to health.

The Invalid of Bethesda

John 5:1-18

Introductory questions

Have you ever faced a problem for which you had no solution?

What does this sign teach about Jesus' power?

Jesus' power is not limited by time. This man had been sick for 38 years. (Jesus claimed to be equal with God (verses 17-18))

What human need does Jesus satisfy?

Hope.
The invalid had lost all hope (verse 17).

How did the people respond?

We have no evidence to suggest that the healed man believed in Jesus. The Jews rejected Jesus because He didn't fit in with their traditions.

It is possible to see and not believe

Final comments

Are you open to the possibility that the Bible presents a Jesus different from what you've always thought or expected him to be?

Additional lessons

Verse 14 seems to indicate that this sickness was caused by some sin. Are there sicknesses today which are the result of sin? When Jesus doesn't correct the Jews' conclusion in verse 18, He is showing His agreement with it, making himself "equal with God."

Textual explanatory notes

"*Sabbath*" (verse 10): The seventh day of the week when the law of Moses prohibited working (see the Ten Commandments). The religious leaders added 39 prohibitions to this commandment, including one about carrying loads. Jesus bases His argument on the fact because God the Father works on the Sabbath day, the Son also may work. This shows how He was making himself equal with God the Father

The Feeding of the Five Thousand

John 6:5-14

Introductory questions

Do you think that it is possible to be completely satisfied in this life? How would you finish this sentence, "I would be happy if only...?"

What does this sign teach about Jesus' power?

Jesus' power is not limited by our resources.

What human need does Jesus satisfy?

Real and permanent satisfaction.

How did the people respond?

They wanted to make Jesus king because they saw Him as the "Great Benefactor" -- someone capable of meeting all their physical needs. Jesus rejected their offer to become "king" under those conditions. **Don't believe for selfish reasons.**

Final comments

What kind of Jesus are you looking for? Although He is sensitive to our physical needs and can satisfy them, He makes it very clear that He refuses to be accepted only as "The Great Benefactor."

Additional lessons

Identify the four possible solutions for feeding the multitude:

- 1) Send the people home
- 2) Buy bread
- 3) Find out if there was enough for everyone to share
- 4) Give Jesus what you have. How do people today try to *use* Jesus to get what they want?

Textual explanatory notes

"*Denarii* (Verse 7): a unit of money in use at that time. One denarii was equivalent to the daily salary of a laborer. "*Twelve baskets with the pieces*" (verses 13): Jesus is more than capable of meeting our needs.

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Jesus Walking On The Water

John 6:16-21 (25-35)

Introductory questions

What are some things that frighten you? At what moments in your life have you felt most insecure?

What does this sign teach about Jesus' power?

Jesus has power over the elements (weather) and space. He is the bread of life (verse 35).

What human need does Jesus satisfy?

Security and protection

How did the people respond?

The disciples were frightened as they faced enormous physical (the storm) and spiritual (they thought Jesus was a ghost, Matthew 14:26) forces.

Believing doesn't exempt you from problems.

Final comments

The only real solution to all fears is to have Jesus in your life (verse 20).

Additional lessons

The only *work* that pleases God is believing in Jesus Christ (verses 25-29).

True satisfaction is only found when we draw close to Jesus and believe in Him (verses 30-35).

Textual explanatory notes

"*Rabbi*" (verse 25): Jewish teacher.

"*Manna*" (verse 31): The miraculous way God fed His people during 40 years in the desert. Every morning a white, sweet, nutritious substance "rained" down from the sky. See Exodus 16:1-31.

Jesus Heals a Man Born Blind

John 9:1-41

Introductory questions

Have you ever asked yourself the question, "What do these things happen to me?"

What does this sign teach about Jesus' power?

Jesus has power over any human limitation. He is the light of the world (verse 5).

What human need does Jesus satisfy?

Spiritual understanding. Jesus has the answer to the great questions of our life.

Everyone saw the same miracle, but only the blind man saw who Jesus was. The Pharisees didn't see (understand) because they didn't want to recognize their need. They were spiritually blind (verse 41). **He who doesn't "see" his need won't believe.** The parents didn't want to lose their "status" (verse 22). **Believing may be costly.** The blind man saw who Jesus was and worshipped him (verse 38). **To believe is to worship**

Final comments

The things that happen to us in life have a purpose: to show us that true salvation is only found in Christ. "*It's better to be born blind and end up in heaven, than to be born with sight and go to hell.*"

Additional lessons

Not every sickness is caused by a specific sin, although all sicknesses exist as a result of sin. Note how the man gradually came to recognize the true Jesus: "The man" (verse 11); "He is a prophet" (verse 17); "does the will of God" (verse 31); "came from God" (verse 33); "He is the Son of God" (verses 35-37).

Textual explanatory notes

"*Day*" (verse 4): The time that Jesus had at His disposal in order to accomplish His work. "*Pharisees*" (verse 13): A minority group of Jews who believed they were very righteous because they strictly obeyed the Jewish laws and traditions. "*Worshipped*" (verse 38): to worship is to acknowledge who Jesus is and what He wants from me. "*Synagogue*" (verse 22): The center of religious activity in the community

The Resurrection of Lazarus

John 11:17-46

Introductory questions

Have you ever wondered, "What would have happened if only...?" There was a time when two close friends of Jesus asked that question.

What does this sign teach about Jesus' power?

Jesus has power over death.

He is the resurrection and the life (verse 25).

What human need does Jesus satisfy?

Eternal life. If Jesus doesn't have authority over death, of what real value are His other powers?

How did the people respond?

Many believed (verse 45), others rejected and reported Him to the authorities (verse 46). The words and the works of Jesus always create a division between people. What side are you on?

Believing is seeing.

Final comments

Faced with the undeniable facts of these signs, you only have two options: accept or reject the Jesus of the Bible.

Additional lessons

"*Even though he dies*" (verse 25): although he dies physically, he will rise again. "*Will never die*" (Verse 26): spiritual death, eternal separation from God (see Revelation 20:11-15). This miracle teaches us the power of Jesus over physical death (He was able to raise Lazarus) and spiritual death (He can give eternal life). "*I believe*" (verse 27): the verb tense indicates a firm faith: "I believe and will keep on believing."

Textual explanatory notes

"*He was deeply moved*" (verse 33): Literally, "became indignant" Why? Because He was face to face with the most devastating consequences of sin. "*Wept*" (verse 35): is not the same word that appears in verse 33, where it demonstrates agony and mourning. However, it does show His sympathy and identification with the pain of those present.

FACE-to-FACE

with

JESUS

The Seven Signs in John

"But these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name."

(John 20:31 NIV)



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