

TEXT John 2:1-11

SUPPLEMENTAL SCRIPTURES Matthew 8:5-10,13; Mark 5:25-34; Luke 5:18-20,24,25; John 9:11

OBJECTIVE The students will be able to state the particulars of Jesus' first recorded miracle, noting that this miracle was the start of His public ministry. The students will understand that the Lord works miracles often as the result of faith and obedience on the part of the recipients.

KEY VERSE FOR ANSWER Whatsoever he saith unto you, do it. — John 2:5

KEY VERSE FOR SEARCH This beginning of miracles did Jesus in Cana of Galilee, and manifested forth his glory; and his disciples believed on him. — John 2:11

ANSWER TITLE: **His First Miracle**

SEARCH TITLE: **Jesus' First Miracle**

REFERENCE INFORMATION

Cana was a small city of Galilee. Its probable location is about eight miles northeast of Nazareth (no one knows for sure). By saying this was "Cana of Galilee," the evangelist distinguishes it from another Cana, which was of the tribe of Asher, just southeast of Tyre. See Joshua 19:28.

The term woman as used in verse 4, was a title of respect, not an insult as some suppose. See also John 19:26.

Waterpots were set in a convenient place for the use of the Jews in washing their hands before they sat down to meat, and probably for other purposes of purification.

The number of pots was proportioned to the number of guests. The six waterpots at this marriage at Cana, contained two to three firkins apiece, which probably measured a total of 126 gallons.

The governor of the feast was either one of the guests elected to preside over the occasion, or a professional hired for the job. He supervised the sacred ceremony as well as the progress of the festivities.

This first miracle can symbolize spiritual truth, the wine typifying the joy and ministrations Jesus came to bring. Only the Creator can recreate us. His attendance at the feast could be thought of as Jesus' blessing on marriage.

YOUR OPENER

Jesus' First Miracle

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KEY VERSE: This beginning of miracles did Jesus in Cana of Galilee, and manifested forth his glory; and his disciples believed on him. — John 2:11

What joy there is for the person who has faith in God and will obey His Word. Obedience brings blessing, for we find that the Lord works miracles often as the result of faith and obedience on the part of the recipients. In our lesson today, we see how these two ingredients combined to set the stage for Jesus' first recorded miracle, and the start of His public ministry.

1. What was the name of the village where Jesus performed His first miracle? What was the occasion that had brought Him there?

2. Why do you think Mary said to Jesus, "They have no wine"?

3. Why didn't Jesus encourage Mary to believe that He would do something about the need?

4. Why do you suppose Mary told the servants, "Whatsoever he saith unto you, do it"?

RESPONSES

1. Cana of Galilee was probably located about eight miles northeast of Nazareth and west of the Sea of Galilee. Jesus and His disciples had been invited there to attend a marriage. This was a time of social fellowship, and should inspire us to recognize the importance of keeping Jesus as the center of every part of our lives.

2. Mary knew that Jesus was the Son of God. From what we read, she never entertained any doubt of this fact. She believed that Jesus could perform miracles even though He hadn't done so up to this time. Students should conclude that even if they haven't seen Jesus perform a miracle in their lives, He is still able to do so. But, faith is a necessity if they are to receive anything from God.

3. Jesus said that His time had not yet come. In another place, He said that He always did the will of His Father. Up to this moment, Jesus showed no compulsion to act. But perhaps Mary's faith moved the Father to allow Jesus to meet the need of these people. The Bible doesn't tell us the reason Jesus chose this to be the first of His many miracles. Discussion should bring out that many times a situation may arise in which there is little encouragement to believe a miracle will transpire, but faith does move the arm of God.

4. Responses to this question may vary. Some students may suggest that Mary had confidence that if a problem was brought to the Lord He would be sympathetic to the need and would do something about it. Other students may bring out that Mary recognized the need for obedience to Jesus. If the people had not obeyed Jesus, would the water have been changed into wine? Read Matthew 6:8 and discuss how God is aware of our needs.

ADDITIONAL DISCUSSION NOTES

5. Jesus told the servants to fill the six waterpots with water—no small task when we consider that in all likelihood it was drawn from a well. Since these servants weren't employed by Jesus, why do you think they obeyed Him when presumably they should have been trying to obtain more wine?

6. Jesus' first miracle actually came about without His having any physical contact with the water, or in "telling" the water what it should become before it was served. Since it was performed with such simplicity, how do you suppose the servant felt when he drew wine from one of the pots and gave it to the governor of the feast?

7. What was the response of the governor of the feast when he tasted from the cup given to him by a servant?

8. Can we expect to see miracles if we do as Jesus commands us? Explain. See 1 John 5:14,15.

9. In our text, who believed on Jesus because of the miracle?

5. The servants had been given a suggestion by Mary, and they may have been inspired by the faith that Mary had in her heart. Our attitude of faith as Christians can be transmitted to others, as can our lack of faith. If we as Christians live by the principle of doing whatever Jesus tells us to do, those around us may be influenced to do the same thing.

6. A variety of answers may be given. The servant might have been hesitant or dubious. He may have been reluctant, but as a servant he was compelled to do what this guest asked him to do. The discussion should focus on the point that the important thing is not how they may feel about a commandment from the Lord, but that they should do what the Lord says. Ask your students what happens when one doesn't follow the Lord's directions.

7. The governor of the feast inquired why the best wine had been saved for the last. This is testimony that when Jesus does something for us, He always does a perfect job. Even sinners know when God works a miracle.

8. The days of miracles did not end when Jesus ascended into Heaven. God works miracles for the believer today. Some additional promises to this effect are in Matthew 21:22 and John 15:7.

9. His disciples believed on Him. Ask your students to discuss how every miracle witnessed increases the faith in the heart of the believer. Summarize the lesson by paralleling the comment of the governor of the feast regarding the bridegroom's having saved the best till the last, with the Christian's hope for the future. The Christian receives the blessing of the Lord here, but in the end he will receive eternal life in Heaven—again, the best is at the last.

YOUR WRAP-UP

SUPPLEMENTAL QUESTIONS

What is the meaning of the word *miracle*?

What miracle did Jesus perform at Cana?

Did Mary expect Jesus to perform a miracle? How can you tell?

Why do you suppose Jesus performed this miracle (beside the fact that they needed more wine)?

Who knew of the miracle? How do you think they reacted to the power of Jesus?

What did the servants do to show Jesus that they believed He could perform the miracle? What must we do to show the Lord that we believe He will take care of us?

Did miracles only happen while Jesus was here on earth? Why can we still expect miracles to happen today?

What are some commands the Lord has given us?

Why is it important to do what God asks of us?

In the ANSWER story, what effect did the miracle which Jesus performed have on the servant Ahiah?

THINGS TO DO

For each student provide a mug or a styrofoam cup, with some concentrated grape juice at the bottom of each cup. Cover the tops of these cups before class starts. When telling the story of the miracle at Cana, pour water into each cup and let the students drink the grape juice.

Have the students act out a short skit about the servants who obeyed Jesus. You can assist them by finding fictional names for the servants, and discussing the feelings that these servants might have had and their reactions to Jesus' miracle.

Add some food coloring to a glass of water. Point out that we can change the appearance of the water, but it is still water. Only God can change its nature.

Bring to class a stone pot or container that resembles a waterpot. Fill it with slips of paper on which you have written some of the promises God gave to us if we obey Him. Have each student draw one out, read it, and

explain its meaning in his own words. These should illustrate that God does reward obedience.

Discuss what the servants' thoughts might have been after hearing Jesus' command. (For instance, We don't need water. What good will that do? etc.) Then give some examples of commands or situations your students might encounter and ask the class what their first reaction would be, and what the results of obeying or not obeying might be:

— Your Sunday school teacher points out a new student and asks you to go sit by him and be friendly. You are shy and don't know what to say.

— You've been invited to a party, but Mom says Dad will pick you up at 10 o'clock. You're sure no one else will be leaving that early.

— A group of girls you've really admired at school invite you to a slumber party. But it is on a church night and Mom says she wants you to go with the rest of the family.

Answers for ANSWER

The First of Many

Jesus' first recorded miracle was at the marriage in Cana of Galilee. That was just the start of many miracles. Listed in the circles below are a few miracles that we should remember because of the numbers involved. Find the correct numerical answers to the questions and write the answers in each circle. Then find the sum of the numbers in the circles that overlap and write the sum in the correct place. The first set of numbers has been given to help you start.

Number of lepers (Luke 17:12) 10	15	How many loaves? (Matthew 14:19) 5
163	156	What day was the marriage? (John 2:1) 3
Number of fish (John 21:11) 153	154	How many water pots? (John 2:6) 9
How many thanked Jesus? (Luke 17:15) 1	7	6

