

Miracle-Worker

The Wedding at Cana - John 2:1-11



series: The Jesus I Follow

week 2

While Jesus never catered to those who insisted He perform miracles-on-demand, He nevertheless gave numerous “signs” to back up His claims to be the most unique person ever born. Francis Schaeffer called these miracles “space-time proofs”, and, while they do not do away with the need for trusting faith, they do provide a firm a foundation for believers.

John 2:1-11 The Message

Three days later there was a wedding in the village of Cana in Galilee. Jesus' mother was there. Jesus and his disciples were guests also. When they started running low on wine at the wedding banquet, Jesus' mother told him, "They're just about out of wine."

Jesus said, "Is that any of our business, Mother – yours or mine? This isn't my time. Don't push me."

She went ahead anyway, telling the servants, "Whatever he tells you, do it."

Six stoneware water pots were there, used by the Jews for ritual washings. Each held twenty to thirty gallons. Jesus ordered the servants, "Fill the pots with water." And they filled them to the brim.

"Now fill your pitchers and take them to the host," Jesus said, and they did.

When the host tasted the water that had become wine (he didn't know what had just happened but the servants, of course, knew), he called out to the bridegroom, "Everybody I know begins with their finest wines and after the guests have had their fill brings in the cheap stuff. But you've saved the best till now!"

This act in Cana of Galilee was the first sign Jesus gave, the first glimpse of his glory. And his disciples believed in him.

John, the disciple, apostle, gospel-writer and author of the book of Revelation, lived longest of the twelve original followers. Perhaps seeing the advent of the second century, John had decades to ponder the deeper meanings of Jesus' words and deeds. Therefore, many scholars note that his account of Jesus' life takes a two-tiered approach. William Barclay noted:

"The very richness of the Fourth Gospel presents those who would study it and him who would expound it with a problem. Always there are two things. There is a simple surface story that anyone can understand and re-tell; but there is also a wealth of deeper meaning for him who has the eagerness to search and the eye to see and the mind to understand."

One literary device that John employs is the way he structures his book around certain lists of events. For instance, He chooses seven specific “signs” (out of hundreds Jesus performed) and weaves his gospel around them. His reason? He states near the end of the book (20:30-31):

Jesus did many other miraculous signs in the presence of his disciples, which are not recorded in this book. 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.

Not only did John want the reader to be convinced by these stories, but many of the original witnesses were. In the table below, look up each of the seven “signs” in **John**, describe them and note whether those who saw them with their own eyes believed as a result.

Sign	Passage	Description	Response
1	2:1-11		
2	4:43-54		
3	5:1-15		
4	6:1-14		
5	6:16-21		
6	9:1-41		
7	11:1-44		

Read the story of Jesus turning water into wine at the wedding in Cana (John 2:1-11) and note your observations:

- It is the beginning of Jesus' ministry after 30 years of obscurity. Why do you think He would pick such an occasion to do something miraculous?
- On the surface, John tells a simple story about Jesus "saving the day" for a young couple who might have been embarrassed by not supplying enough refreshment at the biggest celebration of their lives. What do you think is the "deeper meaning" that John is trying to tell us?

Perhaps you've heard someone say (or maybe you've even said this yourself!), "If God would just come down here and do a miracle right in front of me, then I'd believe." The problem is, God *did* do that in the person of Jesus, and yet not everyone who saw His miracles became a believer. (C.S. Lewis remarked: "Seeing is not believing. This is the first thing to get clear in talking about miracles.") Evidently God doesn't mind doing miracles, but He knows that in and of themselves they do not produce faith. The disciple Thomas, who demanded to see evidence of Jesus' resurrection, must have been shocked when Jesus actually showed up and provided it. Thomas responded, "My Lord and My God!" But Jesus replied, "Because you have seen me, you have believed; blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed." (John 20:29)

- When you became a believer, did God use miraculous signs to show Himself to you, or did you simply hear the truth and believe it?
- How many of Jesus' miracles are recorded in the Bible? (Look under "miracles" - most Bible dictionaries will give you a list)
- Read 2 Corinthians 4:6. Why is Paul saying that it is a miracle when a person becomes a Christian, and what huge miracle does he compare it to?
- Have you ever witnessed a miracle? What events in your life would you define as miraculous?

The miracles in fact are a retelling in small letters of the very same story which is written across the whole world in letters too large for some of us to see."

- C.S. Lewis, God in the Dock, "Miracles"

Although the Bible spans thousands of years of history, there are really only three general periods of time in which God consistently did things miraculously:

- (1) Moses and the Exodus,
- (2) Elijah and Elisha's ministries, and
- (3) Jesus and the early apostolic age.

What conclusions do you draw from that?

- Does God care more about the people He does miracles for than the ones He doesn't?
- Does God go through periods of time when He is weak and unable to help?
- Does He have a special reason for doing miracles at certain times, and what would that be?