

SPRING 2025

YOU[®]

**ALL SIGNS
POINT TO
JESUS**

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**ELISHA:
SEEING THE HAND
OF GOD AT WORK**





A STUDY ON THE SIGNS AND WONDERS POINTING TO JESUS

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In our daily lives, we encounter many signs, each meticulously designed to guide us toward specific destinations or choices. Traffic signs ensure our drives on the road are safe and efficient, while instructional signs in public spaces help us confidently navigate unfamiliar environments. Signs point us to our favorite restaurants and stores. Signs point us to hotels and gas stations.

We also interpret social and emotional signs from the people around us. A warm smile can signify openness and friendliness. Crossed arms and a furrowed brow might indicate discomfort or defensiveness, suggesting we should approach the person with caution or empathy. These tangible or intangible signs serve as indispensable markers along the paths we tread, ensuring we move forward with direction and purpose. Signs give us direction and guidance. Whenever we miss the signs, we lose out.

The Gospel of John uniquely emphasizes the signs of Jesus. He performed many other signs in the presence of His disciples that are not written in this book. But these are written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that by believing, you may have life in His name. These signs in the Gospel of John are not just miracles but intentional acts designed to reveal Jesus's divine nature and mission.

In this unit, we will explore how the miracles Jesus performed, the statements Jesus made, and the interactions between Jesus and others can be used to deepen our understanding of God's Word and the One to whom the Scripture points. By studying the amazing acts of compassion and power that Jesus exhibited, we can see the practical application of His teachings and understand His mission to reconcile humanity with God.

SESSION 1

THE SIGN OF HIS GLORY

Leader pages on pp. 102-105

THE POINT:
JESUS'S WORK IN OUR LIVES IS FOR HIS GLORY.

JOHN 2:1-11

¹ On the third day a wedding took place in Cana of Galilee. Jesus's mother was there,
² and Jesus and his disciples were invited to the wedding as well.
³ When the wine ran out, Jesus's mother told him, "They don't have any wine."
⁴ "What has this concern of yours to do with me, woman?" Jesus asked. "My hour has not yet come."

MEMORY VERSE

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⁵ **"Do whatever he tells you," his mother told the servants.**

⁶ Now six stone water jars had been set there for Jewish purification. Each contained twenty or thirty gallons.

⁷ "Fill the jars with water," Jesus told them. So they filled them to the brim.

⁸ Then he said to them, "Now draw some out and take it to the headwaiter." And they did.

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⁹ When the headwaiter tasted the water (after it had become wine), he did not know where it came from—though the servants who had drawn the water knew. He called the groom

¹⁰ and told him, "Everyone sets out the fine wine first, then, after people are drunk, the inferior. But you have kept the fine wine until now."

¹¹ Jesus did this, the first of his signs, in Cana of Galilee. He revealed his glory, and his disciples believed in him.

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KEYWORDS

A wedding (v. 1)—Jewish weddings in the first century were a week-long celebration or could last even longer.

Woman (v. 4)—Mary appears in only two scenes in John, here and at the cross. Jesus used the same term to address her as He used when entrusting her to John's care.

Headwaiter (v. 9)—In the New Testament, this word appears only in this verse and the next. The Greek translates literally as "ruler of the table."

First of his signs . . . in Cana (v. 11)—This is was not the only sign Jesus would perform and more specifically, not the only one in Cana.

HOW CAN WE EXPERIENCE THE GLORY OF GOD IN OUR LIVES?

How many followers do you have? This seems to motivate our social media posts, likes, and shares. According to Brandwatch, Beyonce is ninth with followers on Instagram, with 318 million followers, while only following one. Ariana Grande is seventh with 378 million followers while following only 742. Social media has revolutionized how we connect, with individuals showing off their creativity to gain more likes and followers. The truth is that social media continues to play a significant role in shaping perceptions and influencing decisions. Whether it's staying updated with global trends, reconnecting with old friends, or discovering new interests, the impact of social media is undeniable. Why?

There is an undeniable connection between social media and pursuing pride and personal glory. We often seek validation and admiration as we share clips and pieces of our lives, accomplishments, and unforgettable moments. But the joy of accumulating likes, comments, and followers can become a measure of our worth, pushing us to present only the most polished and impressive versions of ourselves. How often do you pick up your phone to see how many likes you have received from your last post?

The self-centered side of our human nature continually seeks to enhance our image and garner personal glory. However, as flawed and sinful beings, any glory we achieve is inherently imperfect and transient. There is, nevertheless, One whose glory is incomparable and eternal. Jesus embodies true glory, and the actions He undertakes on our behalf illuminate this. Instead of seeking our own fame, we should be pursuing His glory.

This week, we're diving into a moment that went down at a wedding—a powerful miracle that most folks didn't even realize at the time. Jesus wasn't trying to grab the spotlight or show off with what happened. He wasn't seeking likes. Instead, it was all about revealing His true power and glory. This miracle kicked off Jesus's public ministry, setting the stage for everything that followed.

Get ready to uncover how this miracle played a huge role in showing the world who Jesus really is.

Trust His Plan // John 2:1-4

Have you ever been to a wedding where something went wrong publicly? A person shared her disappointment while attending the wedding of a friend. They ran out of food for the last two tables, who just happened to be the coworkers of the bride. Those attendants had to order pizza delivery and pay for it because the bride's family refused to



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pay for it. You never remember the good weddings, but you never forget the bad ones. What we see in the text today is certainly an example of that.

The first miracle in the Gospel of John does not occur in the grand imperial palace of Rome, neither within the majestic confines of Herod's Temple in Jerusalem nor amid the impressive architecture of Athens' Acropolis. Instead, the first miracle unfolds in a humble, impoverished, and barely known village hidden in a remote corner of Galilee called Cana. There, Jesus, his mother, and disciples are attending a wedding.

During Jesus' day, weddings were a week-long tradition, not just a one day thing. Family and friends would come and stay for days, and the hosts made sure there was plenty of food and drinks to go around. Wine particularly, presence of wine was not for intoxication but was part of Jewish culture. In fact, almost every tradition, holiday, and celebration included wine.

The problem is obvious in this passage, Jesus and His disciples attend a wedding where the host runs out of wine (v. 3). With the situation becoming increasingly dire, Jesus, prompted by His mother, performs His first miracle. Jesus' mother told him, "They have no more wine." This issue was a big deal socially because if you ran out of wine or food at a wedding, the family could face serious public shame or at the very least, embarrassment. People might think the family was too poor to take care of their guests. And, to make things worse, wine wasn't easy to get back then. You couldn't just go to the corner store really quick.

When we hear Jesus call His mother "woman" (v. 4), we might automatically judge Him and think, "How could He talk to His mother like that?" But it's important to understand the context of that time. Back then, Jesus referring to His mother as "woman" was actually a term of endearment, not meant to be harsh. It was His way of emphasizing the importance of the moment. It's like Jesus was asking Mary, "Is this really what you want me to do?" He was trying to show both her and His disciples that miracles aren't just tricks to be performed on demand. They have a higher purpose – to reveal a deeper truth about God and bring Him glory. So, when Jesus said, "My hour has not yet come" (v. 4), He was making an important point filled with purpose.

We need to see Jesus for who He truly is—the One who came to earth with a much greater purpose that shows His ultimate authority. Even if we don't understand what God is doing in a situation, we must learn to trust in His plans and His timing.

HOW CAN WE TRUST GOD'S TIMING INSTEAD OF STRESSING OVER OUR OWN RUSH?



DIGGING DEEPER WORKING TOGETHER

In the miracle of the turning of water to wine, we often overlook the teamwork required among the servants. There was a cartoon called "The Wonder Twins." Zan can transform into water at any state (solid, liquid, gas). Jayna is a shape-shifter; she could transform into any animal, whether real, mythological, and indigenous to Earth or to some other planet. But there was only one way for The Wonder Twins to activate their power. The Wonder Twins powers are activated when they touch each other and speak the phrase, "Wonder Twin powers, activate!" Physical contact is required. If the two are out of reach of each other, they are unable to activate their powers. As they were about to transform, they would each announce their intended form. "Shape of..." or "Form of..." What I am trying to suggest is what Jesus said: "That if two of you shall agree on earth as touching anything that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven. For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them." (Matt. 18:19-20 KJV)

How can working together increase our faith?

Obey His Commands // John 2:5-8

Notice Mary didn't push back or argue about Jesus's response; she realized that once Jesus was involved, it wasn't up to her anymore. She trusted that whether He chose to do a miracle or not at that moment, His actions would still honor God. She had faith in Jesus!

So Mary turns to the servants, in faith, and says, "Do whatever he tells you" (v. 5). The "servants" refer to the household staff or attendants who were assisting at the wedding in Cana. In today's time, these would have been the hotel waiters during a wedding reception. Isn't it incredible that for Jesus' first miracle, ordinary servants were asked to follow His commands? They got a front-row seat to witness His incredible power, something that must have left a lasting impact on them.

Jesus called the servants to fill the six stone jars to the brim (v. 6). The jars were massive, holding like 20-30 gallons each. The water in them wasn't for drinking; it was for rituals, like washing hands and stuff. When Jesus told the servants to fill those jars to the top with water, it made sure everyone knew there wasn't any trickery involved. The scripture straight-up says it was water, no doubt about it.

Again, we see the obedience of the servants on display. When Jesus ordered them to draw liquid from the stone jars, the servants immediately responded and took some to the headwaiter. In this culture, the headwaiter served as an overseer of the meals, as well as a master of ceremonies to ensure that all the wedding celebrations went as planned.

So many times, we waver in obedience when Jesus calls us to trust in Him. Then we'll question the way in which Jesus calls us to do something when we don't see a logical solution. Or rather than obey, we'll just complain about what we are being asked to do. Finally, we may waver when we consider the possible outcomes of our obedience. The more we see ourselves as servants, however, the more we'll lean upon our faith and respond in obedience (Gal. 2:20).

WHY IS IT HARD SOMETIMES TO DO WHAT JESUS TELLS US TO DO?



See His Works // John 2:9-11

At a concert, they don't start with the main performer. They have other acts and artists on first. The biggest star always performs last. Why? Because they save the best for last. We have become accustomed to the expression – they saved the best for last. However, in our passage, when it came to serving wine at a wedding feasts, the host serve the best wine first. Then as the feast continued and the wine seemed to run lower, it would be diluted with water so that it would last longer.

However, when the headwaiter got the new round of wine, he was straight up confused. All of a sudden, there was a load of top-quality wine that nobody had tasted yet. The confusion brought about questions for the headwaiter:

- **He questioned the source (v. 9).** He was perplexed as to where the wine came from.
- **He questioned the wrong people (v. 9).** Rather than asking the servants about their experience, the headwaiter went to the bridegroom to gain information (who would have had no idea how it happened).
- **He questioned the purpose (v. 10).** He saw that this wine was counter to the traditional practice of diluting wine and questioned why it was just now being offered.

We see in the headwaiter's questions a picture of what happens when we go searching for answers without seeing things from a kingdom

THE POINT: JESUS'S WORK IN OUR LIVES IS FOR HIS GLORY.

perspective—whether it's a positive occurrence, as in this case, or a challenge we face. Many times, we can struggle to see answers to the questions we face in our lives.

An important purpose of the sign of the wedding was to inaugurate Jesus's earthly ministry and point to the truth that Jesus has compassion for people. It would have been easy for Jesus to have walked away and let the wedding host and family figure it out on their own. But He knew as well that this was ultimately an opportunity to put compassion on display for those who really needed to see it. It's also important to see how John didn't refer to the water changing to wine as only a miracle, rather he called it a sign (v. 11). It's a sign that points to the glory of God and Jesus being the promised Messiah. Furthermore, Jesus isn't holding anything back from us, turning us away, or trying to ration His grace in fear that it might run out. Of course, the ultimate display of Jesus's compassion—and His grace—can be seen in His life, death, burial, and resurrection.

WHAT ARE SOME LESSONS WE CAN LEARN FROM THIS FIRST SIGN FROM JESUS?

DID YOU KNOW?

According to Fidelity.com, the average American wedding costs approximately \$29,000. The two largest expenses in this scenario are the reception venue and catering, which together comprise more than 40% of the total wedding budget. Reception venues can range from lavish hotels and rustic barns to elegant country clubs, each adding its unique ambiance and amenities to the ceremony. Catering is another cost, along with the wedding attire, photography, music, and floral arrangements, all of which enhance the overall event. Despite the substantial investment, the goal for many couples is to create an unforgettable celebration of their union, filled with meaningful moments shared with family and friends.

Biblical Truth: "Unless the LORD builds a house, its builders labor over it in vain" (Ps. 127:1a).

What happens when we place more focus on the wedding ceremony and reception than the marriage itself?

LIVE IT

How can you live your life for Jesus' glory?

It's easy to become consumed by personal accomplishments and achievements. In a world driven by social media, the number of likes and followers often seems to establish our credibility. However, as Christians, our focus is to seek Christ's glory rather than our own. We should strive to reflect His love and grace in all we do. Choose one of the following applications:

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- **Worship.** Write down recent decisions, motivations, and actions taken in your life. Evaluate how you are using these things to glorify the Lord and point people to Jesus.
- **Obey.** Write down two or three things that God may be calling you to obey Him in doing and pray about how you can begin to act upon those things. Draw up an action plan.
- **Share.** Take some time to meet with another group member and ask questions about how they are handling struggles in their lives. What are some needs they have that only Jesus can supply?

DAILY READINGS

1. TRUST HIM COMPLETELY // JOHN 2:5

"Simply crisscross your arms over your chest and just fall back into my arms; I will catch you," my baby brother said. I was the lucky chosen one to demonstrate this team building activity he was sharing with the team he leads. I remember thinking to myself, "I either trust him, or I don't." In this verse, Jesus's mother puts her complete trust in Jesus. While attending a wedding in Cana of Galilee, the wine runs out, and she informs Him. She then tells the servants to do whatever He tells them. Just like that. Without hesitation. Devoid of questions. She trusted that she could count on Him to take care of their problem.

Like Mary, we should learn to put our complete trust in Jesus, leaving the results up to Him.

2. KEEPING HIS COMMANDS HAS BENEFITS // PSALM 25:10

A common misconception many people have is that the Lord's statutes restrain us or keep us from something, but that could not be further from the truth. In fact, his decrees are designed to help us and forge us forward. In this chapter of Psalm, David continues to put his trust in the Lord concerning his enemies. He commands the Lord to show him His ways, guiding and teaching him His truth. This verse highlights a condition to be met and a promise to be kept. Lord, show me your ways; teach me your paths; lead me in your truth. Open my eyes that I may behold wondrous things out of your law.

If we keep the Lord's commands, His ways will be loving and faithful towards us.

3. FOR HIS GLORY // 1 KINGS 18:37

Take a moment and ponder why you do what you do. Is it for your glory or His glory? At some point in our lives, we can probably all recall a time of desiring the credit or wanting to be acknowledged for the work that we do for the Lord. However, Elijah provides us an example of how to pray. He prays

to the Lord after he tells the people to decide who they will follow: the Lord or Baal. They decided that the god who answers by fire will be God. As shown in this verse, he commands the Lord to answer him so the people will know that He is Lord and is turning their hearts back.

Let us follow the example of Elijah and seek to glorify God and not ourselves.

4. POSSESS THE RIGHT ATTRIBUTES // PSALM 103:8

How would your coworkers describe you? Would they know you are a Christian? Do you express the traits that would categorize you as a son or daughter of the King? Psalm 103 provides some great descriptions of our Lord. What better person is there than the Lord to offer the perfect example of how we should live daily? David opens the chapter by charging the reader to bless the Lord, forgetting not all his benefits. Then, he goes on to inform us why. Verse 8 highlights a few reasons we are to bless the Lord. The Lord is merciful, gracious, and slow to anger. As a child of God, we, too, are to possess these same traits.

Today, be slow to anger. Choose to extend mercy and grace towards others.

5. SAVED THROUGH GRACE ALONE // GALATIANS 2:21

If I have heard it once, I have heard it a million times: "My good outweighs my bad." I immediately want to respond but resist the urge, "What exactly does this mean." The good news is that we are not saved by our good works. Paul speaks to the Galatians who are being swayed by others against the gospel they have been preached. This verse sums up the chapter. He says that he does not put aside or does not exclude God's grace. For righteousness does not come by the law but His grace. If righteousness came through the law, then His death was for nought.

Thank you, Heavenly Father, that I am saved by grace alone and not by the works that I do or laws that I keep.

BEFORE YOU TEACH

Study the Chapter

Prepare for the session by reading John Chapter 2 in its entirety. You may wish to read various biblical translations of this text as well as the commentary to thoroughly understand the text. Familiarize yourself with the content in the learner pages and answer the questions posed in each section. Pray for God's guidance and understanding for both you and the learners.

Promote the Study

Promote the study by sending teaser phrases or images via email, text, or social media pertaining to the upcoming lesson to learners to spark their interest and to encourage participation in the lesson. Examples could include a tooting horn and a probing question such as "Are you down with TOS (Trust, Obey, See)? Join us to find out more and to further explore this topic." Talk up the lesson and Invite others in your circle of influence.

LOOK BACK

Remind the learners that the last session of the previous unit focused on the importance of corporate worship. Reiterate the main points that together we draw closer to God, our confession is stronger, and our service more acceptable. . Point out the coming together for the study is a way to worship God while encouraging and strengthening one another.

TEACHING PLAN

INTRODUCTION

Begin the session by asking the learners if they are on any social media platforms, and if so, do they have followers. Also, inquire of the learners if they follow any high-profile individuals. Discuss how oftentimes we measure ourselves and our worth through the lens of social media and how others perceive us. Mention how the self-centered side of human nature can result in our

efforts to garner recognition personal glory and for some, at any cost. Begin to introduce the story of Jesus at the wedding and how he ultimately intervenes to remedy a mishap that occurred. Inform the learners that Jesus's actions were not to grab the spotlight, but the miracle He performed was a sign of His glory and a glimpse of who Jesus really is.

TRANSITION: Read the question "How can we experience the glory of God in our lives? and **The Point: Jesus's work in our lives is for His glory.**

PACK ITEM: Use **Pack Item 1: "All Signs Point to Jesus"** poster to preview the sessions for the study. Also use **Pack Item 2: "The Seven Signs in John"** to discuss the seven signs of Christ that will be examined during this study.

DIG INTO THE TEXT

Trust His Plan // John 2:1-4

READ: Enlist a learner to read John 2:1-4.

OBJECT LESSON: Incorporate the first part of the object lesson (p.104). Share experiences from your own wedding or someone else's wedding where things didn't go as smoothly as intended and what measures were taken to resolve the situation. Encourage learners to share their experiences and engage in the discussion.

EXPLAIN: Provide the background of the customs during Jesus's time detailed in the lesson. Weddings were described as week-long events where the hosts supplied plenty of food and drinks for the occasion. Clarify that wine on such occasions was part of the Jewish culture and not for intoxication.

DISCUSS: Ask learners what is meant by Jesus's response (v. 4), "What has this concern of yours to do with me, woman?" Jesus asked. "My hour has not yet come."

GUIDE: Use the commentary (p.104), to explain verse 4. Conclude with how Jesus referring to His mother as "woman" was, in that day, a term of endearment. Explain that Jesus was aware of

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what was needed but would intervene in God’s timing. Parallel how often in our lives we have expectations on when, where, and how something should be and that may not be God’s will, way, or His timing.

ASK: “How can we trust God’s timing instead of stressing over our own rush?”

Obey His Commands // John 2:5-8

READ: Recruit a volunteer to read John 2:5-8. Tell the learners that the main take-away from versus 5-8 is to do what Jesus tells us to do.

EMPHASIZE: Point out that Jesus’s mother trusted Him and had faith in Him and His abilities so much so that she told the servants to do whatever Jesus instructed them to do. Interject humor by comparing Jesus’s mother’s emphasis on “do it” to the modern-day Nike slogan “Just do it.”

GUIDE: Make the comparison of the servants in the wedding story and Christ followers who are also called to be servants who obey what Jesus calls them (us) to do.

Review the key lessons we can learn from the servants:

- The servants did not waver when asked to do whatever Jesus told them to do.
- The servants did not question Jesus about how the miracle would happen.
- The servants did not murmur and complain when asked to complete the massive task.
- The servants took a risk and stepped out on faith.

EMPHASIZE: To support the need for obedience to the Lord, reference I Samuel 15:22, “Does the Lord take pleasure in burnt offerings and sacrifices as much as in obeying the Lord? Look: to obey is better than sacrifice, to pay attention is better than the fat of rams.”

RECAP: Summarize the first two points of John 2:1-8 by saying that so far, the passages show how we must trust and obey the Lord without wavering.

See His Works // John 2:9-11

READ: Read John 2:9-11.

EXPLAIN: Explain that it was customary for the best wine to be served first and then the inferior wine, but in this instance the latter wine was better. Jesus saved the best for last. This sign of Jesus turning water into exquisite wine confused the headwaiter so he questioned the bridegroom as to how this could be even though it was the servants who witnessed Jesus’s intervention.

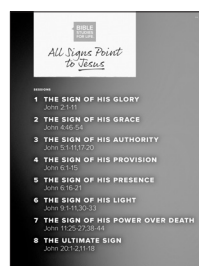
GUIDE: Question learners whether God intervened in a circumstance, and they questioned what just happened and how.

HIGHLIGHT: Emphasize that John did not just refer to the Jesus turning water into wine as a miracle, but as a sign (v. 11). This is one sign that points to not only the glory of God, but Jesus being the promised Messiah. The miraculous sign at the wedding was also to inaugurate Jesus’s earthly ministry.

ASK: “What are some lessons we can learn from this first sign from Jesus?”

DIGGING DEEPER: Paraphrase the Digging Deeper (p.13), and relate it to the story of how the servants at the wedding were all on one accord when Jesus gave them instructions. Emphasize the power of Jesus that is activated when we walk in agreement with one another based on God’s word.

SUMMARIZE: Conclude with reminding the learners that just as Jesus shows compassion at the wedding, He shows grace and compassion to us by having fulfilled His mission at the cross.



PACK ITEM 2

THE SEVEN SIGNS IN JOHN		
SIGN	REFERENCE	CENTRAL TRUTH
1. Turning water into wine	John 2:1-11	Jesus' glory was revealed to His disciples
2. Healing the son of the ruler	John 4:46-54	Jesus' glory was revealed to the Samaritan
3. Healing the man born blind	John 9:1-41	Jesus' glory was revealed to the Jews and the Samaritan
4. Raising the dead Lazarus	John 11:1-44	Jesus' glory was revealed to the Jews
5. Walking on water	John 6:16-21	Jesus' glory was revealed to His disciples
6. The sign of His Light	John 8:12-20	Jesus' glory was revealed to His disciples
7. The sign of His Power over Death	John 11:1-44	Jesus' glory was revealed to His disciples
8. The Ultimate Sign	John 20:1-21:14	Jesus' glory was revealed to His disciples



OBJECT LESSON

Share a picture of a bride and groom or of a scene of a wedding. Ask the learners if there were any things that happened at their wedding or at someone else's wedding where quick thinking and action was taken to avoid a likely calamity and if it was ultimately avoided? Or, if everything went smoothly, discuss what planning assured the seamless event? Review the issues that arose at the wedding scene from John 2:1-11 where Jesus intervened. Ask the learners, "Why do you think the servants so readily followed Jesus's orders?" Have the learners ponder challenging situations in their lives and ask, "Were you able to trust, obey, and see (T.O.S) His works?" "What made it easy or difficult for you to T.O.S in this situation?"

CLOSE THE SESSION

Review the key points of the session. Referring to what transpired with Jesus turning water into wine. Ask learners to comment on what lessons can be learned from this first miraculous sign from Jesus. Reiterate the need to trust God's timing, obey Him, and see His impact in our lives so that He gets the glory. Challenge learners to complete one or more of the Live It applications for the week.

PRAY: Ask God to help each participant trust His plans, Obey His commands, and see His marvelous, miraculous works. According to John 3:30, Pray that God through Christ may increase in their lives and that they may decrease for God's purpose to be fulfilled and for Him to receive all the glory.

COMMENTARY

JOHN 2:1-4

Connection to the Point. At a wedding, Jesus was informed of a problem.

Verse 1. This may have been the third day since Jesus left Judea for Galilee (1:43). Or this may be a foreshadowing of the resurrection on the third day. More likely, though, John was saying the wedding took place on the third day of the week, which had become a Jewish tradition. This was because the third day of creation was unique; twice God declared it to be "good" (Gen. 1:10,12). In a wedding, God was creating a new family; Jews wanted it to be doubly blessed.

Verses 2-3. Invitations to Jewish weddings in the first century came in two parts. The first indicated the date; recipients were expected to RSVP. The second invitation arrived when the food was ready and the festivities were about to begin. In a culture based on displaying honor and avoiding shame, running out of wine was a huge social blunder. Such a faux pas could ruin the family's reputation and standing in the community for the rest of their lives. Further, the blunder could result in legal action. The bride's family could bring charges against the groom's family for not fulfilling their promises or obligations and for shaming their daughter.

Verse 4. What has this concern of yours to do with me. Jesus's use of this phrase may indicate Mary had a more official role at the wedding. She may have been a family friend who was merely assisting with the food. Or, she may have been responsible for catering the week-long festivities. If either of these was true, then running out of wine would have been a concern. Mary appears in only two scenes in John, here and at the cross. Jesus used the same term to address her as He used when entrusting her to John's care. Referring to the beloved disciple, Jesus said, "Woman, here is your son" (19:26). Despite Jesus using it twice, woman was not a title Jews commonly used when addressing their mothers. Yet it was not a term of

disrespect or contempt; it would be comparable to our saying, "Ma'am." Jesus's hour is a theme woven throughout John's Gospel. The term refers to Jesus's being glorified in His death, burial, and resurrection (12:23,27; 17:1). His statement here meant this was not the time for Him to reveal His full glory; that would come later. Yet, as we see in verse 11, this miracle did reveal His glory, meaning His divine power.

JOHN 2:5-8

Connection to the Point. The servants did what Jesus told them to do.

Verse 5. "Do whatever . . ." . This statement to the servants also indicates Mary was more than an observant guest. Do is an imperative, a command. The only way Mary would have had authority to give this directive would have been if she had an official role at the wedding. Mary's statement is a precursor to something Jesus taught His disciples, "You are my friends if you do what I command you" (15:14). The two verses use the same Greek word, translated as "whatever" and "what." Mary fades from the scene after giving this directive. John was making plain that the focus was not the wedding, the crisis, or even Mary; it was Jesus.

Verse 6. Six stone water jars. This one phrase tells us so much! First, seven was the Jewish number for perfection. Six, then, represented something imperfect, including the falleness of humanity. Since the water was for Jewish purification, this miracle focused on how imperfect the old Jewish system of purification and cleansing was for sinful people. The family was obedient to Old Testament law, which stated clay jars were susceptible to contamination. Jews thus used stone jars to avoid uncleanness (Lev. 11:33-34).

Verses 7-8. *The headwaiter.* In the New Testament, this word appears only in this verse and the next. The Greek translates literally as "ruler of the table." This may have been a volunteer or someone the groom's family hired to cater the wedding, or he may have worked for the wedding venue. His role was something of a combination of master of ceremonies, chief

steward, and head waiter. He was responsible for overseeing the servants and making sure everyone had plenty of food and drink. As the next verse will show, part of his job was evidently to be the taste-tester for anything served at the wedding.

JOHN 2:9-11

Connection to the Point. Jesus performed a miracle that points to His glory.

Verses 9-10. The official's words indicate three things. First, he was surprised at how good this new wine was. Underscoring the theme of these verses, the quality of this wine exceeded his expectations. Second, the tradition was for the best wine to be served first, to make the biggest impact and impression early in the week-long celebration. As far as we know, the wedding festivities continued uninterrupted thanks to the miracle Jesus performed. Why keep the miracle in the shadows and shrouded from public view? Jesus's hour had not yet come.

Verse 11. *The first of His signs.* The terminology lets us know this was not the only sign Jesus would perform and more specifically, not the only one in Cana. Unlike the Synoptic Gospels (Matthew, Mark, and Luke) that refer to Jesus's mighty acts as "miracles" (dynamis in Greek), sign was John's preferred word for the miracles Jesus did. Jesus's signs conveyed an unseen truth; they pointed to the fact He was the Word who had become flesh.

In the Old Testament, God's glory first dwelled in the tabernacle and later in the temple (Ex. 40:34-35; 2 Chron. 7:1-3). Because of the incarnation, He dwelt among His people in a new way—in human form. Being God in the flesh, Jesus revealed and radiated the Father's glory (John 1:14). The Hebrew word translated "glory" refers to something heavy, meaning something that matters and is substantial. The Greek word is doxa. Combined with logos, the Greek word for "word," the Doxology is a word that glorifies God.

Note: Additional commentary can be found at you.lifeway.com.