

## Jesus Turned Water to Wine

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**BIBLE PASSAGE:** John 2:1-12

**MAIN POINT:** Jesus' first miracle was to turn water into wine.

**KEY PASSAGE:** John 20:31

**BIG PICTURE QUESTION:** Why did Jesus perform miracles? Jesus performed miracles to glorify God and prove He is God the Son.

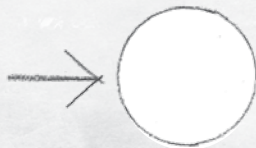
**SMALL GROUP OPENING**  
(10–15 MINUTES)

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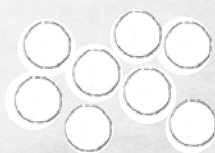
**LARGE GROUP BIBLE STUDY**  
(25–30 MINUTES)

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**SMALL GROUP ACTIVITIES**  
(25–30 MINUTES)

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## Leader BIBLE STUDY

Jesus' ministry had begun. He called disciples and traveled to the region of Galilee. Jesus spent His time on earth teaching and performing miracles, preparing for His ultimate mission: to die on the cross for the salvation of sinners. Jesus' miracles were signs that pointed to greater truths about who Jesus is and why He had come.

John 2 records Jesus' first miracle at a wedding in Cana. Jesus' mother told Jesus that the wine had run out. Culturally, running out of wine was a big deal. Weddings were important events, and the celebration could last a week. To run out of wine was a social disaster. But Jesus responded in a surprising way: "What has this concern of

yours to do with Me, woman? My hour has not yet come”  
(John 2:4).

To understand Jesus’ answer, remember that Jesus’ miracles were not an end unto themselves. They were signs, pointing to something greater. When the wine ran out, Jesus turned water to wine to show that He is the Messiah, the Son of God.

Jesus offers us something greater than wine—Himself. Jesus is the true vine. On that day, His hour had not yet come. Jesus knew what lay ahead; to give us Himself, He would shed His own blood by dying on the cross for our sin.

When Jesus’ disciples witnessed His miracle, the jars of wine were not the focus of their awe and wonder. Through the miracle, Jesus displayed His glory and His disciples believed in Him. Jesus was driven by His Father’s plan—not to simply solve the problem of lacking wine, but to solve the deepest problem we face, the problem of sin.

As you teach kids, point them beyond Jesus’ miracles to see Jesus for who He is. Jesus performed miracles to help people believe that He is the Messiah, the Son of God. Through His death and resurrection, Jesus provided what we need most—forgiveness and eternal life.



**MINISTRY GRID**  
training made simple

Additional resources for each session are available at [gospelproject.com](http://gospelproject.com). For free training and session-by-session help, visit [www.ministrygrid.com/web/thegospelproject](http://www.ministrygrid.com/web/thegospelproject).

# The BIBLE STORY

## **Bible Storytelling Tips**

- **Use props:** Set up six small jars and fill them with water as you tell the story. Hold up a jar as you describe the servants taking the water to the man in charge.
- **Sketch the scene:** As you tell the story, draw the figures on a dry erase board: Mary, Jesus, His disciples, servants, the wedding party, and so forth.

## **Jesus Turned Water to Wine**

*John 2:1-12*

**One day, Jesus’ mother, Mary, was at a wedding feast in Cana. Jesus and His disciples were there too. When the wine was all gone, Mary told Jesus, “They do not have any more wine.”**

**Jesus replied, “What does this have to do with Me? My time has not yet come.”** Jesus meant that it was not yet time for Him to be glorified, or to be worshiped and praised.

**Jesus knew what was best, so Mary said to the servants, “Do whatever He tells you.”**

**Now there were six stone water jars at the feast for religious washing. Each jar held 20 or 30 gallons. Jesus told the servants to fill the jars with water. The servants filled the jars to the top. Then Jesus said, “Now take some of the water out and give it to the man in charge of the feast.”**

**So they did. The man in charge tasted the water that had now turned into wine. The man did not know where the wine had come from, but the servants knew. He called to the groom and said, “Usually the best wine is served first. Then, after the guests have had enough, the other wine is served. But you have kept the best for last!”**

**This was Jesus’ first miracle, and He did it in Cana, which is in Galilee. This miracle showed Jesus’ glory, and His disciples believed in Him.**

After this, Jesus went to Capernaum with His mother, His brothers, and His disciples. They stayed in Capernaum for a few days.

*Christ Connection: Jesus performed miracles to help people believe that He is the Messiah, the Son of God. Jesus has power over everything, and those who believe in Him will have eternal life.*



**WANT TO  
DISCOVER  
GOD'S WORD?  
GET  
BIBLE EXPRESS!**

Invite kids to check out this week's devotionals to discover that Jesus' first miracle gave God glory. God calls all believers to good works to give Him glory and grow His kingdom. (Eph. 2:10) Order in bulk, subscribe quarterly, or purchase individually. For more information, check out [www.lifeway.com/devotionals](http://www.lifeway.com/devotionals).

# Small Group OPENING

**SESSION TITLE:** Jesus Turned Water to Wine

**BIBLE PASSAGE:** John 2:1-12

**MAIN POINT:** Jesus' first miracle was to turn water into wine.

**KEY PASSAGE:** John 20:31

**BIG PICTURE QUESTION:** Why did Jesus perform miracles? Jesus performed miracles to glorify God and prove He is God the Son.

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## Welcome time

Greet each kid as he or she arrives. Use this time to collect the offering, fill out attendance sheets, and help new kids connect to your group. As kids arrive invite them to share about the most incredible things they have ever seen. Would they have believed it if they had only heard about it instead of seeing it for themselves?

## Activity page (5 minutes)

- “Word Maze” activity page, 1 per kid
- pencils or markers

Invite kids to complete the “Word Maze” on the activity page. Kids should follow the maze to figure out which letters complete the bottom word. (*wine*)

**SAY** • Wine is made from grapes. To turn water into wine would be a miracle! That’s exactly what today’s Bible story is about.

## Session starter (10 minutes)

**OPTION 1:** Make signs

Distribute paper and markers or crayons. Invite kids to create a sign. Suggest they make a sign for the door of their bedroom or the classroom. Kids might like to design a road sign advertising an upcoming destination or event. Allow



- paper
- markers or crayons

kids to work for several minutes. Then invite kids to present their signs to the group. Ask questions about each sign:

- What does your sign say?
- What does your sign point forward to? (An event? A place?)
- What's more important, the sign or what it points to?

**SAY** • Today we are going to hear about one of Jesus' miracles. In fact, this was Jesus' very first miracle on earth. A *miracle* is an unusual event that only God can cause to happen. Jesus' miracles were like signs that pointed to something even greater.

### **OPTION 2:** Water relay

Form two teams of kids. Instruct each team to form a single-file line. Give each player a paper cup. Position a bucket of water at the front of each line and an empty bucket at the end of each line.

Explain that when you say "go," the first player in line should dip her cup into the water and then pour the water into the next player's cup. Players will pass the water down the line from cup to cup. The last player in line will dump the water into the second bucket.

The first player may dip her cup into the bucket again as soon as her cup is empty and pass more water down the line. Teams should continue passing water until the first bucket is empty.

**SAY** • Great! In today's Bible story, Jesus told His disciples to fill six stone jars with water. Each jar held 20 or 30 gallons of water! When we hear the Bible story, we will find out what Jesus did with all that water.

- buckets, 4
- paper cups, 1 per kid
- water
- towels for cleanup

Tip: Keep towels ready to clean up spills so kids don't slip on water.

## **Transition to large group**

# Large Group LEADER

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- room decorations
- Theme Background Slide (optional)

**Suggested Theme Decorating Ideas:** Simulate the starting line of an extreme obstacle course. Hang a banner that says *START*. Display a large clock or timer. Secure a climbing rope to the ceiling or lay it across the floor. Cover a focal wall with a dark sheet and attach colored circles as climbing holds, or project the theme background slide. Arrange a few orange cones at the front of the room.

## Countdown

- countdown video

Show the countdown video as your kids arrive, and set it to end as large group time begins.

## Introduce the session (3 minutes)

- leader attire
- large barrel

*[Large Group Leader enters wearing athletic attire and sweatbands on his or her wrists and head. Leader stretches and then attempts to lift a large barrel without success.]*

Option: Tape a large piece of brown paper into a tube to simulate a barrel. Pretend it is heavy as you attempt to lift it.

**LEADER** • Whew! I am going to have to work on the ol' biceps to get that thing off the ground.

In case you don't know, I am training for a competition. It's very unique—an extreme obstacle course of sorts. I've heard rumors that one of the challenges involves moving large barrels of water

from one area to another. I'm just not sure I can do it! [*Lift up a Bible.*]

Now this is something I can lift. I'm glad you are here to learn more about God as we study His Word. I'm ready to jump right in.

## Big picture question (1 minute)

**LEADER** • Let's take a step back and look at the bigger picture here. Jesus came to earth because He is God's plan to rescue people from sin. Sin separates people from God, and the punishment for sin is death. God promised to send a Savior—a Rescuer—and He kept His promise by sending His Son.

Jesus came to earth as a baby. He grew up and began His ministry. He taught people about God and His kingdom. He also performed miracles.

For the next few weeks, we are going to hear about Jesus' miracles and answer our big picture question:

***Why did Jesus perform miracles?***

## Giant timeline (1 minute)

Show the giant timeline or big story circle.

**LEADER** • We have been learning about things Jesus taught to people while He was on earth. Jesus told stories, or parables, to teach people about God and His kingdom. He also performed miracles. A *miracle* is an unusual event that only God can cause to happen.

Today's Bible story is called "Jesus Turned Water to Wine." We are going to hear about Jesus' first miracle. You can find this story in the New Testament, in the Gospel of John.

• Giant Timeline or  
Big Story Circle



- Bibles
- “Jesus Turned Water to Wine” video
- Big Picture Question Poster
- Bible Story Picture Poster

## Tell the Bible story (10 minutes)

Open your Bible to John 2:1-12. Use the Bible storytelling tips on the Bible story page to help you tell the story, or show the Bible story video “Jesus Turned Water to Wine.”

**LEADER** • This is the story of Jesus’ first miracle. **Jesus’ first miracle was to turn water into wine.** Now that’s pretty amazing! Wine was an important part of a wedding celebration. To run out of wine would have been a disaster.

Jesus’ mother, Mary, was at a wedding feast in Cana, and Jesus and His disciples were also there. When Mary saw that the wine had run out, what did she do? She told Jesus about it. Surely He could help.

But Jesus’ answer is surprising. He said, “What does this have to do with Me? My time has not yet come.” At this point in His ministry, not many people knew that Jesus was the Messiah. Jesus said that it wasn’t time yet for Him to be praised.

Mary believed that Jesus would do what was best, so she told the servants to listen to Him. Jesus told the servants to fill six jars with water. Then they took out some of the water and gave it to the man in charge of the feast.

Jesus had changed the water into wine, and it was very good wine—even better than the first wine.

Tip: Use Scripture and the guide provided to explain how to become a Christian. Make sure kids know when and where they can ask questions.

## Christ connection

**LEADER** • Turning water into wine was the first of many miracles that Jesus performed. Jesus performed miracles to help people believe that He is the Messiah, the Son of God.

After Jesus turned water into wine, His disciples

believed in Him. We can read about Jesus' miracles in the Bible and believe that He has power over everything. Those who trust in Jesus will be forgiven of their sins and have eternal life.

### **Key passage (5 minutes)**

Show the key passage poster. Read John 20:31 aloud. Then lead boys and girls to read the key passage together.

- Key Passage Poster
- "Life in His Name" song

**LEADER** • Do you know why we find these stories about Jesus' signs and miracles in the Bible? Our key passage tells us why! It says that these are written so that we may believe Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God. Let's say our big picture question and answer together before we sing. *Why did Jesus perform miracles? Jesus performed miracles to glorify God and prove He is God the Son.*

Lead boys and girls in singing "Life in His Name."

### **Discussion starter video (4 minutes)**

**LEADER** • Have you ever told a friend that you could do something, but your friend didn't believe you? Check this out.

- "Unit 23, Session 1" discussion starter video

Show the "Unit 23, Session 1" discussion starter video.

Then guide kids to discuss the following questions:

- How do you know someone is telling the truth about who he or she is?
- *Why did Jesus perform miracles? Jesus performed miracles to glorify God and prove He is God the Son.*
- What did Mary's instructions show about her trust in Jesus?

**LEADER** • Jesus claimed to be the Son of God. Do you

believe He is? Mary trusted that Jesus is the Messiah. She told the others to do whatever Jesus said because she believed He is powerful. Because Jesus is who He says He is, we can trust Him and obey Him too.

### **Sing (4 minutes)**

• “I Will Stand” song

**LEADER** • This makes me want to sing. Will you join me? Sing together “I Will Stand.”

### **Pray (2 minutes)**

Invite kids to pray before dismissing to small groups.

**LEADER** • Lord Jesus, You are the Son of God. We believe that You are the promised Messiah. You have given us Your Word to help us believe. Help us to trust You and obey You. Amen.

### **Dismiss to small groups**

## The Gospel: God's Plan for Me

Ask kids if they have ever heard the word *gospel*. Clarify that the word *gospel* means “good news.” It is the message about Christ, the kingdom of God, and salvation. Use the following guide to share the gospel with kids.



**God rules.** Explain to kids that the Bible tells us God created everything, and He is in charge of everything. Invite a volunteer to read Genesis 1:1 from the Bible. Read Revelation 4:11 or Colossians 1:16-17 aloud and explain what these verses mean.



**We sinned.** Tell kids that since the time of Adam and Eve, everyone has chosen to disobey God. (Romans 3:23) The Bible calls this sin. Because God is holy, God cannot be around sin. Sin separates us from God and deserves God's punishment of death. (Romans 6:23)



**God provided.** Choose a child to read John 3:16 aloud. Say that God sent His Son, Jesus, the perfect solution to our sin problem, to rescue us from the punishment we deserve. It's something we, as sinners, could never earn on our own. Jesus alone saves us. Read and explain Ephesians 2:8-9.



**Jesus gives.** Share with kids that Jesus lived a perfect life, died on the cross for our sins, and rose again. Because Jesus gave up His life for us, we can be welcomed into God's family for eternity. This is the best gift ever! Read Romans 5:8; 2 Corinthians 5:21; or 1 Peter 3:18.



**We respond.** Tell kids that they can respond to Jesus. Read Romans 10:9-10,13. Review these aspects of our response: Believe in your heart that Jesus alone saves you through what He's already done on the cross. Repent, turning from self and sin to Jesus. Tell God and others that your faith is in Jesus.

Offer to talk with any child who is interested in responding to Jesus.

Tip: Provide *I'm a Christian Now* for new Christians to take home and complete with their families.

# Small Group LEADER

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## Key passage activity (5 minutes)

- Key Passage Poster
- chalkboard or dry erase board
- chalk or marker
- eraser

Write the words of John 20:31 on a chalkboard or dry erase board. Guide boys and girls to read the key passage aloud together. Then erase one or two words. Challenge kids to read it again and supply the missing words.

Continue erasing one or two words at a time, allowing kids to fill in the blanks. When you have erased the entire verse, challenge kids to say John 20:31 from memory.

**SAY** • Great work, everyone! In our Bible story today, we learned that **Jesus' first miracle was to turn water into wine.** Have you ever wondered why God's Word includes this story? Our key passage tells us! God wants us to believe in His Son, Jesus, and have eternal life in Him.

## Bible story review & Bible skills (10 minutes)

- Bibles, 1 per kid
- Main Point Poster
- pitcher of water
- red food color
- 1-cup measure
- large clear, identical wide-mouthed vases, 2

Before small group, drop a few drops of red food color into the bottom of two clear, identical wide-mouthed vases. Set the vases on a table. Position a pitcher of water and 1-cup measure between the vases.

Form two teams of kids. Explain that you will ask review questions about the Bible story. For each correct answer, a

player will add 1 cup of water to his team's vase. The team with the most water at the end wins.

Ask a question to team 1. If the team is correct, allow a player to add water to the team's vase. Then ask team 2 a question. If team 1 answers its question incorrectly, allow team 2 to answer before asking team 2 a new question.

1. What book of the Bible contains the story of Jesus' first miracle? (*the Gospel of John, John 2:1-12*)
2. Where did this Bible story take place? (*at a wedding feast in Cana, John 2:1*)
3. Which of Jesus' relatives was at the wedding feast? (*His mother, Mary; John 2:1*)
4. What went wrong at the feast? (*The wine ran out, John 2:3*)
5. What did Mary tell the servants to do? (*She said to do whatever Jesus told them to do, John 2:5*)
6. How many stone water jars were at the feast? (*six, John 2:6*)
7. What did Jesus tell the servants to do? (*fill the jars with water, John 2:7*)
8. What happened to the water? (*It had become wine, John 2:9*)
9. How many miracles had Jesus performed before this? (*none, this was the first; John 2:11*)
10. **Why did Jesus perform miracles? Jesus performed miracles to glorify God and prove He is God the Son.**

**SAY** • How did the water change when you put it in the vase? (*The food color turned it red.*) **Jesus' first miracle was to turn water into wine.** This miracle helped the disciples believe in Jesus.

Option: Retell or review the Bible story using the bolded text of the Bible story script.



LOW PREP

- index cards
- marker

## Activity choice (10 minutes)

**OPTION 1:** Is it time yet?

Write a time on an index card and place it facedown. (For example, 5:18 *p.m.*) Challenge kids to guess the time written on the card.

Call on kids one at a time to guess the time. Depending on their answers, respond, “It’s not time yet,” or “You’re too late,” to indicate whether the time on the card is earlier or later than their guess.

If a kid guesses the exact time, shout, “It’s time!” Allow the kid to write down another time and play your role.

**SAY** • When Mary told Jesus about the wine running out, Jesus told her, “My time has not yet come.”

Jesus meant that it was not yet time for Him to be glorified. Jesus came to earth to do God’s plan—to rescue people from sin. **Jesus’ first miracle was to turn water into wine**, but His ministry had just begun. He had a lot more to do!

**OPTION 2:** Cause and effect science experiments

Place the following combinations of items on the table: effervescent tablet and water, drink mix and water, and baking soda and vinegar. Invite kids to describe what they think will happen when you mix the items.

Invite volunteers to mix the pairs together one at a time. Prompt kids to describe the results. Then explain the reactions.

- When the effervescent tablet mixes with water, there is a chemical reaction that releases a lot of carbon dioxide bubbles.
- Baking soda and vinegar also react to form carbon dioxide.

- The drink mix is dissolved, or evenly distributed, in the water so the water changes color.

**SAY** • Each of these changes can be explained by science, but miracles cannot be explained by science. Miracles are unusual events that only God can cause to happen. ***Jesus performed miracles to glorify God and prove He is God the Son. Jesus' first miracle was to turn water into wine.*** This miracle showed Jesus' glory, and His disciples believed in Him. Jesus has power over everything, and those who believe in Him will have eternal life.

Option: Review the gospel with boys and girls. Explain that kids are welcome to speak with you or another teacher if they have questions.

## Journal and prayer (5 minutes)

Distribute journal pages and pencils. Encourage kids to write a sentence or two to answer these questions: Do you believe Jesus is the Messiah? Are you willing to obey Him? Why or why not?

**SAY** • Just like Mary told the disciples, “Do whatever He tells you,” we can obey Jesus and trust that He knows what is best.

Lead kids in prayer. Thank Jesus for using miracles to bring glory to God and prove who He is. Ask God to help kids look beyond the miracles and understand who Jesus is. Pray that kids will love Jesus and trust Him for their salvation.

As time allows, lead kids to complete “Signs and Wonders” on the activity page. Direct kids to fill in the missing words. Kids should first match the letter to a jar (A, B, or C) and then the number to a word in the list (1 = first word, 2 = second word, and so forth).

(Answer: *Jesus performed miracles to glorify God and prove He is the Son of God.*)

- pencils
- Journal Page
- “Signs and Wonders” activity page, 1 per kid

Tip: Give parents this week's *Big Picture Cards for Families* to allow families to interact with the biblical content at home.