Wedding at Cana



Scripture Reference: John 2:1-11

Suggested Theme: Jesus' miracles weren't just tricks, but showed God's power and increased people's faith.

Memory Verse: "So, in Cana of Galilee, Jesus did his first miracle. There, he showed his glory, and his followers believed in him." John 2:11, ICB

Story Overview:

Jesus performed His first miracle at a wedding in the city of Cana. When the hosts ran out of wine to serve the guests, Mary had total confidence that her son, Jesus, would take care of the situation. He miraculously turned plain water into excellent wine.

Background Study:

The exact location of Cana is not known. It is west of the Sea of Galilee. It is close enough to Nazareth and the area around the Jordan that Jesus, his mother, and Jesus' disciples were all guests at the wedding.

The feast was a big part of the wedding custom. It would have been shameful for the host to run out of wine for his guests. Mary must have been well acquainted with the host because she saw it as her responsibility to help with the problem. She also seems to have a charge over the servants since she gave them orders to obey Jesus. Perhaps this was a relative or even another of Mary's children (Jesus' sibling) who was getting married.

It is interesting that Mary trusts Jesus to solve the problem. We know that He had not yet performed a public miracle before this time (verse 11). In what way did Mary know that Jesus would solve the problem? She may or may not have expected Him to perform a miracle. Jesus knew that His power was not given to Him for His own gratification. He reminds Mary that what she is asking Him to do is not of the magnitude that His purpose on earth was.

Whatever Mary's expectations might have been, they were surpassed. Jesus miraculously produced some more wine. He ordered the servants to fill six stone water jars with water. These were not special jars. They were simply jars used to hold water used in ceremonies. The text says that the jars were quite large (verse 6).

Jesus then ordered the servants to take a sample from the jars. This was to be given to the man in charge of the banquet. When he tasted it – it was wine! The water had been miraculously turned to wine!

It was not just any wine – it was excellent wine. Usually, guests were served the best wine at the beginning of the banquet. After they had been satisfied with the wine then, their taste was dulled. That is when the

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inferior (cheaper) wine was brought out. In this case, the person in charge thought the bridegroom might have made a mistake. The wine that Jesus had produced was the best wine of the night.

The lesson from this miracle is more than just turning water into wine. Jesus used old containers for ceremonial purification (verse 6). He filled the containers with something totally new and good. This was a good way for Him to introduce the purpose of His ministry. The Jewish nation was the container by which the Messiah would be poured out to the world.

Another parallel is the fact that drinking too much wine dulls us from knowing the difference between right and wrong (good to point out to kids!). The wedding guests had been drinking so long that they probably didn't appreciate the beautiful taste of the new wine. The Jews had practised their religion for so long that they did not appreciate the Messiah.

This was the first recorded miracle performed by Jesus. More are found throughout Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. There were still others that were never recorded. Near the end of his book, John wrote that the miracles of Jesus were written in his book to help the reader believe that Jesus is the Son of God and, ultimately, have eternal life.

> "Jesus did many other miracles before his followers that are not written in this book. But these are written so that you can believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God. Then, by believing, you can have life through his name." John 20:30-31, ICB

Way to Introduce the Story:

Show the children some of your wedding pictures, or have a guest come and show them theirs. Discuss the wedding and the celebration afterwards. Was there a meal? Did you have plenty of food and drink, or did you run out? What would you have done if you had run out? What weddings have the children been involved in? "In today's story, we are going to learn about a wedding that Jesus and His mother attended. Let's listen to hear what happened at the feast following the wedding."

The Story:

Jesus and the disciples were invited to a wedding in the town of Cana. When they arrived at the wedding, they saw Jesus' mother, Mary. She had been invited to the wedding, too. There were many people at the wedding. After the wedding, they had a big wedding feast. They celebrated and ate lots of good food.

The groom provided wine at the wedding. Wine is a kind of alcoholic drink. The problem with alcohol is that some people do not know when to stop drinking it. That is what happened at this wedding. Some people drank so much that there was none left for the rest of the guests.

Jesus' mother knew that Jesus could help. She told Him the problem. Then, she told all the servants to do exactly what Jesus told them to do.

Jesus reminded His mother that solving the wine problem was not the reason He came to earth. Jesus came to earth to be the Messiah.

But Jesus wanted to help His mother. He told the servants to go and get water. Then He told them to put the water in six large water pots. After all the pots were full, He told them to dip out the water and take it to the man who was in charge of the wedding feast.

The servants did just as Jesus said. They filled the six pots with water, and then they dipped out some water and took it to the man in charge of the wedding feast.

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The man had a taste, and he could not believe it! How could this have happened? The servants put plain water into the jars, and the water turned to wine. That is impossible! No one could make that happen, could they? But Jesus made it happen.

When something is impossible, but it happens anyway – that is called a miracle. Jesus performed many miracles after this, but turning water to wine at the wedding in Cana was Jesus' first miracle.

As the man and the other servants served the wine, everyone was amazed at how delicious it was.

This was the best wine he had ever tasted. Usually, the best wine comes first, and then the cheap wine. This time, it was just the opposite. The last wine (the wine that Jesus made) was the best wine.

Turning water to wine at the wedding at Cana was the first miracle Jesus performed. When they saw this miracle, His disciples (followers) began to see how amazing Jesus really was.

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Ways to Tell the Story:

This story can be told using various methods. Always remain true to the facts found in the Bible, but help children connect to its meaning by using drama, visual aids, voice inflection or other group participation.

Be selective. Each teacher is unique, so only use the illustrations that best relate to how YOU tell the story in THIS lesson. Too many illustrations can be confusing, so eliminate any that cover other stories or details you do not wish to emphasise in this lesson.

Click here for visual aids and more storytelling methods.

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Review and Reflection Questions:

Review questions help children remember and know the facts of a story. Reflection questions encourage them to internalise the meaning and implications for their lives. Asking at least one of each type of question can help strengthen a child's spiritual development and help them connect to God. Click here to learn more about review and reflection questions.

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Review:

- In what city did Jesus perform His first miracle? (Cana)
- What kind of event was Jesus attending when He performed His first miracle? (A wedding)
- What was the problem at the wedding? (There was no more wine, which was shameful)
- What is a miracle? (Something impossible that God makes happen with His power)
- What was Jesus' first miracle? (Turning water to wine)
- How did Jesus' wine taste? (It was excellent wine)
- What did the disciples learn from being at the wedding with Jesus and seeing His miracle?
- What did you learn about God or Jesus from this story?

Reflection:

- What do you think the wedding looked or sounded like? What did the food smell like?

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- What is something you wonder about in this story?
- Why do you think this was Jesus' first miracle?
- Do you think the disciples had faith that Jesus could turn water into wine?
- How do you think Jesus felt before He did His first miracle?
- If you were one of Jesus' disciples, would you have believed Jesus turned the water into wine?
- How do you think those leading the wedding felt when Jesus performed the miracle and provided everyone with more wine?
- Have you experienced a miracle?
- How are Jesus' miracles different from superpowers or magic? (Jesus could do miracles because God gave Him His power. Jesus' miracles were performed to make things right- to heal, provide, or restore- or show God's glory and power)
- What question would you ask God about this story?

Prayer:

It is important to guide children in learning how to pray. In prayer, children can connect with God and learn that He hears and answers them. God can become a life-long friend who is with them every moment of their lives. Try using a variety of prayer methods from time to time so that the children can learn to connect with God in different ways. Note that you can pray at any time throughout your lesson. A variety of prayer methods are found here.

Song Suggestions:

- J-E-S-U-S Song
- Jesus' Love is a-Bubblin' Over Song
- My God is So Big Song
- Refer to the Song Page on this website for more song options.

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Activities and Crafts:

- How to choose the best learning activities for my teaching situation.
- Visit the activities and songs pages for additional activities and crafts.

Activities:

- Have two containers – one transparent and one not. The transparent container should contain clear water. Place food colouring or dry purple drink mix in the bottom of the container that is not transparent. Pour the water into the container with the coloured drink mix. Then, pour it back into the transparent container, allowing children to see that it has now been "changed." After the children have seen the effect then be sure to explain that it is a trick. Discuss the fact that Jesus did miracles – not tricks.
- Use identical cups and place Refresh, Kool-Aid or any powdered drink mix in each one. Make one correctly and dilute the others (some more than others.) Give each child an empty cup. Pour a little from one of the Refresh cups into each of the children's cups and let them taste it. Do this for each Refresh

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cup and let the children vote on which contains the “best” drink. Talk about the fact that when Jesus changed the water to wine, it was the best wine.

- Have a cup of water and pass it around to each child, asking them to turn it into wine. After each child has a go, they reply that they can’t do it and that it is not possible. Then, talk about how miraculous it was that Jesus was able to do this. To further reinforce the idea, explain the process of making wine and how it takes a long time to make good wine. You can demonstrate this by smashing grapes and trying to get the juice into a cup.
- A female teacher could drape a cloth over her head like a veil and then tell the story from Mary’s point of view (or a servant’s point of view). A male teacher could tell the story from the bridegroom’s point of view.

Invite the children to respond to this story using the adaptable “God’s Story” printable reflection page. Free printables for this story.

Crafts:

- Use wooden or plastic spoons to make puppets. Draw faces on the inside of the spoons and wrap a piece of fabric around the handle as clothing. Let children use these to act out the story.
- Provide a plastic goblet or cup and various stickers, glitter, stick-on jewels, etc., so younger children can decorate a cup. Alternatively, use this printable Water to Wine craft.



Print and use these free bookmarks, trading cards or timelines. Free printables for this story.

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Other Online Resources:

- Colouring page and worksheets about Jesus turning water to wine (Calvary Curriculum)
- A list of Jesus' miracles (About Jesus)

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