

Jesus Changes Water into Wine

John 2:1–11

Characters: 2 Readers; Jesus; Jesus' Disciples (1–7); Mary, Jesus' mother; Servants (2 or more); Master of the Feast; Bridegroom; Wedding Guests (everyone else); Leader (you)

Costumes: Blue sash for Jesus; hand towels or kitchen towels for servants to lay on their arms, like "French" waiters; identifying costume pieces, such as scarves, neckties, or belts for Mary, Disciples, Master of the Feast, and Bridegroom

As an option, provide costume pieces for all the Guests, such as two colors of crepe-paper streamers, one for guests of the bride and the other for guests of the groom, to attach as headbands, belts, bracelets, or sashes.

Props: Cana Sign (CD, choice of 2); 6 plastic 2-liter bottles, plastic milk containers, or something to represent six 20–30 gallon water jars; wine glasses (cups); highlighters

Prepare: Print Leader Notes, Script, and Review Questions for yourself. Highlight your parts, especially the introduction to the skit.

Print at least 6 Scripts for characters with speaking parts. You will need more if you have more than one person play as Servants.

Gather props and costume items that you can reuse.

Set your six containers (stone jars) along one wall.

Leader Notes

This drama activity lets all children participate; it is not a performance. Include preparation time as part of the activity so that everyone sees and hears the plans. Encourage children to relax and enjoy participating.

As Leader, you introduce the skit and direct the activity. Help students know where to move or what to do, as needed. Use the review questions after the skit to help students understand the reading.

If time allows, repeat the activity with students playing the same or different parts. Students often relax and enjoy doing the activity again. Children, especially those with language-processing delays, learn a lot from repeating activities.

Recruit students to play the speaking parts of 2 Readers, Jesus, Mary, Servants, and Master of the Feast. Give each person a script and a highlighter marker to mark their lines. Hand out costumes.

Give cups and towels to the Servants. Show them how to fold the towels over their arms. Tell Servants to give every Guest a wine glass (cup) when they enter the feast and help them find a place to sit. Show Servants where to seat Guests.

Ask one person to lead the Servants. Give these groups a few minutes to practice singing their lines to the melody of “Be Our Guest” from Disney’s *Beauty and the Beast* movie.

While other students prepare, recruit students to play the nonspeaking parts of the Disciples, Bridegroom, and Guests. Hand out costumes. Tell these students that they should greet one another, talk, laugh, and shake hands when they enter and pretend to drink wine and eat food at the party.

Choose a place as the entrance for the party. Move the Guests, Jesus, Jesus’ Disciples, and Mary outside the entrance. Ask the Bridegroom to stand by the door and greet the Guests as they enter. When ready to start, stand by the Bridegroom, and then sit down with the Guests.

Ask Servants to stand behind the groom, ready to hand out cups to Guests and show them where to sit.

Put Readers in a place where students can hear them but they do not impede other action.

Script

Jesus Changes Water into Wine; John 2:1–11

LEADER: (*Hang up Cana Sign.*) **Today, we read about Jesus' first miracle that happened in the town of Cana in the region of Galilee.**

In this miracle, Jesus showed that He is true man and true God. May the Holy Spirit give us faith in Jesus, our Savior, through His Word.

READER 1: **There was a wedding in the town of Cana in Galilee. Wedding feasts lasted many days, sometimes as long as a week.**

READER 2: **Many people came to rejoice with the family.**

LEADER beckons for GUESTS to ENTER. BRIDEGROOM greets GUESTS. GUESTS greet one another, talk, laugh, and shake hands.

SERVANTS: (*Give each GUEST a wine glass and help GUESTS find a place to sit while singing to the tune of "Be Our Guest" from Beauty and the Beast. Repeat until all GUESTS are seated.*) **Be our guest. Be our guest. We will serve you with our best!**

READER 1: **Jesus, His disciples, and His mother, Mary, also attended.**

LEADER beckons and JESUS, DISCIPLES, and MARY ENTER.

SERVANTS: (*Give each a wine glass and help ALL find a place to sit, still singing*) **Be our guest. Be our guest. We will serve you with our best!**

When ALL are seated, READER 2 continues.

READER 2: **One day, there was a little commotion, unnoticed by most.**

MARY beckons BRIDEGROOM to stand, whispers to HIM, and looks concerned; then motions for BRIDEGROOM to sit.

READER 1: **The servants were also aware of this issue.**

SERVANTS: (*Aghast, singing to one another*) **There's no wine. There's no wine. Nothing left for guests of mine.**

MARY: (*Moves quietly to JESUS, beckons for JESUS to stand, and whispers*) **They have no wine.**

JESUS: (*Calmly, kindly*) **Woman, what does this have to do with Me? My time has not yet come.**

MARY: (*Walks to SERVANTS, points at JESUS*) **Do whatever He tells you.**

SERVANTS: (*Singing*) **Yes, indeed! Yes, indeed! Can He give us what we need?**

JESUS moves to stand by jars.

READER 2: Now, there were six stone jars there, holding water for washing utensils and hands before eating.

READER 1: Each jar held twenty or thirty gallons. That's a lot of water!

JESUS: *(To SERVANTS)* Fill the jars with water. Then draw some out and take it to the master of the feast.

SERVANTS: *(Singing)* Fill them up! Fill them up! Someone go and get a cup. *(Pretend to pour water into jars. ONE SERVANT grabs a cup.)*

Draw some out! Draw some out! Do as Jesus said, no doubt. *(Pretend to scoop water from the jar with a cup. ONE SERVANT tries to sip some, but ANOTHER SERVANT stops him or her, says No! and shakes an index finger.)*

READER 2: So they took the sample cup to the master of the feast. *(SERVANTS proudly present cup to the MASTER OF THE FEAST with a wave of their hands and a small bow.)*

SERVANTS: *(Singing)* Drink it up! Drink it up! We were told to fill the cup!

MASTER OF THE FEAST: *(Sips from the cup and is completely astounded at how good it tastes.)* This is amazing! Where did this come from?

SERVANTS: *(Smiling)* We know where! We know where! But we dare not speak or share.

MASTER OF THE FEAST: *(Runs to BRIDEGROOM and beckons to stand; puts arm around the BRIDEGROOM)* Everyone serves the good wine first, and when people have drunk a lot, then they serve the poor wine. But you kept the best wine until now! *(Pats BRIDEGROOM on the back.)*

SERVANTS: Let's go serve! Let's go serve! Share this wine and some hors d'oeuvres. *(SERVANTS pretend to hold trays and offer food to GUESTS; and hold pitchers and pretend to fill wine glasses of GUESTS.)*

READER 1: This was the first of Jesus' signs that showed His glory.

BOTH READERS: His disciples believed in Jesus as the promised Messiah.

READER 2: With this sign, Jesus proved He is true God who commands nature to obey while doing miracles. *(DISCIPLES have an awestruck look on their faces as they stare at JESUS.)*

READER 1: Jesus' mother already knew Jesus as the powerful Son of God.

READER 2: Soon many more people would believe in Jesus too—people like you and me.

Review Questions

Understand the Bible account and make life applications

Jesus Changes Water into Wine; John 2:1–11

Ask questions to check children's understanding of the skit and Bible account.

What problem did Mary notice? They ran out of wine at the wedding feast. The bridegroom's family hosted the wedding feast and provided food and drink for their guests. The Jewish people highly valued hospitality, and running out of wine kept them from being good hosts.

Some Bible scholars believe Mary may have been related to the bride or groom, so she may have felt obligated to help the family.

Mary told Jesus about the problem. What does this tell us about her? Mary believed Jesus could do something about the problem. She knew Jesus as God's Son and trusted His powerful Word.

Why did Jesus say no to Mary at first? He said His time had not yet come. Jesus would choose the time to reveal Himself, not anyone else.

What did Mary say to the servants? "Do whatever He tells you."

What do Jesus' actions tell us about Him? Jesus cares about people. He shows compassion and mercy in big and little ways. No need escapes His care. Jesus has power, and He lovingly uses it to help us.

How did Jesus turn water into wine? The Bible doesn't say how. It just says that He did, and that the wine was excellent! Notice that Jesus didn't make a big deal of doing this. He did it quietly.

What is a "sign"? A sign reveals God's mind and work. When Jesus showed His power as God's Son in a sign, He provided evidence that He is the Messiah, the Savior for whom people waited. In this case, this sign strengthened His disciples' faith in Him as the Messiah and true God.

Can we ask Jesus to help us? Yes! We can tell Jesus about our concerns in prayer. Like Mary, we trust that He listens, cares, and is able to help us with any need.

Where do we hear God's love and grace in this event? Only God's Son could turn water into wine. Only God's Son could live without sin and pay for our sins on the cross. Only God's Son could rise from the dead and give us new life with Him, now and forever.

Jesus Clears the Temple

John 2:13–22

Characters: Jesus; 2 or more Merchants; 1 Money Changer; 2 Religious Leaders; 2 or more Disciples; more Religious Leaders and Worshipers (everyone else); Leader (you)

Costumes: Blue sash for Jesus; pendants or other items showing wealth for Merchants and Money Changer; identifiers for Religious Leaders and Disciples; other group identifiers for the other people (e.g., belts, bandanas, ties, scarves, color-defined crepe-paper streamers for each group).

Props: 2 signs: Jerusalem (choice of 2) and Herod's Temple (CD); stuffed or plastic toy cows, lambs, and birds for Merchants to sell; 2 kinds of coins, such as toy coins or pennies for Money Changers to use; tables or small blankets to define selling areas; construction paper and markers for students to make signs; whip of cords for Jesus (lengths of yarn or jute tied together at one end)

Prepare: Print Leader Notes, Script, and Review Questions for yourself. Highlight your parts. Copy 8 more Scripts for people with speaking parts: Jesus, 2 Merchants, Money Changer, 2 Religious Leaders, and 2 Disciples.

Print the 2 signs. Hang up the Jerusalem Sign in your area. Keep the Herod's Temple Sign to use in the introduction. (Save both signs for Lesson 13. You also reuse the Jerusalem Sign in Lesson 3.)

Gather props and costume items. Decide which kind of coin will be used for the temple tax. Money Changers will trade this coin for others so that Worshipers can pay their temple taxes.

Define an area in your space as the Court of Gentiles, the largest and most accessible part of Herod's Temple, where Merchants and Money Changers worked. Leave space for skit action in the middle of the room.

Leader Notes

This drama activity lets all children participate; it is not a performance. Include preparation time as part of the activity so that everyone sees and hears the plans. Encourage children to relax and enjoy participating.

As Leader, you introduce the skit, using the Herod's Temple Sign, and direct the activity. You ask review questions after the skit.

If time allows, repeat the activity with students playing the same or different parts. Students often relax and enjoy doing the activity again. Children, especially those with language-processing delays, learn a lot from repeating activities.

Recruit students who read well for speaking parts: Jesus, 2 Merchants, Money Changer, 2 Religious Leaders, and 2 Disciples. Give each person a script and highlighter marker to mark their lines.

Tell 2 Disciples that some of their parts include saying words for everyone to repeat. Encourage them to use inflection, louder or softer volume, and other voice variations. Normally, students repeat the phrases in the same way the leader speaks. Tell the Disciples to try again if people don't respond as expected.

Hand out costume items and ask students to put them on. Give the cord whip to Jesus.

Ask Merchants and the Money Changer to set up their individual sales areas on tables or small blankets on either side of the action area to showcase their wares (stuffed or toy animals; coins). Encourage these groups to make signs that name their "stores" or show their prices. Point out construction paper and markers.

Give the second kind of coins to Worshipers and/or to Religious Teachers.

When ready to start the skit, place Jesus and His Disciples at one end of the merchant area. Ask the Religious Leaders to stand at the other end.

Script

Jesus Clears the Temple; John 2:13–22

LEADER: *(Stand between the MERCHANTS' sale areas; show the Herod's Temple Sign.)* **Welcome to Herod's Temple. This is the Court of Gentiles, the outermost part of Herod's Temple.** *(Point out the Court of the Gentiles, the tallest and longest wall in the top center of the sign.)* **This court encircled the sanctuary where priests made sacrifices for the people.** *(Point out the pinkish rectangle near the center top of the sign, which shows the sanctuary with the Holy Place and Most Holy Place.)*

MERCHANT 1: Anyone was welcome in the Court of the Gentiles.

RELIGIOUS LEADER 1: But the further in and the higher up you went into the temple, the fewer people who could enter.

RELIGIOUS LEADER 2: The next court allowed only Jews. The one after that allowed only Jewish men, and then only priests.

RELIGIOUS LEADER 1: Only priests could enter the Holy Place.

RELIGIOUS LEADER 2: And only the high priest could enter the Most Holy Place, and only once a year.

MERCHANT 2: We merchants sold animals in the Court of Gentiles. People had the priests sacrifice them in the temple.

MERCHANT 1: That included oxen, sheep, turtle doves, and pigeons.

MONEY CHANGER: We money changers also traded foreign money for Jewish money here so that people could pay their temple taxes.

DISCIPLE 1: These commercial activities created commotion in the place where pilgrims and local Jews came to worship and pray.

DISCIPLE 2: We went to Jerusalem with Jesus for Passover.

RELIGIOUS LEADER 1: The temple was full of pilgrims and worshipers who came to Jerusalem for this most important festival.

RELIGIOUS LEADER 2: *(Rubs palms together)* **Time to make some big money!**

LEADER encourages RELIGIOUS LEADERS and WORSHIPERS to walk around the area, talk to one another, and stop to buy MERCHANTS' wares and change coins at the MONEY CHANGER'S area.

MERCHANT 2: Get your sacrificial doves here! Two doves for the price of one!

MERCHANT 1: Check out our sheep and lambs, perfect for your sacrifices.

MONEY CHANGER: Need to pay your temple tax? Exchange your money here for acceptable coins.

MERCHANT 2: Pigeons! Pigeons! Everyone can afford a pigeon.

MONEY CHANGER: Cheapest exchange rates here! Change your money here.

MERCHANT 1: Oxen! Sheep! We have only the best here.

JESUS ENTERS with DISCIPLES. JESUS approaches MERCHANTS and uses a cord whip to upset their tables (or blankets) and scatter people and animals.

JESUS: Get out of here! How dare you turn My Father's house into a market!

The DISCIPLES step back as the MERCHANTS talk with JESUS.

MERCHANT 2: (Pleading) What are You doing?

MONEY CHANGER: Who do You think You are?

MERCHANT 2: Stop!

RELIGIOUS LEADER 1: (Steps up) What are You doing?

RELIGIOUS LEADER 2: (Steps up) On whose authority do You do these things! Give us a sign!

JESUS: Here's a sign. Destroy this temple, and I will raise it again in three days! (DISCIPLES and RELIGIOUS LEADERS look at each other, puzzled.)

RELIGIOUS LEADER 1: It took forty-six years to build this temple!

RELIGIOUS LEADER 2: How could You raise it up in three days?

JESUS and DISCIPLES EXIT and stand at their starting place.

LEADER tells WORSHIPERS to sit down.

MERCHANTS, MONEY CHANGER, and RELIGIOUS LEADERS shake their heads in anger and mutter as they begin to clean up.

RELIGIOUS LEADER 1: Rebuild the temple in three days. That is ridiculous!

MERCHANT 1: What a mess!

MERCHANT 2: Some say that man is the Messiah! How could that be?

LEADER tells MERCHANTS, MONEY CHANGER, and RELIGIOUS LEADERS to sit.

DISCIPLE 1: Jesus insisted people honor God's house. To those who questioned His authority, He foretold His own death and resurrection.

DISCIPLE 2: Jesus is the Messiah. He's our Savior who died for our sins.

DISCIPLE 1: After Jesus rose from the dead, we remembered that He said,

JESUS: Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up.

DISCIPLE 2: Jesus wasn't talking about Herod's temple.

DISCIPLE 1: He was talking about His body, the temple of the Holy Spirit.

DISCIPLE 2: And Jesus rebuilt the temple of His body three days after He died, when He rose from the dead.

DISCIPLE 1: Say these words after me: Jesus loves us. / He is our Savior.

**/ He died on the cross / and rose from the dead / to restore our
relationship with God the Father, / to forgive our sins, / and to give us
a new life, / now and forever!**

**DISCIPLE 2: Say these words after me: May God forgive us / when we
disrespect His house and His Word, / and may He give us faith in His
Son, / who died for our sins.**

Review Questions

Understand the Bible account and make life applications

Jesus Clears the Temple; John 2:13–22

Ask these questions to help students understand the skit.

Why did Jesus become angry in the temple? Why did He take action? Jesus wanted the people to honor the temple as a house of prayer and worship. The commercial activity was detracting from that purpose.

What sign did Jesus offer as proof of His authority to cleanse the temple? Jesus said the Jews could “destroy this temple” and He would raise it again in three days.

Why did that puzzle those who heard Him? The Jews thought Jesus meant the temple building, which had been under reconstruction for their entire lifetime (46 years, with another 34 to go); if destroyed, it could not be rebuilt in three days.

What was Jesus really saying? Did Jesus raise a temple in three days? Jesus was referring to His own body as God’s temple and was predicting His death and resurrection (see John 2:21–22). He did indeed “rebuild” His body on the third day after His death.

What blessing did Jesus’ disciples receive from this event? The disciples remembered Jesus’ words later when He was crucified, and they believed His promise to rise again. God speaks this same promise to us.

How does this account in Scripture help you and me see God’s love and grace? God speaks this same promise to us that the disciples heard and believed, that Jesus would die on the cross but then rise from the dead. On the cross, Jesus paid for our sins. Three days later, He rose from the dead (rebuilt the temple of His body), victorious over death and the power of the devil. Jesus gives forgiveness of sin and eternal life to all who believe in Him as our Savior. The Holy Spirit gives us faith in Jesus through God’s Word and Sacraments, Baptism and the Lord’s Supper.