



John 2

Evidence for Jesus' identity – Leader's version

For an hour study, just do the starred * questions

Check in – ask everyone, including the leaders, how they are and how they're feeling about studying the Bible today.

What does the passage say and mean?

Water into wine

Read John 2 v 1-12

1. **SHOUT-OUT** Is there anything about the passage that surprises, puzzles or intrigues you?

Write their responses on the flip-chart but don't attempt to answer any questions or discuss any points.

Questions 2-4 are **SELF-DIRECTED QUESTIONS**. Let the group work on them in pairs.

2. **SDL** Where is Jesus in this episode and what problem arises?

At a wedding, with His mother and His disciples. The wedding runs out of wine.

Jewish wedding celebrations may have lasted for a week and it was the groom's responsibility to provide the wine. Running out would be a major social embarrassment for the groom.

3. **SDL** What does Jesus' mother do and why do you think Jesus responds as He does in v4?

She tells Jesus that they have run out of wine (is she making an observation or a demand??). He says, 'My time has not yet come'. We know from the Greek word used for time, hora, that He is referring to a specific moment in time – His death and resurrection.

4. **SDL** What does Jesus do about the wine problem? (v6-10)

He provides choice wine in abundance – 120-180 gallons (730-1100 standard bottles)! He doesn't just solve the problem; He solves it in abundance!

5. Considering what Jesus did at the wedding, what can we deduce about His identity?

In this miracle, Jesus shows His authority over nature. Jesus is fully human and fully God.

6. Read v11. How does John describe this miracle and what were the consequences?

As a 'sign'. His disciples (presumably including His mother, Mary) put their faith in Him. John 20 v 31 tells us that the signs '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'. They already knew enough to want to follow Jesus, but something new happens when they 'put their faith in Him'. Note that everyone saw the sign, but only His disciples 'put their faith in him'.

7. In the Old Testament, the picture of abundant wine was used to signify the coming of the kingdom of God. In view of this, what reason might Jesus have had for miraculously producing an abundance of wine at the outset of His ministry?

e.g. Amos 9 v 13-15 – after giving prophecies about the coming judgment of God on His rebellious people, Amos talks about a time when King David's prophesied descendant would come and God's people would be restored to their own land (after exile) with a continuous supply of food (the reaper overtaking the planter etc) and wine 'dripping from the mountains', signifying a lasting time of abundance, blessing and belonging.

By producing abundant wine, Jesus alludes to this prophecy (and other OT references to wine), making the claim, for those willing to acknowledge it, that God's kingdom has come. He links His own arrival to the arrival of the kingdom of God; He's giving a sign that He is the Christ (Messiah).

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Sometimes people assume Jesus will spoil their fun. They think He is the sort of person who would turn wine into water, not water into wine. What is your impression of Jesus?

Clearing the Temple

Read John 2 v 13-17

*8. What was the purpose of the Temple in Jerusalem?

The Jewish Temple was built as a focal place for the worship of God and a place where animal sacrifices were offered to God. The Temple was where God 'dwelled' – the place where He specifically met with His people.

*9. What did Jesus find when He arrived at the Temple and why do you think this was?

Animals and doves being sold and money-changers – a market – within the Temple grounds.

(People bought their sacrificial animals on-site because they travelled long distances to get to the Temple).

(Money changers were there because the Temple authorities (not God) demanded that a specific currency be used within the Temple precincts. Money was changed at profit).

*10. What was Jesus' response to this situation and why?

Jesus got angry and drove out the animals and the people selling them / changing money. He made a whip to do this but He did not strike anyone with it. Maybe He used it to get the animals moving? He turned their tables over and the money was spilled onto the floor. He cause chaos and ended the market.

The area used as a market was the area Gentiles were to use for worship – the market was preventing worship of God for a whole people-group.

*11. What did Jesus say to the people who sold the doves and what did He mean?

'Get these out of here! How dare you turn my Father's house into a market?' Jesus made a direct claim to be the Son of God.

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Sometimes people assume that anger is always sinful. Why was Jesus' anger not sinful? Are there times when it's right for us to be angry?

Jesus' anger was appropriate for the situation. It was controlled and directed. He didn't fly off the handle; He dealt with the situation without sinning and without harming anyone.

There are situations in which it is appropriate for us to get angry – when someone is being harmed or treated unjustly. It is right to respond to these situations, but our anger quickly gets inflamed by temper and becomes uncontrolled, misdirected and inappropriate – in summary, sinful.

*12. What verse from Scripture (our Old Testament) do the disciples remember when Jesus does this and why do you think this is important?

'Zeal for your house will consume me.' (Psalm 69 v 9)

Psalm 69 is a Messianic psalm – it is recognised to contain prophecy about the Messiah, as well as being a contemporary prayer or song from the author's point of view. Jesus quoting this verse at this point is a Messianic claim, to those who are listening.

Read John 2 v 18-22

*13. The Jews were upset at Jesus walking in and doing this and demanded a sign that He had authority to interfere in the running of the Temple. What sign did Jesus give? (v18-19)

They were presumably looking for a miracle – demanding a spectacle from God – but, as a sign, Jesus said, ‘Destroy this temple, and I will raise it again in three days.’

*14. How did the Jews understand Jesus’ words?

They thought He was referring to the Temple in Jerusalem and mocked His words.

*15. Read Matthew 26 v 59-61, part of Jesus’ first trial. What do the false witnesses accuse Jesus of? In what way do they misquote Him?

They alleged that Jesus had said, ‘I am able to destroy the temple of God and rebuild it in three days.’ Threatening to destroy the Jerusalem Temple was an offence.

In John 2, Jesus said ‘Destroy this temple...’ not ‘I will destroy this Temple...’

*16. Read John 2 v 21-22. What did Jesus really mean when He said, ‘Destroy this temple, and I will raise it again in three days’? How was this the sign that the Jews had asked for?

He was referring to them destroying His body – His death resurrection three days later. The Jews had asked for a sign that Jesus had authority to clear the Temple: His resurrection from the dead was the ultimate sign of His identity and thus His authority.

There’s also an implicit claim that Jesus is the real temple: the Jerusalem Temple pointed towards a better meeting point between God and people – Jesus.

*17. Jesus’ disciples looked back on this after His resurrection. How did they interpret His words, with the benefit of hindsight?

They then believed the Scripture and Jesus’ own words about Him rising from the dead.

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What have you learned about Jesus’ identity through studying this passage?

Jesus is the Son of God and is the Christ / the Messiah

Check out – ask everyone, including leaders, how they found the study and if they are safe to go back to the cell.



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2. Where is Jesus in this episode and what problem arises?
3. What does Jesus' mother do and why do you think Jesus responds as He does in v4?
4. What does Jesus do about the wine problem? (v6-10)
5. Considering what Jesus did at the wedding, what can we deduce about His identity?
6. Read v11. How does John describe this miracle and what were the consequences?
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