A wedding full of wonder

Grades 1–5 • 60 minutes • John 2:1–11

What children are learning

Children will learn why John tells us about the wedding in Cana. When Jesus turned water into wine, his disciples saw his glory and put their trust in him.

Before class

For you. Find John 2:1–11 in your Bible before class. Keep a bookmark there for the reading. You'll also use John 2:11 for the memory verse.

Print before class. Print pages 5 and 7 for each child. Keep an extra copy of page 7 to demonstrate. Print one family page (page 6) per household.

For the table. A Bible, pencils and crayons. Give each child a strip of plain paper. Tear or cut the strips before class.

Words children may ask about. A sign helps you notice something. John calls the wedding miracle a sign because it showed the disciples who Jesus is. Glory means God's greatness and goodness. The man in charge of the feast looked after the wedding meal.

Teach with care. Naming the wine simply and accurately is enough for this age group. Paper pictures keep the focus on Jesus' sign without alcohol, tasting, or a water-changing demonstration.

A note for the teacher. This outline is here to help you prepare and teach. As you teach, feel free to adjust the pace, change an activity, or spend more time on a child's question as the Holy Spirit leads you.

When the children arrive, begin on page 2. Teach pages 2–4 in order.

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0–5 min · Welcome the children

Begin. Ask, “When you see an arrow by a doorway, what do you do?” Let someone show you. “The arrow helps you notice something beyond the sign.”

5–10 min · Worship and opening prayer

Worship together. Sing a familiar song of praise. If you are leading without music, invite each child to finish “God, thank you for…” aloud or quietly.

Pray. God, thank you for bringing us together. Help us hear what you want to teach us today. Amen.

10–23 min · Open the Bible together

Lead into the reading. “At a wedding, Jesus did something John calls a sign. As we read John 2, listen for what the servants saw and what the disciples came to believe.”

Read aloud. Read John 2:1–11 aloud from your Bible. Pause briefly before you ask the first question.

Background for you. Jesus, his mother and his disciples were at a wedding in Cana when the wine ran out. Mary told Jesus what had happened. Then she told the servants to listen to what he asked them to do.

Six large stone jars stood nearby. People used them for water for washing. At Jesus’ word the servants filled them to the top and took some to the man in charge of the meal. He tasted wine. He didn’t know where it had come from, but the servants did.

John calls this a sign. An arrow can help you notice the door it points to. This act helped the disciples notice something about Jesus himself: they saw his greatness and trusted him.

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23–31 min · Talk about what you heard

Ask. What did the disciples learn about Jesus from what happened at the wedding?

Listen for. They saw his glory and believed in him. If someone says, “He turned the water into wine,” ask what that showed his friends about him.

Keep talking. The person in charge of the feast tasted the wine. Who else knew where it had come from?

Connect to Jesus. The disciples put their trust in Jesus when they saw his glory. John tells the story so his readers can come to believe in him too.

31–47 min · Tell the wedding story with an arrow

Give out the materials. Give each child page 7. Read the boxes aloud together. Start with the one labeled “Water in the jars.”

Try it together. Give each child a crayon and a strip of scrap paper. Draw an arrow on the strip. In pairs, slide it first to “Water in the jars,” then to “Jesus changed it to wine,” then to “His glory was revealed.” At each stop the partner tells that part in their own words. Switch roles. At the last stop, finish “This sign helps me see that Jesus…”

For younger children. Show a child where it says “Water in the jars.” Read it aloud and try that part together. They can point, say a few words, or ask you to write for them.

For older children. Why do you think John tells us about the disciples’ faith after he tells us about the wine?

Tidy up. Keep the pencils or crayons out for page 5. Ask children to set their finished work beside them.

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47–51 min · Give children a moment to respond

Offer the student page. Hand out page 5 and read the choices aloud. Each child can answer one. Take a spoken answer, or give them a quiet minute to draw or write.

51–55 min · Remember a verse

Read and echo. Read John 2:11 in your Bible. Invite everyone to echo one short phrase at a time. Ask which word or phrase they would like to remember.

55–60 min · Take it into the week

Ask. If someone remembers only the jars, what would you want them to remember about Jesus?

Pray together. Lead the children in a prayer about what they learned today.

Example prayer. Jesus, help us see your glory and trust you.

At the door. Send home each child’s work. Give one Family Connection page to each household.