

3. Nicodemus

Not everyone who saw the signs believed in Jesus as Messiah. There were those who wrestled with how to respond. Nicodemus was a Pharisee who struggled.

John 3:2 NLT - 2 After dark one evening, he came to speak with Jesus. "Rabbi," he said, "we all know that God has sent you to teach us. Your miraculous signs are evidence that God is with you."

Nicodemus called Jesus "rabbi" and recognized him as one sent to teach. Was this true? Why does it fall short of believing Jesus' mission? How does John 3:16 summarize that mission? How does John 3:16 echo John's reason for writing his Gospel?

John 3:16 NLT - 16 "For God loved the world so much that he gave his one and only Son, so that everyone who believes in him will not perish but have eternal life."

Jesus told Nicodemus that God sent, not just a teacher, but His Son. And that those who believe in the Son will have life. Do you believe?

WRAP-UP

John tells us Jesus performed many signs, but he chose to include signs that would help us to believe. The first of those signs was turning water intended for ceremonial self-cleaning, into the best wine to be enjoyed at the marriage supper. There would one day be a marriage supper in heaven where Jesus would again serve the best wine to celebrate his bride, the church. John tells us Jesus cleared the Temple of vendors who turned a place of worship into a marketplace. And when asked about his authority to do so, He gave the ultimate example, the prediction of his resurrection. And finally John shows us that people, like Nicodemus, will struggle with how to view Jesus. Is it enough to see him as a good teacher? Not according to John 3:16. It is believing He is God's Son who died for us that brings us eternal life. He calls you to "come and see!"

MEMORY VERSE

John 2:11 NLT - 11 This miraculous sign at Cana in Galilee was the first time Jesus revealed his glory. And his disciples believed in him.

PRAYER (20 MIN)

Ask your group to pray for you regarding one area where you can apply this study in your life.

Challenge- Read through chapters 2 and 3 of John this week.

"Come Here!" **Believe and Have Life #2**

INTRODUCTION

John was quite clear about the purpose of his Gospel. He recorded certain signs Jesus performed so that we would believe and have life. Jesus invited them to come and see. The first sign recorded during Jesus' ministry was performed at a wedding in Cana. There was no fanfare, and few were aware of what had happened but those who saw believed. However, if turning water into wine was done quietly, his next sign was anything but. Jesus took up a whip and drove the moneychangers out of the temple. No doubt many people saw that sign. Then back under cover of darkness Jesus was approached by a Pharisee. Nicodemus was drawn to Jesus but conflicted as he struggled with believing Jesus. As we consider these passages, how do you respond to what you see Jesus doing?

Ice Breaker

Have your most impactful encounters with Jesus been when you are alone, or when you are in a community of believers?

Key Passage

John 20:30-31 NIV - 30 Jesus performed many other signs in the presence of his disciples, which are not recorded in this book. 31 But these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.

STUDY QUESTIONS

1. Water into Wine

The first sign John shares with us is at a wedding feast in a small town of Cana. Jesus and Mary, his mother, were guests at the wedding. But

when the wine ran out Mary sought Jesus to rescue the hosts, their friends, from embarrassment.

John 2:3-8 NLT - 3 The wine supply ran out during the festivities, so Jesus' mother told him, "They have no more wine." 4 "Dear woman, that's not our problem," Jesus replied. "My time has not yet come." 5 But his mother told the servants, "Do whatever he tells you." 6 Standing nearby were six stone water jars, used for Jewish ceremonial washing. Each could hold twenty to thirty gallons. 7 Jesus told the servants, "Fill the jars with water." When the jars had been filled, 8 he said, "Now dip some out, and take it to the master of ceremonies." So the servants followed his instructions.

When Mary brought her concern to Jesus his initial response wasn't all that encouraging. But Mary didn't debate why Jesus should act. What she did do was trust His judgment and direct the servants to trust what he said.

Most of us feel better with solid confirmation. But Mary demonstrated a level of trust and understanding when she told the servants to do whatever Jesus told them to do. When you bring your requests to God, how do you feel when you don't get an answer? How confident are you that you have been heard and God will act at just the right time? What helps to move us from doubt to unqualified believe in Jesus' words?

Jesus saw the jars for water used in ceremonial washing stood empty. The water had been used by guests making themselves clean as the law directed. This wasn't just good hygiene; the practice had evolved from the time when the priests were required to wash before offering sacrifices in the temple. Ceremonial washing was a way to clean yourself up so that you could stand before God with your offering. It was part of the Old Covenant. Jesus was sending a message when he replaced the water for washing with the new wine.

Luke 22:20 NLT - 20 After supper he took another cup of wine and said, "This cup is the new covenant between God and his people--an agreement confirmed with my blood, which is poured out as a sacrifice for you.

At the Passover, or last supper, Jesus explained that the wine represented a new covenant. How was the new covenant confirmed? What parallels do you find between the best wine provided by Jesus

at the wedding at Cana and the wine that represents the new covenant between God and his people?

John 2:11 NLT - 11 This miraculous sign at Cana in Galilee was the first time Jesus revealed his glory. And his disciples believed in him.

In John chapter 1 verse 14 John said that we saw God's glory in the Word made flesh. He also tells us this sign of turning water into wine revealed his glory.

Who saw Jesus' glory revealed through this sign at Cana? John doesn't describe a visual demonstration that we typically associate with glory- no bright light shining on the wine. So, in what way do you think the disciples saw God's glory in this sign? What are some of the subtle ways we see God's glory revealed every day?

2. Clearing the Temple

Shortly after the wedding, Jesus went to Jerusalem. But he was not happy with what he found at the Temple there. This sign was on public display.

John 2:14-16 NLT - 14 In the Temple area he saw merchants selling cattle, sheep, and doves for sacrifices; he also saw dealers at tables exchanging foreign money. 15 Jesus made a whip from some ropes and chased them all out of the Temple. He drove out the sheep and cattle, scattered the money changers' coins over the floor, and turned over their tables. 16 Then, going over to the people who sold doves, he told them, "Get these things out of here. Stop turning my Father's house into a marketplace!"

Jews traveled great distances to make sacrifices in the Temple. Instead of bringing along their own animals they purchased animals in Jerusalem to offer. But this practice had turned the Temple into a marketplace rather than a place of worship. Jesus could not tolerate that. The disciples saw this as a demonstration of prophecy (Ps 69:9).

John 2:18-19, 22 NLT - 18 But the Jewish leaders demanded, "What are you doing? If God gave you authority to do this, show us a miraculous sign to prove it." 19 "All right," Jesus replied. "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up." ... 22 After he was raised from the dead, his disciples remembered he had said this, and they believed both the Scriptures and what Jesus had said.

How did the Jews in leadership respond? Jesus promised them the ultimate sign of authority, His power to defeat death. But Jesus referred to his body as this Temple. In what way was Jesus body the

Temple? How did the words spoken by Jesus ultimately lead to the disciples' belief?