

John – Week 9 – Water and Blood – Bible Study Helps

Title: Water and Blood: The First Miracle and the Promise of Salvation

Sermon Summary: This sermon examines Jesus Christ's first public miracle at the wedding in Cana, where He turned water into wine. Rather than being a justification for social drinking, this miracle prophetically pictures salvation through Christ's shed blood. The sermon draws parallels between Moses' first public miracle (turning water to blood in Egypt) and Jesus' miracle, emphasizing that the "wine" was actually new wine (grape juice) - the "pure blood of the grape" - symbolizing Christ's blood shed for our sins. The message challenges the misconception that Jesus created fermented alcohol, instead revealing how this miracle demonstrates His deity, points to His crucifixion, and illustrates spiritual rebirth. Mary's role is carefully examined to counter false teachings about her position, showing that Jesus respectfully established that He answers to the Father alone, not human direction. The sermon emphasizes that salvation comes through faith in Christ's blood sacrifice, not through works, religion, or human effort.

Key Points:

- The first public miracle of Jesus was turning approximately 120-160 gallons of water into wine at a wedding in Cana
- This miracle parallels Moses' first public miracle of turning water to blood in Exodus 7
- The "wine" was new wine (grape juice), not fermented alcohol, referred to in Scripture as "the pure blood of the grape"
- Jesus never consumed fermented wine, maintaining His Nazarite-like purity and sinless nature
- Mary's name is intentionally omitted in John's Gospel to prevent her exaltation above her proper place
- Jesus respectfully corrected Mary's attempt to direct His miracle, establishing that He follows only the Father's will
- The phrase "mine hour is not yet come" specifically points to Christ's death on the cross
- Water and blood symbolize physical and spiritual birth, pointing to salvation and being born again
- At the crucifixion, water and blood flowed from Jesus' pierced side, connecting to this first miracle
- Jesus used fruit of the vine (not fermented wine) at the Last Supper
- The miracle manifested Christ's glory and caused His disciples to believe in Him
- Salvation comes only through faith in Christ's shed blood, not through works or religious activity

Scripture Reference:

- John 2:1-12 (primary passage)

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- Exodus 7:14-24 (Moses' first miracle)
- Deuteronomy 32:14 (pure blood of the grape)
- John 19:30, 34 (crucifixion, water and blood)
- John 3:3-5 (born of water and Spirit)
- 1 John 5:7-8 (water, blood, and Spirit bear witness)
- Numbers 6:3 (Nazirite vow)
- Matthew 26:28-29 (fruit of the vine at Last Supper)
- Habakkuk 2:15 (woe to those who give intoxicating drink)
- Isaiah 65:8 (new wine in the cluster)
- Genesis 40:11 (grapes pressed into Pharaoh's cup)

Stories:

- The wedding at Cana where Jesus performed His first miracle by turning water into wine
- Moses' first public miracle in Egypt, turning all water to blood including water in stone vessels
- The crucifixion of Christ where water and blood flowed from His pierced side
- Jesus at the Last Supper establishing communion with the fruit of the vine
- The Pharaoh's butler pressing grapes into the cup
- The Bereans who searched the Scriptures to verify what was being preached
- Mary's concern at the wedding when wine ran out and her instruction to servants to do whatever Jesus said
- The servants who knew they put water in the pots but drew out wine for the governor
- The governor of the feast tasting the wine and declaring it the best, not knowing where it came from

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Discipleship Questions

How does understanding Mary's relationship with Jesus in John's Gospel challenge common religious teachings about her role as an intercessor, and what does this mean for how we approach prayer?

Why do you think Jesus chose to perform His first public miracle at a wedding celebration, and what does this reveal about God's view of marriage and community?

In what ways does the miracle of turning water into wine parallel Moses' first public miracle of turning water into blood, and what does this teach us about Jesus as the fulfillment of Old Testament prophecy?

How does the phrase 'mine hour is not yet come' throughout John's Gospel connect this wedding miracle to Jesus' ultimate purpose on the cross?

What does it mean that the servants knew what went into the water pots but the governor did not, and how does this relate to how different people perceive and respond to Jesus' miracles today?

How should the biblical teaching about wine as the 'pure blood of the grape' and Jesus' Nazarite separation influence our understanding of Christian living and social drinking?

Why is it significant that Jesus used six stone water pots intended for Jewish purification rituals, and what does this symbolize about the transformation He offers?

What does Mary's instruction to the servants—"Whatsoever he saith unto you, do it"—teach us about obedience and surrender in our own relationship with Christ?

How does the connection between water, blood, and Spirit in 1 John 5 deepen our understanding of what it means to be born again?

If Jesus never sinned and would not cause others to sin, how should this shape our approach to interpreting difficult Bible passages and defending the character of God?

Small Group Guide: Water and Blood

John 2:1-12 - The First Miracle of Jesus

Opening Prayer

Begin with prayer, asking the Holy Spirit to guide your discussion and help you understand God's Word more deeply.

Icebreaker Question

What's one thing you've believed about this passage your whole life that you're now questioning or seeing differently?

Key Takeaways from the Sermon

1. **Jesus' relationship with Mary changed** when He began His public ministry - He was establishing that His authority came from the Father, not from family relationships.
2. **The miracle points to Jesus' death** - When Jesus said "Mine hour is not yet come," He was referring to His crucifixion.
3. **The wine was not fermented alcohol** - It was "new wine" (grape juice), representing the pure blood of the grapes, which symbolizes Christ's blood shed for our sins.
4. **This miracle parallels Moses' first public miracle** - Moses turned water to blood (Exodus 7); Jesus turned water to wine (the blood of grapes).
5. **The miracle demonstrates salvation** - Water and blood represent physical birth and spiritual birth through Christ's sacrifice.

Discussion Questions

Understanding the Text

1. **Read John 2:1-12 together.** What details in this passage stand out to you now that you've heard the sermon?
2. Why do you think John repeatedly refers to "the mother of Jesus" rather than using Mary's name throughout his gospel? What does this teach us about proper reverence?

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3. When Jesus says "Woman, what have I to do with thee?" (v. 4), how is this both respectful and instructive? What was He establishing?

Digging Deeper

4. **Compare Exodus 7:14-24 with John 2:1-12.** What similarities do you see between Moses' first public miracle and Jesus' first public miracle? Why would God design them to be similar?
5. **Read Deuteronomy 32:14.** How does the phrase "the pure blood of the grape" help us understand what kind of wine Jesus created?
6. **Look at John 19:30-34.** How does "water and blood" coming from Jesus' side connect to the water-to-wine miracle in John 2?
7. **Read 1 John 5:6-8.** How do "the spirit, the water, and the blood" work together to bear witness to our salvation?

Addressing Common Misconceptions

8. Many Christians use John 2 to justify social drinking. Based on what we've learned, how would you respond to someone who makes this argument?
9. **Read Habakkuk 2:15.** What does God say about giving someone drink that causes them to sin? How does this apply to Jesus' character?
10. If Jesus had created 120-160 gallons of fermented wine, what would have been the result at this wedding? Why would this be inconsistent with Jesus' sinless nature?

Personal Application

11. Mary told the servants, "Whatsoever he saith unto you, do it" (v. 5). What is Jesus currently telling you to do that you've been hesitant to obey?
12. The sermon mentioned that "not everybody that sees the miracles believes." Why do some people see God's work and believe while others remain skeptical? Where do you fall on this spectrum?
13. How does understanding this miracle as pointing to Jesus' death and our salvation change the way you view it?

Practical Applications

This Week's Challenge

Choose one of the following to put into practice:

Option 1: Bible Study Commitment

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- Commit to reading John chapters 1-3 this week, looking for connections between water, blood, wine, and salvation.

Option 2: Share the Gospel

- Like the first disciples who "brought people to Jesus," identify one person you can invite to church or share the gospel with this week.

Option 3: Obedience Check

- Take Mary's advice seriously: "Whatsoever he saith unto you, do it." Identify one area where you've been disobedient to God's Word and take action to obey this week.

Option 4: Search the Scriptures

- Be like the Bereans (Acts 17:11) and verify what you heard in the sermon by studying the cross-references provided.

Reflection Questions for Journaling

- How has my view of Jesus' first miracle changed after this study?
- What does it mean to me personally that Jesus' blood was shed for my sins?
- Am I truly born again? Have I called upon the Lord to save me?
- In what areas of my life am I bringing Jesus down to my level instead of lifting Him up?

Memory Verse

John 2:11 - "This beginning of miracles did Jesus in Cana of Galilee, and manifested forth his glory; and his disciples believed on him."

Closing Discussion

Final Question: The sermon emphasized that Jesus' miracles in John all point to salvation. How does this first miracle specifically picture the gospel message?

Prayer Requests and Closing Prayer

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- Share prayer requests related to salvation of loved ones
- Pray for those who may need assurance of their salvation
- Ask God to help the group obey whatever He is saying to them
- Thank God for the blood of Jesus that cleanses us from all sin

For Next Week

Read John 2:13-25 in preparation for the next study on Jesus cleansing the temple.

"Whatsoever he saith unto you, do it." - Mary, the mother of Jesus

5-Day Devotional:

Water and Blood—The Miracle of Salvation

Day 1: The Authority of Christ

Reading: John 2:1-5

Devotional: When Mary approached Jesus about the wine shortage, His response reveals a profound truth: Jesus operates under divine authority, not human direction. "Woman, what have I to do with thee? Mine hour is not yet come." This wasn't disrespect but a gentle reminder that His mission follows the Father's timeline, not human urgency.

Mary's response demonstrates perfect faith: "Whatsoever he saith unto you, do it." She surrendered control and pointed others to Jesus' authority. How often do we try to direct God's hand rather than submit to His timing? Today, examine areas where you're attempting to control outcomes. Like Mary, learn to trust Jesus completely and follow His instructions, even when His timing doesn't match your expectations. True faith surrenders the timeline to the One who sees eternity.

Day 2: Miracles Point to the Cross

Reading: John 2:6-11; John 19:30-34

Devotional: Jesus' first miracle wasn't random—it prophetically pointed to His ultimate sacrifice. He transformed approximately 160 gallons of water into wine, foreshadowing how His blood would bring spiritual transformation. Notice the stone vessels used for Jewish purification rituals; Jesus was about to offer a better purification through His blood.

When the soldier pierced Jesus' side on the cross, "forthwith came there out blood and water"—the very elements of this first miracle reversed. The miracle at Cana celebrated new beginnings; the cross accomplished eternal salvation. Every miracle Jesus performed pointed beyond the immediate need to the greater spiritual reality of redemption. Today, look beyond your immediate circumstances to see how God is working toward eternal purposes. The same Jesus who transformed water into wine can transform your life through His precious blood shed for you.

Day 3: The Pure Blood of the Grape

Reading: Deuteronomy 32:14; Matthew 26:26-29; 1 John 5:6-8

Devotional: Scripture calls grape juice "the pure blood of the grape" and "new wine found in the cluster." At the Last Supper, Jesus called it "the fruit of the vine"—not fermented wine, but fresh

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grape juice representing His sinless blood. This distinction matters deeply. Jesus, our perfect Nazarite, never touched fermented drink, maintaining absolute holiness.

The symbolism is beautiful: just as new wine comes from crushed grapes, our salvation flows from Christ's suffering. The water, the blood, and the Spirit all testify to one truth—Jesus saves. When you take communion, you're not just remembering history; you're proclaiming that Christ's pure, undefiled blood cleanses you from all sin. His sacrifice was perfect, complete, and sufficient. Today, thank Jesus for His pure sacrifice that makes you pure before God.

Day 4: Born of Water and Spirit

Reading: John 3:1-7; 1 John 5:6-8

Devotional: "Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." Physical birth brings natural life; spiritual birth brings eternal life. Just as Jesus transformed water at Cana, He transforms hearts through His blood and Spirit. This isn't about baptismal water but about the spiritual rebirth that comes through faith in Christ's sacrifice.

The water and blood that flowed from Jesus' pierced side represent this complete salvation. His blood paid your sin debt; His Spirit gives you new life. You cannot earn this transformation through good works, church membership, or religious rituals. Salvation comes only through believing in Jesus Christ and calling upon Him. Have you experienced this new birth? If not, today is your day. Call upon Jesus right now—confess your need, believe in His sacrifice, and ask Him to save you. He will make you completely new.

Day 5: Whosoever He Says, Do It

Reading: John 2:5; Luke 11:27-28; James 1:22-25

Devotional: Mary's instruction to the servants contains the secret to experiencing God's power: "Whosoever he saith unto you, do it." Not whatsoever feels comfortable, makes sense, or fits your plans—but whatsoever He says. The servants obeyed without understanding, filling stone pots with water when wine was needed. Their obedience positioned them to witness a miracle.

Jesus corrected those who would exalt Mary, saying, "Blessed are they that hear the word of God and keep it." True blessing comes not from religious heritage or human mediators, but from hearing and obeying God's Word. The Bible is your authority for life. When Scripture speaks, will you obey? Today, identify one clear command from God's Word you've been ignoring. Maybe it's forgiveness, witnessing, Bible reading, or abandoning a sin. Stop making excuses. Do what Jesus says. Obedience unlocks blessing and positions you to see God work miraculously in your life.

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"This beginning of miracles did Jesus in Cana of Galilee, and manifested forth his glory; and his disciples believed on him." —John 2:11