

# OneBook.

DAILY - WEEKLY

## The Gospel of John

with Ben Witherington III



A TWELVE-WEEK BIBLE STUDY

# **The Gospel of John**

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**OneBook.**

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DAILY - WEEKLY

# The Gospel of John

with **Ben Witherington III**

 seedbed

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SOW FOR A GREAT AWAKENING

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# WELCOME TO THE ONEBOOK DAILY-WEEKLY

John Wesley, in a letter to one of his leaders, penned the following,

O begin! Fix some part of every day for private exercises. You may acquire the taste which you have not: what is tedious at first, will afterwards be pleasant.

Whether you like it or not, read and pray daily. It is for your life; there is no other way; else you will be a trifler all your days. . . . Do justice to your own soul; give it time and means to grow. Do not starve yourself any longer. Take up your cross and be a Christian altogether.

Rarely are our lives most shaped by our biggest ambitions and highest aspirations. Rather, our lives are most shaped, for better or for worse, by those small things we do every single day.

At Seedbed, our biggest ambition and highest aspiration is to resource the followers of Jesus to become lovers and doers of the Word of God every single day, to become people of One Book.

To that end, we have created the OneBook Daily-Weekly. First, it's important to understand what this is not: warm and fuzzy, sentimental devotions. If you engage the Daily-Weekly for any length of time, you will learn the Word of God. You will grow profoundly in your love for God, and you will become a passionate lover of people.

## **How does the Daily-Weekly work?**

Daily. As the name implies, every day invites a short but substantive engagement with the Bible. Five days a week you will read a passage of Scripture followed by a short segment of teaching and closing with a question for reflection and self-examination. On the sixth day, you will review and reflect on the previous five days.

Weekly. Each week, on the seventh day, find a way to gather with at least one other person doing the study. Pursue the weekly guidance for

gathering. Share learning, insight, encouragement, and most important, how the Holy Spirit is working in your lives.

That's it. When the twelve weeks are done, we will be ready with twelve more. Four times a year we will release a new edition of the Daily-Weekly. Over time, those who pursue this course of learning will develop a rich library of Bible learning resources for the long haul. Following is the plan for how we will work our way through the Bible.

**The Gospels:** Twelve weeks of the year the Daily-Weekly will delve into one of the Gospels, either in a broad overview or through a deep dive into a more focused segment of the text.

**The Epistles:** Twelve weeks of the year the Daily-Weekly will explore one of the letters, sermons, or the Acts of the Apostles that make up the rest of the New Testament.

**The Wisdom Writings:** Twelve weeks of the year the Daily-Weekly will lead us into some part of the Psalms, Proverbs, or prophetic writings.

**The Old Testament:** Twelve weeks of the year the Daily-Weekly will engage with some portion of the Books of Moses (Genesis–Deuteronomy), the historical books, or other writings from the Old Testament.

If you are looking for a substantive study to learn Scripture through a steadfast method, look no further. If it's sentimental and superficial you are after, there is no shortage of options elsewhere. The OneBook Daily-Weekly will also be available through the OneBook App. To learn more about how to access the app, please visit [OneBookApp.com](http://OneBookApp.com).

# WEEK ONE

John 2:1–25

## **Jesus Changes Water into Wine and Clears the Temple Courts**

### INTRODUCTION

In John, the Fourth Gospel, we have a highly schematized presentation of the story of Jesus, with seven “I am” sayings linked to seven “I am” discourses, all presaged and prepared for by the seven sign narratives, which are miracle stories found in the first half of this gospel (between John chapters 2–12). Seven was the number of perfection, and lest we think the author just didn’t have enough source material, he tells us clearly in the last verse of this gospel (John 21:25) that Jesus did many other things as well. So we have a carefully chosen and arranged series of materials, including miracle tales, in this gospel. Nothing happens by accident in Jesus’ ministry—everything is ordered in a specific way to show the plan of God. Thus, in John 2, we have two crucial stories—the miracle at the wedding feast in Cana, and the action of Jesus in the temple. It is not clear whether the action in the temple was meant to be seen as a sign in the same way as the miracle at Cana, but as we shall see, both are symbolic actions.

Scholars have long noted that the placement of the temple story in John is at a very different juncture in the narrative compared to where the same story is placed in the other three canonical Gospels. In the latter, the story is part of the Passion narrative—the telling of the events that happened during the last week of Jesus’ ministry. Here the story is found at the outset of the narrative. Why the difference? Concerning this event, most scholars would agree that: it did not likely happen twice; indeed, no single gospel suggests that it did (and if it had happened early in the ministry, it is hard to believe

Jesus would have even been allowed on the temple precincts thereafter by the Jewish officials); and the placement in the Fourth Gospel seems to be theological rather than chronological. One of the major themes of this gospel is that Jesus replaces or fulfills the major institutions in himself—he is the Passover Lamb, he is the Temple where God dwells, he is the purifying waters, he is the sacred bread, he is God’s peace/Sabbath for humankind, and so on. The Fourth Evangelist wants to make this clear from the beginning of his story, and so he puts this temple action at the outset of his narrative.

One final point: the mother of Jesus appears in only two stories in this gospel—once at the outset of his ministry, and once at the conclusion, when he is on the cross. In a sense, then, the Evangelist presents Jesus in his relationship to his mother and his disciples together as bookend stories in this gospel. We will explore the reason for this later.

## ONE

### Wedding Faux Pas

**John 2:1–5** *On the third day a wedding took place at Cana in Galilee. Jesus’ mother was there, <sup>2</sup>and Jesus and his disciples had also been invited to the wedding. <sup>3</sup>When the wine was gone, Jesus’ mother said to him, “They have no more wine.” <sup>4</sup>“Woman, why do you involve me?” Jesus replied. “My hour has not yet come.” <sup>5</sup>His mother said to the servants, “Do whatever he tells you.”*

**Understanding the Word.** While scholars have debated which Cana might be referred to in John 2, it seems reasonably clear that it is the Cana that is about four miles from Nazareth, called Kefer Qana. It is possible that our Evangelist calls it “Cana in Galilee” to distinguish it from the Qana in Lebanon near Tyre. In any case, it was a small village, and the fact that Jesus’ mother is there suggests it was near Nazareth and there may have been some family connections to the bride or bridegroom. A few background points will help in the understanding of this story.

Jewish weddings in Jesus’ era went on for several days, and so it is not a surprise that the catering may have run out of one item or another. It

would seem we join the story near the end of the wedding celebrations, long past the point in time when the best wine would have been served, which was at the beginning of the celebration, not near its end. The reason for this, of course, was that people had a more discriminating palette before, rather than after, the wine dulled their sense. Wine in Jesus' day was definitely alcoholic, involving fermented grape juice, though we cannot be sure of what sort of percentage of alcohol it would have had (ranging from a possible low of 2 percent to a high of 12–13 percent). To be sure, no toastmaster at a Jewish wedding would ever have said, "Why did you save the best grape juice until last?" The issue was real wine, and more to the point, wine that was not watered down. The normal practice was to water down the wine the further the celebrations went, to prevent complete inebriation. And so, of course, the best-tasting wine, rather than the watered-down sort, would be served first.

We are told that Jesus' mother is a wedding guest, but Jesus and some of his disciples were wedding guests as well. Jesus' mother in this gospel is never named, never called Mary. For the Evangelist her whole importance is in her relationship to Jesus. Here, and in John 19, she is simply identified as the mother of Jesus. It is true that the only reason anybody shows up in these stories in the gospel is because they have come across Jesus' path at some point, but Jesus' mother is a special case.

Acting like a good worrying mother, not wanting something to spoil the wedding party, she informs Jesus that they have no more wine. This statement, which implies a request—namely, "Do something about it!"—also implies that Mary knew Jesus *could* do something, something miraculous. Even though this is the first miracle story in this gospel, it implies that there had been other miracles beforehand, miracles known to Mary. The fact that the miracle at the wedding feast is the first sign miracle in this gospel has more to do with the Evangelist's theological schema. He will present a crescendo of the miraculous beginning with turning water into wine and finishing in John 11 with the raising of a man from death who has been in the grave four days. Jesus' response to his mother is somewhat shocking—it is abrupt, and almost seems like a rebuke. It literally reads "Woman, what to me and to you? My hour has not yet come." This brief Greek phrase likely means something like "What's that got to do with us?" (We are only invited guests, not hosts.) Notice that Jesus distances himself

from his mother's authority, which is probably why he calls her "woman," which is surprising. In this gospel, Jesus must follow the dictates of his heavenly Father, not his earthly mother. But Jesus then gives a reason for his response—"my hour has not yet come." The hour referred to is not just any hour, but what we might call prime time. Later in this gospel, it refers to the time for Jesus to fully reveal himself to the world by dying on the cross.

Undaunted, Mary, who apparently will not take no for an answer, even from Jesus, tells the servants—"Do whatever he tells you." Apparently she does not take his rather brusque response as a definite no.

1. What sort of relationship between Jesus and his mother does this story depict?
2. Why has the wedding party run out of wine?
3. What does Jesus mean by "my hour"?

## TWO

### Saving the Best for Last

**John 2:6–10** *Nearby stood six stone water jars, the kind used by the Jews for ceremonial washing, each holding from twenty to thirty gallons. <sup>7</sup>Jesus said to the servants, "Fill the jars with water"; so they filled them to the brim. <sup>8</sup>Then he told them, "Now draw some out and take it to the master of the banquet." They did so, <sup>9</sup>and the master of the banquet tasted the water that had been turned into wine. He did not realize where it had come from, though the servants who had drawn the water knew. Then he called the bridegroom aside <sup>10</sup>and said, "Everyone brings out the choice wine first and then the cheaper wine after the guests have had too much to drink; but you have saved the best till now."*

**Understanding the Word.** Recent archaeological work in and around Cana has unearthed numerous *mikvaoth*—ritual purification pools where Jews would go to remove ceremonial uncleanness. The six stone water jars in our story were

for holding just such purification water for ceremonial cleansing. The picture of Jews in this region is that they were often devout, and particular about keeping the laws regarding clean and unclean. This family for whom the wedding is held was certainly a Torah-observant family. We are told that each stone jar (stone because according to Jewish thinking it could not become unclean or polluted) could hold twenty to thirty gallons! And Jesus was about to turn it all to wine! It may well be this story that got Jesus the reputation that he was “a drunkard” as well as a “friend of tax collectors and sinners” (Matt. 11:19). Whatever else you say about Jesus, he seems to have spent more time during the ministry feasting than fasting, and in this regard he stood apart from the praxis of his cousin John the Baptizer. The image of Jesus here is not of a killjoy, more nearly the life of the party, or at least the one who gives life to the party.

Notice that the only ones in the story who know a miracle has happened are Jesus, his mother, the disciples, and the servants involved in filling the jars with water and then dipping the new wine out to take to the toast-master. Despite the fact that the miracles in this gospel are stupendous, the Evangelist does not suggest that Jesus used miracles to wow people into the kingdom of God. He does reveal some of his glory to a select few in this story, but he does not make a big deal of the miracle or even make a pronouncement explaining it and taking credit. The impression all four Gospels give is that Jesus’ main ministry was preaching and teaching, and he set out to various places for that purpose. But where a need arose, as was at this wedding, he was prepared to stay to heal or help. This is presumably because Jesus knew that miracles were, at best, temporary solutions or cures, whereas the acceptance of the gospel message was the key to having everlasting life.

Nothing happens in these Johannine stories by accident, and the climax where we hear “but you have saved the best till now” is a double entendre—it refers not only to the best wine served last at this wedding party, but it likely also reminds that God, after a long line of prophets, priests, and kings, has finally sent his Son to rescue the world. What he brings is the new wine of the gospel, the new wine of salvation, which is truly the best wine of all. And note that there is more than enough of it for all as well. More to the point, Jesus replaces the old, lifeless ceremonial water, which could do no more than cleanse the outside of a person, with the new wine of the gospel, which can make the heart glad.



1. Why doesn't Jesus make more of a public display and explanation of this miracle?
2. What does Jesus' turning of water into actual wine tell you about him? Was he an ascetic like his cousin John?
3. Why is the toastmaster so surprised at the outcome of Jesus' action?

## THREE

### Trailing Clouds of Glory

**John 2:11–12** *What Jesus did here in Cana of Galilee was the first of the signs through which he revealed his glory; and his disciples believed in him. <sup>12</sup>After this he went down to Capernaum with his mother and brothers and his disciples. There they stayed for a few days.*

**Understanding the Word.** The culmination of the story tells us that this was the first of Jesus' semi-public sign miracles, revealing his glory, and that it was the disciples themselves who believed in him. We must be careful not to download all of the later Christian faith into the word *believe* when we hear something like verse 11. Here it likely means they came to believe what Mary already knew—namely, that Jesus could perform miracles. Throughout this gospel there is not only a crescendo of the miraculous, but there is also a crescendo of confessions of who Jesus is. The resurrection of Jesus is the climactic miracle (foreshadowed by the last sign narrative about the raising of Lazarus) and is followed finally by a confession of “my Lord and my God” by Thomas, which matches up with what the prologue in John 1 says about Jesus. Ironically it is only unbelieving Thomas's confession after seeing that proves to be a fully adequate confession of who Jesus is.

Verse 12 is interesting because it suggests that we are in a period of overlap between the time that Jesus was still at home with his family as an adult, and when he left his family behind and traveled with his disciples. This then would be a story from very early in Jesus' ministerial career. Notice it is Capernaum (or more properly, Kefer Nahum—the village of the prophet Nahum) where they go. Capernaum was to become Jesus' base

of operations, probably based in the home of Peter's mother-in-law (which can possibly be seen today underneath the modern Franciscan church at Capernaum). This story should be compared to Mark 3:21, 31–35, where Jesus distances himself from his physical family because they not only fail to understand him; they are even worried (based probably on the exorcisms) that Jesus is playing with fire, or as the text suggests, is not in his right mind. The story of Jesus and his relationship with his brothers is even more problematic than that with his mother. As John 7:5 will inform us, Jesus' brothers did not believe in him during his ministry. This did not mean they didn't believe he could do remarkable miracles, like the one at Cana. It meant that they didn't think that he was the Messiah, the Savior of the world. It was only after Easter, and because of an appearance of the risen Jesus specifically to his brother James, that this situation seems to have changed (see 1 Cor. 15:7). Acts 1:14 tells us there is a happy ending to this story, for we find Mary and the brothers in the Upper Room, praying in preparation for Pentecost with the other disciples. This is the last direct reference to Mary in the Gospels and in Acts, and perhaps the last one in the whole New Testament.

1. What do you make of Jesus' relationship with his brothers? Compare it to the relationship of Joseph with his brothers in Genesis.
2. What does "believe" seem to mean in John 2?
3. The term "glory" comes up a good deal in the Fourth Gospel (see, for example, John 1:14—"we have seen his glory"). What do you think it refers to?

## FOUR

### Temple Tantrum

**John 2:13–17** *When it was almost time for the Jewish Passover, Jesus went up to Jerusalem. <sup>14</sup>In the temple courts he found people selling cattle, sheep and doves, and others sitting at tables exchanging money. <sup>15</sup>So he made a whip out of cords, and drove all from the temple courts, both sheep and cattle; he*

*scattered the coins of the money changers and overturned their tables. <sup>16</sup>To those who sold doves he said, "Get these out of here! Stop turning my Father's house into a market!" <sup>17</sup>His disciples remembered that it is written: "Zeal for your house will consume me."*

**Understanding the Word.** The story of Jesus' cleansing of the temple requires some background information to be fully understood. The court where they were selling sacrificial animals and changing money was the outer court of the temple, otherwise known as the Court of the Gentiles. This was the only place in the temple non-Jews were allowed to come and pray or offer sacrifices, and it was a relatively new thing for the Jewish temple officials to make available animals for sale in the temple precincts. Previously, such animals had only been sold in places like the Mount of Olives, but apparently the Jewish officials figured out a way to make a little more money for the temple treasury (especially important since the building of the temple proper was still continuing all the way up to the Jewish war in the AD 60s). Jesus sees this as a defiling of the temple, turning it into a marketplace. This reminds me of the church I once visited who had a senior minister who thought it was a good idea to install an ATM machine in the vestibule of the sanctuary "in case people forgot to bring money to give to the church." I was present at the meeting the Monday after this item was installed and, needless to say, the huge negative reaction to a mechanical but literal money changer in the temple led to its immediate removal.

The money changers were needed because the proper coin for paying the temple tax was the Tyrian shekel, which had the purest silver in it. This coin had a picture of Herakles (Hercules) on one side, and the royal eagle on the other, neither of which images would have failed to offend devout Jews. Nevertheless, these were the coins that the Jewish authorities required for the tax.

Jesus' reaction to these activities is dramatic, but we need to bear in mind it was not actually a cleansing of all the temple, which would have involved other courts as well and presumably the temple treasury itself, with its pagan coins. This is what is called a prophetic sign act, rather than a true full cleansing. It symbolized not only the need for reform, but it probably symbolized the coming judgment of God on Herod's temple, which Jesus clearly predicts in Mark 13, where he says it will happen within a

generation (i.e., forty years). In fact, the temple became the temple of doom exactly forty years after Jesus' death in AD 30.

We are told that later the disciples remembered Psalm 69:9—"Zeal for your house consumes me"—which is spoken by God in the psalm. Here, it is used of Jesus himself to explain his actions. The implication is that Jesus is acting for God, or better said, as God himself. The theme of memory is important in this gospel. We are told in John 14–17 that the Spirit gradually leads disciples into all truth, and so here we see an instance of where the event happened at one point, but the spiritual understanding of its significance did not come until after Pentecost. This is true of many of the things that Jesus said and did, and perhaps we should not be too hard on the disciples. After all, they did not yet have the Holy Spirit during Jesus' ministry; they were only Christians under construction, learners in the school of Jesus.

1. Do you think this action of Jesus was inconsistent with his teachings about nonviolence in the Sermon on the Mount? If not, why not? Is there a difference between using force and acting violently toward another human being?
2. Why were the animal salesmen and the money changers situated in the temple precincts? What court did they occupy?
3. When is zeal for God's house a good thing and when can it go too far?

## FIVE

### A Temple Raised in Record Time

**John 2:18–25** *The Jews then responded to him, "What sign can you show us to prove your authority to do all this?"* <sup>19</sup>*Jesus answered them, "Destroy this temple, and I will raise it again in three days."* <sup>20</sup>*They replied, "It has taken forty-six years to build this temple, and you are going to raise it in three days?"* <sup>21</sup>*But the temple he had spoken of was his body.* <sup>22</sup>*After he was raised from the dead, his disciples recalled what he had said. Then they believed the scripture and the words that Jesus had spoken.* <sup>23</sup>*Now while he*

*was in Jerusalem at the Passover Festival, many people saw the signs he was performing and believed in his name.<sup>24</sup> But Jesus would not entrust himself to them, for he knew all people.<sup>25</sup> He did not need any testimony about mankind, for he knew what was in each person.*

**Understanding the Word.** The word *sign* in some contexts can refer to a proof or a validating sign, and that is what it means in this segment of the story. The Jews, which here means the Jewish officials, ask for proof that Jesus has the authority to cleanse the temple.

Cryptically, Jesus responds, “Destroy this temple, and I will raise it again in three days.” This saying shows up in the trial of Jesus in a garbled form (see Mark 14:58) as an accusation against Jesus, so we can be pretty sure he did say something like this. Of course, the authorities were likely to take Jesus literally and therefore think that he had lost his mind. Thus far, it had taken forty-six years to build Herod’s temple (which suggests the building began somewhere around 16 BC before Herod died), and it was nowhere near finished. Any threat to the temple was a threat to the local economy because the number one employer of laborers in Jerusalem was the temple, with its ambitious building projects.

The Evangelist, in verse 21, provides commentary saying that Jesus was not referring to Herod’s temple, but to his own body as the place where God dwelt on earth while he was there.

In verse 22, we have another indication of after-the-fact clarity; the disciples brought to mind what Jesus said and understood it only after he rose from the dead. On the occasion itself, the actions probably prompted head-scratching and it may have fired up the more zealous of the disciples, who wanted Jesus to be a military messiah like David. If this is what they thought after the triumphal entry on a donkey and then the temple cleansing, they would be disabused of this misunderstanding by the end of the week, and it would lead to disillusionment—all of the Twelve either denied, betrayed, or deserted Jesus before Thursday night was over. And then, of course, we have the revealing story of the trip down Emmaus Road by two former disciples leaving town (Luke 24), who ironically tell the risen Jesus “We *had hoped* [past tense] he would be the one who was going to redeem Israel,” but the crucifixion had crushed such hopes.

Notice as well that we are told that the disciples came to believe both Scripture and the words of Jesus. The early church would later put these two things together as their sacred writings.

The story ends on an intriguing note with our being told that many believed in Jesus because of the signs he performed in and around Jerusalem (presumably some of the miracles as well as the temple cleansing), but clearly what they believed was that Jesus was a miracle-worker. The phrase “believed in his name” probably means no more than believed in the miraculous power of his name and person. They did not believe he was the Son of God and the Savior, which explains why the story concludes by saying that Jesus knew what was and was not in such people’s hearts, and so he did not entrust himself to them.

1. What temple was Jesus most concerned with, and why did he correctly predict the downfall of both Herod’s temple and his own?
2. What was the key to the disciples’ later understanding of Scripture and Jesus’ own words?
3. Why did Jesus not entrust himself to these new believers in his name?

## COMMENTARY NOTES

**General Comments.** All seven of the miracle stories in John are worth studying. One consistent feature in all of them is that we do not see any particular interest in describing *how* the miracles happen, or for that matter, any interest in the miracles themselves. The interest is in what they point to outside of themselves—namely, the presence of King Jesus.

There are a variety of kinds of miracles in the Gospels; the miracle in John 2 is a nature miracle, so called because it involves doing something miraculous with inanimate matter. Other nature miracles would be the cursing of the fig tree (the only negative miracle in the Gospels), the walking on water, and presumably the multiplication of the loaves and fishes. Other types of miracles include: healings of various sorts; exorcisms; and raising people from the dead. It is notable that in this gospel there are no exorcisms at all. Furthermore, there is only one ministry miracle tandem in this gospel that is also found in the Synoptic Gospels—namely, the feeding of the five thousand coupled with Jesus' walking on water. Synoptic Gospels, or Synoptics, refers to the gospels of Matthew, Mark, and Luke. They are so called because they contain much of the same material and often in the same order. This gospel writer does not focus on Galilean miracles in the same way or to the same degree that the Synoptics do. Instead, he tells us unique stories about

miracles in and around Jerusalem and its suburbs, such as Bethany. Instead we have the healing of the cripple at the pool of Bethesda (John 5), the healing of the man born blind (John 9), and the raising of Lazarus (John 11). To judge from the miracle stories, this gospel was likely written by a Judean disciple of Jesus, and one with a connection to Mary. I would suggest that the person in question is the Beloved Disciple, who is probably not John son of Zebedee, not least because none of the special Zebedee stories are found in this gospel—not the calling of the Zebedees by the lake, not their witnessing of the raising of Jairus's daughter, not their presence at the transfiguration, and not their request for the box seats in the kingdom. Indeed the name Zebedee itself never comes up in the Fourth Gospel, save once, in the appendix in passing in John 21.

Miracles in the Fourth Gospel bear witness to who Jesus truly is, but do not provide absolute proof that he is divine, not least because prophets before Jesus and the apostles after Jesus performed many of the very same sort of miracles, including raising the dead. One cannot be impressed into the kingdom of God; rather, one has to embrace the truth by faith (as the purpose statement in John 20 suggests). In fact, in this gospel Jesus says that the disciples will one day do greater works than he has done, and this probably includes the signs or miracles. The story of Thomas in John 20 is a cautionary tale. He represents

the seeing-leads-to-believing crowd. And Jesus will turn around and say that it is *believing* that truly leads to seeing.

**Day 3.** In the Fourth Gospel these miracles are called *semeion* (signs), whereas in the Synoptics they are called *dunamis* (mighty works). A sign, by its very nature, points outside of itself to something more important—in this case to the fact that Jesus, the Son of God, is on the scene.

The term *doxa* (glory), from which we get doxology, has as its Hebrew equivalent *Shekinah*, which refers to the shining presence of God, or better said, the bright physical manifestation of the presence of God when he comes into close encounter

with human beings. Glory does not normally refer in the New Testament to fame or fortune or human accomplishments; it refers to an attribute or effect of God and his presence. It seems probable that when the gospel writer said, “We have seen his glory” or “Jesus revealed his glory,” what he meant is that they had seen evidence that Jesus was indeed God incarnate, a manifestation of the divine in human form.

**Day 5, verse 21.** Notably, there are more parenthetical explanations by the Evangelist in this gospel than in any other gospel, again probably because it was intended to be used in evangelism and to train converts, or new disciples.



## WEEK ONE

# GATHERING DISCUSSION OUTLINE

- A. Open session in prayer.
- B. View video for this week's readings.
- C. What general impressions and thoughts do you have after considering the video, readings, and the daily writings on these Scriptures?
- D. Discuss questions based on the daily readings.

1. **KEY OBSERVATION:** The two very different stories in this chapter reveal a Jesus who performs signs (both miraculous and prophetic), and yet he does not entrust himself to those who believe in his name based on such actions.

**DISCUSSION QUESTION:** What should this teach us about making assumptions about who counts as a genuine follower of Jesus and who doesn't?

2. **KEY OBSERVATION:** It is hard to miss Jesus' impatience with the Jewish authorities, who think that they know better than Jesus and understand him when they don't. Corruption in the house of God (or in the ministry) is the last place one should find such a thing.

**DISCUSSION QUESTION:** If the religious leaders become corrupt, what happens to their followers?

3. **KEY OBSERVATION:** In these two stories in John 2, we see the gamut of emotions of Jesus, from joy and celebration to anger and forceful action.

Jesus Changes Water into Wine and Clears the Temple Courts

**DISCUSSION QUESTION:** What questions do both of these stories raise about Jesus?

4. **KEY OBSERVATION:** The signs and miracles of Jesus were only the undercard to the main event—the death and miraculous raising of Jesus.

**DISCUSSION QUESTION:** Why do you think all four Evangelists spend a third or more of their total narrative on the last week of Jesus' life?

5. **KEY OBSERVATION:** The last story of John 2 tells us that there is an appropriate time and place for confrontation of evil in the house of God, of corruption in the clergy.

**DISCUSSION QUESTION:** Can you think of a modern-day example of confrontation of corruption in the clergy?

- E. What facts and information presented in the commentary portion of the lesson help you understand the weekly Scripture?
- F. Close session with prayer.