



John: The Great "I AM" Gospel
John 2:1-11—The First Miracle
From Sermon 3.12.23

Read *John 2:1-11*

Overview from Sunday's sermon: As chapter 2 opens, it is not a new human witness that is called to the stand to testify concerning Jesus—it is His first recorded miracle. John will use 7 key miracles in his Gospel, just as he uses 7 "I AM" statements. This first of the 7—water made into wine at Cana—doesn't result in any major conversions or controversy. It did re-enforce the faith of the disciples who had already been called. The passage draws the believer and the Church to examine two debated issues: God's use of miracles and addressing the use of wine.

1. What sad, universal truth regarding miracles and the supernatural was stated to open Sunday's sermon? The world, in all times, loves the supernatural. They'll believe and buy any miracle, supernatural event, gifted person as long as it's not performed by Jesus and/or recorded in the Scripture.

1a. Why must they take that stand? Accountability. If Bible miracles are authentic, then the message and words that accompany them must be authentic, divine, truth as well. Each Bible miracle testifies that God is all-powerful, God is Holy, man is sinful and under the curse, repentance is demanded, & that Jesus is God and the only way, truth, and life. See also *John 10:37-38*

2. What did we learn/review about miracles in the Bible?

- Purpose—For the Glory of God (*John 9:2-3*) & to Authenticate His Messengers (*Exodus 4:1-3*).
- Frequency—They are very rare, even in the Bible: Creation, Moses (the Law), The Prophets (Monarchy and warning), Jesus/the Apostles (the birth of the Church).
- Limits—They serve more often to condemn than to convince. *Matthew 11:20-24*

3. What is the New Heights position on miracles? God still does miracles. Every person saved is a miracle. Healings take place: Marriages rescued, supernatural protection at times, angels are still dispatched. New Heights is still here after 20 years. However, with the closing of the canon of Scripture, no one is given the spiritual gift of miracles (or healing, or tongues, or prophecy).

4. The Alcohol Debate: Because Jesus made real wine that day in Cana, and because wine is mentioned over 260 times in Scripture, what stand can we confidently make concerning alcohol? Alcohol in and of itself is not a sin. Jesus likely drank. See *Luke 7:34* & *Matthew 26:29*

There is no passage requiring abstinence from alcohol*. {*Nazarite vows/priesthood ceremonies}

However, what guidelines and boundaries does Scripture also make clear?

- Drunkenness is a sin. See *Ephesians 5:18*
- For some (alcohol/substance abuse) *any* alcohol is a sin. See *Hebrews 12:1*
- There is no scriptural evidence for the "wine purified the water" teaching.
- In all areas, the stronger Christians must protect the weaker Christians. See *Romans 14:13-15*

5. What are some practical and loving ways stronger faithed Christians can exercise their liberty without damaging the conscience of younger, weaker faithed believers? Various answers. No alcohol at Church events. No church advertising/promoting an event where alcohol will be served. Abstaining from alcohol if fellowshiping with those opposed to drinking. Neither side judging the other. Not posting alcohol use pictures on social media.