

Message Extras

a little something extra to keep you connected to Jesus this week

Message Extras accompany the [weekly message](#).

Did you pick up the challenge from last week's message and offer up any BHAPs – big, hairy, audacious, prayers? Do you have anything to report about those prayers?

This sermon series focuses on the seven signs or miracles as recorded by John in his gospel:

- Feb. 27: Changing water into wine (John 2:1-11)
- Mar. 6: Healing the royal official's son (John 4:46-54)
- Mar. 13: Healing the paralytic at the pool (John 5:1-18)
- Mar. 20: Feeding over 5,000 with fish and loaves (John 6:1-14)
- Mar. 27: Walking on the water (John 6:15-25)
- Apr. 3: Healing a man born blind (John 9:1-41)
- Apr. 10: Raising Lazarus from the dead (John 11:1-46)

Let's take on the attitude of a detective as we investigate these miracles. A detective delves into the specifics of a case. He or she seeks to determine the why, or motive; to identify the who (victim and perp); to understand what happened; when and where. He or she might ask something like: "Is this an isolated event or part of a pattern of activity by a person or group?" The detective may have to follow a hunch or an instinct but hopes the evidence leads to a clear conclusion and conviction.

Remember, John was a disciple of Jesus. He had a front-row seat and spent three years with Jesus. John tells why he recorded this biography of Jesus in John 20:30-31. Will we come to the same conclusions John did about the person of Jesus Christ? Read those verses and jot down your thoughts.

As we investigate these signs, where will the evidence lead? I believe the evidence will convince us that while miracles may be few and far between, that they are still possible. I believe we will deepen our convictions that Jesus Christ is the son of God and Savior of the world. I believe a deeper dive into each sign will show that each one doesn't just stand alone but provides irrefutable evidence that Jesus' life connects every key point and belief from "In the beginning" (Gen. 1:1-3) to "...Yes, I am coming soon!" (Rev. 22:20).

In our investigation of the reality, power, and person of God, we see that John moves our understanding from God as creator in Gen. 1 to give God the name Jesus in John 1. As creation illustrates the character, power, creativity, and genius of God, the arrival of Jesus, the word made flesh, reveals the supernaturally personal power, love and mercy of God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

So, put on your gumshoes, trench coat, hat, grab your spy glass and sneak into the story and the story behind the story of the first miracle – turning water into wine.

Read John 2:1-12 and asking the detective questions:

What happened? What are the facts? (Read John 2:1-10)

Why is this story recorded? (John 2:11-12) – John shares his motive for the signs he shares. Or what may this sign have to do with the bigger story of the Old Testament?

These may be loose connections or awe-invoking revelations:

1. The water turned into wine is significant itself because the water was meant for ceremonial washing and now becomes an abundance of wine. ... this first sign represents the replacement of the Jewish ceremonial washings and by the washing or creative and transforming work of Jesus.
2. The wine, which becomes the finest of the evening during this wedding also points toward the messianic banquet, the eternal wedding feast of the Lamb. See Luke 22:28-30 and Rev. 19:7-10.
3. Consider the connection with Moses' first miracle. He turned water into blood as the first step to freeing the enslaved Israelites from Egyptian bondage. Jesus' first miracle turns water to wine, the best wine. This miracle created belief as John 2:11-12 says and illustrates the first step leading to breaking our bondage to sin. His blood would be represented by wine.

Who is involved? What is significant about the people in the story?

When? Why is it important for this to be at a wedding?

Where? (His first miracle is performed in a very small village that no longer exists. Nothing is too big or too small for the Lord.)

What do you conclude about the purposes of Jesus in this first sign?

Maybe this story helps us understand how miracles can help us deepen our trust and faith in God.

Paul David Tripp writes: I remember taking my youngest son to one of the national art galleries in Washington, DC ... I was so excited about what we were going to see. He was

decidedly unexcited. But I just knew that, once we were inside, he would have his mind blown and would thank me for what I had done for him that day.

As it turned out, his mind wasn't blown; it wasn't even activated. I saw things of such stunning beauty that brought me to the edge of tears. He yawned, moaned, and complained his way through gallery after gallery... He was surrounded by glory but saw none of it. He stood in the middle of wonders but was bored out of his mind. His eyes worked well, but his heart was stone blind. He saw everything, but he saw nothing.

Sadly, many of us live this way every day even though God has designed the world in which we live to be a **gloryscope**. What does this term mean? Just as a telescope points you to the stars and magnifies them for you to see their illuminating glory, so the earth focuses our eyes on God and magnifies his glory, so it can produce wonder in us. In and through faith, the earth is our gloryscope – a way to see God's glory.

...Every powerful and mighty thing, animate and inanimate, by design reveals God's glory. No created beauty is an end in itself. No physical wonder exists in isolation. Nothing that is, just is. Everything exists for a grand, vertical purpose. The glories of the physical world don't reflect God's glory by happenchance.... Our loving Creator knows how fundamentally blind we can be, so every fish, stone, flower, bird, cloud, tree, monkey, and leaf reveals Himself to us. (Taken from *Awe: Why it Matters to Everything We Think, Say, and Do* by Paul David Tripp, © 2015, pp.65-66.)

1. How did this week's message or this story help you understand the nature of God?
2. What will you do with that understanding this week?

