

LESSON 2 John 2–4

The Plan

- A. The Wedding at Cana
- B. Jesus Goes to the Temple
- C. Jesus and Nicodemus
- D. Jesus and John
- E. He Who Comes from Heaven
- F. Jesus and the Samaritan Woman
- G. Jesus Heals an Official's Son

The Goals

1. Explain the significance of Jesus' first miracle at the marriage feast in Cana.
2. Discuss the spiritual lesson of Jesus' cleansing the temple.
3. Explain the meaning of being born again.
4. Describe John the Baptist's understanding of who Jesus was.
5. State the results of accepting or rejecting salvation through Jesus.
6. Explain how Jesus was as living water to the Samaritan woman.
7. Explain how Jesus' healing of the official's son demonstrates His lordship.

A. THE WEDDING AT CANA

Goal 1. Explain the significance of Jesus' first miracle at the marriage feast in Cana.

Read John 2:1-12. Jesus, His mother, and His disciples went to a wedding. According to the custom, wine was served at the feast. But before the feast was over, the wine was all gone.

Mary, the mother of Jesus, asked Him to do something so the host would not be embarrassed at the wedding. It would take the power of God, a miracle, to meet this need. Mary knew that Jesus could provide a solution for this problem, so she inquired of Him.

Jesus used this opportunity to reveal God's glory and build His disciples' faith. He turned water into wine and met the need. There is no limit to what the Son of God can do!

Application

- 1 What were the results of Jesus' first miracle?
 - a) Mary realized her place of importance.
 - b) He demonstrated His glory, and His disciples believed on Him.
 - c) Jesus became a good friend with the bridegroom.
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B. JESUS GOES TO THE TEMPLE

Goal 2. Discuss the spiritual lesson of Jesus' cleansing the temple.

Read John 2:13-22. Every year the people of God went to the temple in Jerusalem to celebrate the Passover. They sacrificed lambs in memory of the Passover lambs that had saved their people from death long ago. When the angel of death was going to pass through the land of Egypt, God had told His people that each family must kill a lamb and put its blood on the door. The death angel passed over every house

marked by the blood of a lamb. In all the other houses, the oldest son died. This foreshadowed or illustrated that Jesus, the Lamb of God, would save people from eternal death.

The Passover celebration was very important in the worship to God. Knowing the background of the Passover celebration, the people should have been respectful and worshipful in God's house. Instead, some traders were selling their cattle and livestock in the temple. Angered by their disregard, Jesus drove them out of the temple. John records that Jesus made a whip out of cords, and drove all from the temple area. He scattered the coins of the money changers and overturned their tables, chiding the violators, "'How dare you turn my Father's house into a market!'" (John 2:15–16).

Then, Jesus refused to do a miracle as a sign to show people who He was. Jesus mentioned the greatest miracle of all, which would prove that He was the Son of God. He spoke of His body as the house of God and noted that people would crucify His body later in the city of Jerusalem, but in three days He would rise from the grave. The audience did not understand what He meant.

Application

- 2** What did Jesus do in the temple at Jerusalem?
 - a)** He drove the traders and money changers away.
 - b)** He made a sacrifice.
 - c)** He tore the temple down and rebuilt it.
 - 3** What lesson did Jesus teach while in the temple?
 - a)** That the temple was the place to do business
 - b)** That He would destroy that temple and rebuild it in three days
 - c)** That His body was a temple and He would die and arise from the grave after three days
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Read John 2:23–25. One reason we are studying this course is so that we can understand who Jesus is. In Jerusalem many

people believed in Jesus when they saw the miracles that He did. Let us believe what the Bible teaches about Jesus.

Often people say they believe in Jesus but do not act like it. Faith and actions go together. If we believe that Jesus is the Word, we will believe what He taught. If we believe that His life is our light, we will follow where He leads. If we believe that He is the Lamb of God, we will accept Him as the sacrifice for our sins.

C. JESUS AND NICODEMUS

Goal 3. Explain the meaning of being born again.

The New Birth

Read John 3:1–21. Nicodemus was a teacher and religious leader—a godly man whose heart was tender toward God. Nicodemus heard Jesus speak and knew of the miracles that He performed. He thought that the good things he did would please God and earn him a place in heaven. But Jesus told him, “No one can see the kingdom of God unless he is born again” (v. 3).

Jesus explained that there are two kinds of life: natural life of the body and spiritual life. We are born with natural life, but we receive spiritual life from the Spirit of God. We have already learned in John 1:12 that when we receive this new nature we are born again. This takes place at the moment we believe in Jesus Christ as our Savior: God becomes our Father. We are born of God and become the children of God. Paul affirms, “If anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come!” (2 Corinthians 5:17).

Jesus said this new birth is “of water and the Spirit” (v. 5). The Bible often uses figurative language—words with a different meaning than what they usually have. Water here means the washing away of sin. This is a part of our salvation.

Titus 3:5 teaches, “He saved us, not because of righteous things we had done, but because of his mercy. He saved us

through the washing of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit.” Jesus says, ““You are already clean because of the word I have spoken to you”” (John 15:3).

Spiritual cleansing comes from listening to and obeying the Word of God. When Jesus spoke of being born again of water, He meant we are born again by believing the Word of God.

Application

- 4** What did Jesus tell Nicodemus?
- a)** The good things he did would take him to heaven.
 - b)** No one can see the kingdom of God unless he or she is born again.
- 5** The new birth is
- a)** being born of God by believing in Jesus and receiving Him as Savior.
 - b)** coming back to earth as another person after you die.
 - c)** being baptized in water.
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Life for a Look

Read John 3:14–21 again. At one time in biblical history, when the people of God sinned, they were punished by being bitten by snakes. In His love for them, God told Moses to lift up a bronze snake where everyone could see it. Whoever looked at it got well; those who would not look died.

Everyone on earth has disobeyed God and has been condemned to die. But God loves us and proved this by sending His Son to die for us. Jesus was lifted up on a Cross like the snake made of bronze. Everyone who looks to Him—that is, believes in Him—is healed of sin and will receive forgiveness and eternal life. Those who do not believe in Him will die in their sins.

Application

6 Memorize John 3:16, one of the best-loved verses in the Bible.

7 What is the greatest proof that God loves us?

- a)** He gave His Son to save us.
 - b)** He gives us life.
 - c)** He answers prayer.
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D. JESUS AND JOHN

Goal 4. Describe John the Baptist's understanding of who Jesus was.

Read John 3:22-30. The crowds that listened to John the Baptist were now going to hear Jesus instead. Many of John's disciples had left him and were following Jesus. But John was not sad about this. God had sent him to tell people about Jesus, so he was happy when they left him to follow the Savior.

John's attitude and words show what a noble, unselfish person he was. His words are a good motto for us. Jesus, and not John, was the one who really mattered in John's life. John the Baptist said this about Jesus: "He must become greater; I must become less" (John 3:30).

Application

8 Memorize John 3:30.

9 Pray that Jesus may become more important every day in your life.

E. HE WHO COMES FROM HEAVEN

Goal 5. State the results of accepting or rejecting salvation through Jesus.

In John 3:31–36, John communicates that Jesus is the One who comes from heaven and who is greatest ever. Jesus is full of the Spirit of God and has power over all things in heaven, on earth, and under the earth. John 3:36 notes, “Whoever believes in the Son has eternal life, but whoever rejects the Son will not see life, for God’s wrath remains on him.”

Many verses in John 3 speak of eternal life. Eternal life is not living on and on in this world; it is God’s never-ending life. If we believe in Jesus, we have eternal life. Our bodies may die, but when they do, our spirits will return to God and will live with Him forever. Just as Jesus’ body was raised from the dead, the bodies of those who believe in Him will one day be raised from the dead to enjoy eternal life. By the same token, when someone rejects Jesus, for eternity that soul will live away from God’s joy and presence.

Application

10 What if we do not accept the salvation that God offers in Jesus?

- a) We may be saved by being baptized in water.
- b) We may be saved after we die.
- c) We will not be saved.

11 What if we do accept the salvation that God has provided through Jesus?

- a) Our bodies will never die.
- b) Our bodies may die, but we will go to live with God forever.
- c) Our bodies will never be raised from the dead.

12 Pray for any of your friends who do not believe in Jesus.



F. JESUS AND THE SAMARITAN WOMAN

Goal 6. Explain how Jesus was as living water to the Samaritan woman.

Read John 4:1-42. People in the time of Jesus looked down on the Samaritans, but Jesus treated the rich, the poor, and people of different races alike. The woman of Samaria was very different from Nicodemus. Nicodemus was a good man, but he had to believe in Jesus before he could have eternal life. This woman, however, had severe moral problems. Jesus knew that she was rejected by others because of her sinful lifestyle, but He wanted to save her. As with Nicodemus, believing in Jesus saved her. Jesus told the woman that He could give her the water of life that she needed to satisfy the thirst of her spirit. Though He knew of her life, Jesus never embarrassed her.

In the Gospel of John, the word life is used at least 36 times. Of these, it is joined 17 times with the word eternal. We have learned that Jesus had life in himself (John 1:4), that those who believe in Jesus are born again and have eternal life (John 3:5, 15-16, 36). Jesus gives the water of eternal life to those who want it (John 4:14).

One outstanding aspect of the Samaritan woman's encounter with Jesus was that she was not offended by His comments. Instead, the woman engaged in a remarkable theological conversation. She spoke of her own customs of worship. Then Jesus said that places and customs of worship were not the most important things. He taught her one of the greatest revelations of His ministry: who God is and how to worship Him. Jesus communicated the importance that God is Spirit and that people should worship Him as He is.

Church membership and religious customs alone will not please God. God is not satisfied unless worship is true. True worship must agree with biblical teaching and should begin deep in our heart. Spiritual worship must be sincere and in agreement with the Holy Spirit.

The woman of Samaria knew that Jesus was no ordinary man, for no ordinary person could speak as He did. When Jesus said that He was the promised Savior, she believed Him and ran back to her village to tell the people that the Messiah had come to their town. The people hurried to meet Jesus.

Jesus stayed with them two days, teaching them the way of salvation. The people later confessed to the woman, ““We no longer believe just because of what you said; now we have heard for ourselves, and we know that this man really is the Savior of the world”” (v. 42).

We must each believe in Jesus and meet Him personally. This is a powerful truth that distinguishes Christianity from other religions. The people first heard of Jesus from the woman. But that was not enough. Perhaps you have heard of Jesus from your parents, from a pastor, or from a friend. But it is not enough just to hear about Jesus or to study about Him. You must meet Jesus personally by the means He chooses: in prayer, by studying the Bible, or in worship. If you seek Jesus, you will find Him!

Application

13 Memorize John 4:24.

14 What did the villagers say about Jesus after He taught them?

- a)** He was a good man who gave water to thirsty people.
- b)** He was the Savior of the world.
- c)** He was a prophet who knew all about people.

15 To be accepted by God, you must

- a)** personally believe in Jesus as your own Savior.
 - b)** be born of Christian parents.
 - c)** hear about Jesus from a pastor or a friend.
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G. JESUS HEALS AN OFFICIAL'S SON

Goal 7. Explain how Jesus' healing of the official's son demonstrates His lordship.

Read John 4:43-54. Have you ever asked Jesus to heal someone? An official asked Jesus to heal his son. But Jesus did not go to the boy. He only told the father that the boy would get well, and the father believed the words of Jesus. It is a wonderful thing to know that Jesus still has the same power He always had. We can be healed of sickness just by praying and believing Jesus' words.

Application

16 How did Jesus heal the son of the government official?

- a) He sent some medicine.
 - b) He made a magical charm.
 - c) He said the boy would get well, and the official believed.
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Check Your Answers

- 1 b)** He demonstrated His glory, and His disciples believed on Him.
- 3 c)** That His body was a temple and He would die and arise from the grave after three days
- 2 a)** He drove the traders and money changers away.
- 7 a)** He gave His Son to save us.
- 4 b)** No one can see the kingdom of God unless he or she is born again.
- 10 c)** We will not be saved.
- 5 a)** being born of God by believing in Jesus and receiving Him as Savior.
- 11 b)** Our bodies may die, but we will go to live with God forever.
- 14 b)** He was the Savior of the world.
- 16 c)** He said the boy would get well, and the official believed.
- 15 a)** personally believe in Jesus as your own Savior.

