

Date: September 23rd, 2025

John Section: John 2:1-25

Key Text: John 2:11, 23

Main Idea: Jesus' signs point to who He is, so that we may believe.

Genre: Theological Narrative

Author: John

Audience: Primarily second-generation believers, Jews, and Gentiles, needing encouragement and clarity about Jesus' identity.

Setting: Likely written from Ephesus, AD 85-95, in a context of synagogue opposition and emerging false teachings.

Quote of the Week: "The heartbeat of the Christian life is to receive and accept what He has done for us and rest in it." - Connor Shady, He Must Increase Podcast



John Preview:

Highlight:

The Gospel of John is a unique New Testament account of Jesus' life, written by the Apostle John, the beloved disciple. John's Gospel is not merely a biography but a theological portrait, revealing Jesus as the eternal Son of God who became flesh to bring life and light to the world. Unlike the Synoptic Gospels, John emphasizes signs and discourses that unveil Jesus' divine identity and mission. From the opening words—"In the beginning was the Word"—to the climactic resurrection appearances, John presents Jesus as the one in whom God's glory is revealed, calling all to believe in Him for eternal life. This Gospel is rich with imagery (light, life, bread, water, shepherd, vine) and repeatedly centers on the theme of belief.

Focus of John:

- **Purpose of John:**
 - John tells us his purpose plainly: "But these are written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name." (John 20:31).
- **Themes in John:**
 - Jesus is the Word made flesh
 - Jesus reveals God's glory
 - Eternal life is found in Him alone
 - Belief is the way to life
 - Life flows only from union with Christ
- **Our Response to this Truth:**
 - Believe in Him – Abide in Him – Live by His Word – Trust in His promises – Love as He loved

John 2:1-12 The Wedding at Cana (Water into Wine)

- Setting the Scene:
 - This passage takes place at a wedding in which Jesus, his disciples, and his mother were attending. It is likely that Mary was related to the groom, and traditionally, the groom and his family were responsible for hosting the wedding and, therefore, all the food and drink. In the context of this story, running out of wine at a multiple-day party, such as a wedding, would have brought shame to the groom and his family.
 - In light of this context, we come to John 2. The groom has run out of wine, and Mary comes to Jesus for help.
 - Jesus answers with “My time has not come.”
 - **Why do you think that Jesus answered this way, and what is the significance?**
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- Jesus as the Substance:
 - Jesus turns water into wine using jars used for the right of purification.
 - This symbolically paints the picture that the OT is empty without a Messiah.
 - The law was powerless to save our souls, but Jesus comes to bring the power to save that is effective and beyond our ability.
 - This brings us back to the re-creation idea that was introduced in our first week. He re-creates water into wine, old into new, and creates into new creation. Furthermore, the idea translates directly to John 1:17 when it says, “the law came through Moses, grace and truth came through Jesus Christ.” Throughout this chapter and the chapters to come, we see this theme that Jesus brings the power to save, the power was never found in the Law. He reminds us that we are not enough but that He is enough.
 - Furthermore, if we look back through the scriptures to Moses, we see his first sign during the flight from Egypt, when he turned water into blood. Throughout John and the NT, we see Jesus as the better and only way to God.
 - Jesus Anticipates the Kingdom:
 - Throughout scripture, we see a theme of wine, a theme that symbolically can represent many things.
 - Joy and celebration
 - Abundance
 - Redemption
 - Union with God

- Today, I will focus on the union with God aspect and the ways that it is relevant to this passage. The theme of unity is seen most clearly in Amos 9:13 and Isaiah 25:6.
 - This unity is specifically seen as eschatological unity, meaning God dwelling with His people in a new creation, in the new heavens and new earth. Last week, we saw Jesus reference Jacob's ladder, and how Jesus serves as the only way to heaven and also as the bringer of the kingdom. This week, we see this theme present again, Jesus as the bringer of this new kingdom, both through His resurrection and the descent of the Spirit upon His people, and also in His second coming.
- It may be easy to dwell upon this and think that Jesus is foreshadowing something that will happen in the future, but in reality, this passage anticipates our present and our future.
 - Jesus foreshadows His death and His people as the dwelling place of God (our present reality), yet He also foreshadows when He will descend just as He ascended (future reality). We live in a period of "already but not yet," a period in which we experience the presence of God as believers, yet we look forward to something more. We are actively experiencing the "last days," and we put our hope in the work of Jesus, and we continue to anticipate the day that He returns.
- Symbolism of Weddings:
 - **What is the significance that Jesus performed his first sign at a wedding?**

- Conclusion:
 - In light of this passage, we see that Jesus is the recreator, the substance that brings fulfillment for those who believe in him. Therefore, let us not look at the signs but the sign-giver for comfort and hope.

John 2:13-25 Jesus Cleansing the Temple

- Passover:
 - John begins this section with some historical context. This scene at the temple was taking place during Passover, the primary Jewish feast that brought tons of travelers. This lasted for around a week. The crowds that were drawn during passover meant increased commerce for the community. The temple courts, which were meant only for worship, became loud with trade.

- In the other Gospels, this story takes place significantly later chronologically. What's John's purpose in putting this here, early in the Gospel of John?

- The Temple: Calculated Move of Chaos
 - Jesus enters the temple courts and is dissatisfied with what He sees. This was supposed to be a place of prayer and worship, to serve the living and true God. Instead, He sees livestock and money-changers. He drives the cattle away and pours out the coins of the money-changers, displaying his frustration in a way we almost never see in the scriptures.
- **Why do you think Jesus reacted so strongly when He saw the temple being used for buying and selling?**

- Verse 17:
 - **17** His disciples remembered that it was written, "Zeal for your house will consume me."
 - Connection to the Old Testament: Psalm 69:9
 - **9** For zeal for your house has consumed me, and the reproaches of those who reproach you have fallen on me.
 - Significance of this:
 - He is the substance of the shadow that the law created. Everything that was written in the Old Testament pointed towards Christ. Jesus fulfills the law of the Old Testament. His passionate devotion to God's glory leads not only to the cleansing of the temple, but also to his eventual rejection and death on the cross.

- Jesus as the Temple:
 - In verses 18-22, Jesus has his authority questioned. When He says, “Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up,” He is pointing beyond the physical temple to Him. He is referring to the temple of His physical self. Jesus is pointing to his resurrection and ascension.
 - The Jewish leaders misunderstand and think He is speaking of the physical temple, which has taken 46 years to build. We see this often in the Gospel of John, where Jesus speaks with spiritual meaning, but His audience only interprets it in physical or literal terms.
 - Their misunderstanding displays both their spiritual blindness and the deeper truth Jesus is revealing.
 - **How does knowing that Jesus is the true temple change the way we view our relationship with God?**
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- The last three verses of this chapter might seem a bit strange. These verses appear to be a change of flow and appear not to be directly connected to the rest of the text. But this is not a passage we should overlook.
 - John 2:23-25
 - **23** Now when he was in Jerusalem at the Passover Feast, many believed in his name when they saw the signs that he was doing. **24** But Jesus on his part did not entrust himself to them, because he knew all people **25** and needed no one to bear witness about man, for he himself knew what was in man.
 - In accordance with John’s goal of writing (as we have discussed at length, see John 20:31), “many believed in his name.” But they were impressed by the signs, not with genuine faith in Christ. Jesus “knew what was in man,” understanding this discrepancy and the lack of faith truly held by the people.
 - The darkness of the flesh cannot understand the light that is before them. This sets the stage for what we will dive into next week with Nicodemus.
 - **How does Chapter 2 of John as a whole contribute to John’s central message?**

Other Helpful Resources:

- He Must Increase Podcast by Connor Shady & Adam Tredeau (Official Podcast of 3:30!)
- Waukesha Bible Church John 2 Sermons (Find on YouTube)

Other Reminders:

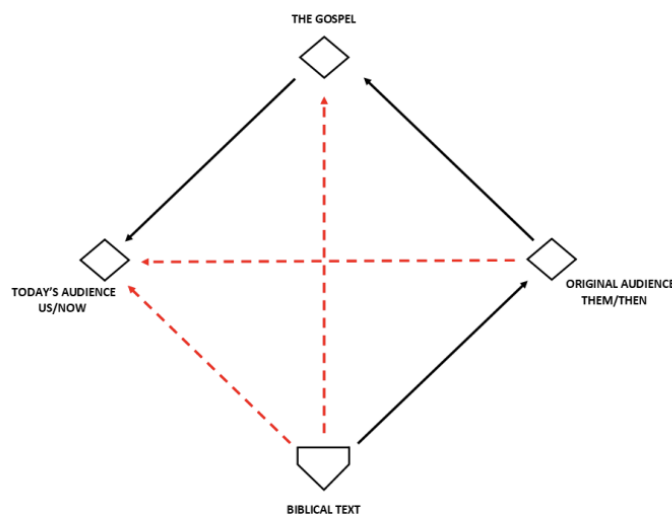
- Get involved with a church - Specifically WBC!
 - Check out our Website: Threethirtyministry.com

ANOTHER WAY TO GO ABOUT THIS IDEA: THINK BASEBALL

- When preparing and studying scripture, our focus is to always stay true to the scripture.
- In order to best do this, we use a method called the Simeon Trust method, which simply lays out a process to faithfully discern the Bible.

• FIRST:

- Understanding who the text was written to. (The Audience)
- Understanding why the text was written. (The Purpose)
- Understanding the structure, genre, context, emphasis, and melodic line of the text.
- In a nutshell, the first step focuses on understanding what the text meant to its original audience.



• SECOND:

- Once we have done this, we must filter it through the Gospel.
- This means understanding when and why this text was written in reference to the cross. → Is it pointing to the coming of Christ (OT), is it pointing to Christ and what Christ has already done (NT), is the text speaking of law, is it speaking of the Gospel, etc?

• THIRD:

- Once we've understood the text's original meaning/audience and have filtered it through the Gospel lens, we are able to determine what it means to us now. Without this process, the proper application of the Bible is essentially impossible.

- COMING HOME: Once we understand the appropriate application of the text, our legwork essentially stops, and we become fully reliant on the Holy Spirit to work in us.

The Gospel: *We Can't, God Can, Jesus Did!*

- **Sin.** None of us can escape it. Because of it, we are spiritually dead and in need of life. Our debt before God is insurmountable. It is the biggest problem any of us has, since there is nothing we can do ourselves to pay that debt. God's standard is perfection, so no amount of good works or religious activities is enough.
 - 1 And you were dead in the trespasses and sins 2 in which you once walked, following the course of this world, following the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience - 3 among whom we all once lived in the passions of our flesh, carrying out the desires of the body and the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, like the rest of mankind. (Ephesians 2:1-3)
- **But God...** These two words are some of the most powerful words in the Bible. God is merciful and loving. He did what we could never do in and of ourselves. He saved us by grace alone and gave us new life in Christ.
 - 4 **But God**, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us, 5 even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ - by grace you have been saved - 6 and raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, 7 so that in the coming ages he might show the immeasurable riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. (Ephesians 2:4-7)
- **Jesus saves.** He is God's gift to us. He paid our debt before the Father. And through his death and resurrection, we are raised to eternal life. There is nothing we can do to earn it. It is only through Christ that we live a life pleasing to God.
 - 8 For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, 9 not a result of works, so that no one may boast. 10 For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them. (Ephesians 2:8-10)