

## Facilitator

1. Open with Prayer
2. Welcome any newcomers
3. Read John 2:1-11 and give a five-minute review of the sermon using Peppy's sermon notes.

Facilitator: Please don't feel you have to cover every question. Try to keep your discussion to an hour and a half at the most.

## CONNECT Group study questions, John 2:1-11

February 15, 2015

### Title: The First Miracle of Jesus Turning Water into Wine

**Question:** Verse 11 says Jesus "manifested His glory" in this first miracle, and as a result, His disciples believed in Him. Share how Jesus revealed His glory to you personally, leading to your belief in Him. Have you ever considered that the transformation from rebellious sinner to child of God requires a miracle? Read and discuss 2 Corinthians 4:6 and 2 Corinthians 5:17.

**Question:** Do you find yourself responding to all that Jesus commands in His Word, like the servants (with obedience, exuberance, patience)? Can you share an example from your life where you have responded like this to Jesus? Can you share an example from your life when you have not responded this way? Are there any areas in your life where you are currently and intentionally not responding to Jesus with obedience? What would repentance look like for that area of your life?

**Meditation and prayer:** Do you think Mary's wine problem was important enough to bring to Jesus? In light of Philippians 4:6-7,

*"do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be known unto God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus"*

and Philippians 4:19,

*"And my God will supply every need of yours according to his riches in glory in Christ Jesus",*

pray that the Lord will remind you to put aside anxiety and bring every issue in your life to God in prayer.

**Read to the group:** There's an elephant in the room. Can you spot it? No, it's not a Republican Connect Group member. An elephant in the room is a big, glaring issue no one's talking about. It's like we're all making believe it doesn't exist, but there it is in the text: The very first recorded miracle Jesus performed was to turn water into wine. And it wasn't a little communion cupful. It was anywhere from 120 to 180 gallons of wine—and it was the good stuff, perfectly aged from the time the servants filled six jugs with water until it was tasted by the headwaiter. There's a heartrending song, "Wine into Water," by T.Graham Brown. He sings in part:

*Tonight, I'm as low as any man can go  
I'm down and I can't fall much farther  
Once upon a time, You turned the water into wine  
An' now, on my knees, I'm turning to You, Father  
Could You help me turn the wine back into water?*

For some, perhaps some of you, John 2:1-11 is a problem text, but it's a problem best discussed rather than letting it be the elephant everyone ignores.

**Question:** Why do you suppose Jesus would turn water into wine when alcoholism is such a social scourge, destroying lives and breaking apart marriages and families? Is it the wine (alcohol) that's at fault, or it's abuse? What legitimate activities can lead to devastating outcomes if they are abused? **Facilitator:** Point out that sex in marriage

is part of God's plan, but promiscuity is destructive, and that eating is necessary, but gluttony can lead to serious health problems, disease and untimely death.

**Question:** For what reason or reasons would you abstain from drinking wine or any alcoholic beverage? Under what circumstances would you advise someone not to use alcohol as a beverage? **Facilitator:** Here are a few Scripture passages that may touch on the issue—Ephesians 5:18; 1 Timothy 3:2-3; Titus 1:6-7; 2 Corinthians 6:3.