Jesus performed miracles so people would believe in God.

Bible Verse
“For the Son of Man came to seek and save those who are lost” (Luke 19:10).

Growing Closer to Jesus
Students will
- learn what miracles are,
- understand the difference between miracles and “magic,” and
- recognize God’s miraculous power.

Teacher Enrichment

Bible Basis
Jesus turns water into wine.

John 2:1-11

It's interesting that John calls Jesus’ first miracle a “sign.” While the other Gospels seem to emphasize Jesus’ demonstration of power in descriptions of his miracles, John described the miracles as symbolic acts. John apparently saw the miracles as designed to lead people toward trusting in Jesus.

God always does things well; thus it is no surprise that the wine Jesus made from water was the best of all the wine that had been served. And the miracle worked toward revealing Jesus’ glory to the wedding party and to Jesus’ disciples.

Notice the last phrase of today’s passage. Because of this miracle, Jesus’ disciples began to see who he really was and, apparently for the first time, really trust him. The miracle sealed the deal for them. If Jesus could perform such a miracle, they figured, he must really be someone worth trusting. Jesus’ miracles do the same for us today. We’re fortunate to have many of Jesus’ miracles recorded in the Bible for us. Faith in him should be far easier for us—and for the children in your class—than it was for those first disciples!


Prayer
- Read John 4:43-54.
- How did this miracle affect the people who witnessed it?
- How does studying Jesus’ miracles impact your faith?
- Pray: Dear Lord, thank you for all the reasons you give me to have faith in you. Help me to pass that faith along to my students, who need it when they…
Lesson 6

Before the Lesson

Collect the necessary items for the activities you plan to use, referring to the Classroom Supplies and Learning Lab Supplies listed on the chart.

Make photocopies of the “Hands-On Fun at Home” handout (at the end of this lesson) to send home with your students. Pray for your students and for God’s direction as you teach the lesson.

This Lesson at a Glance

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Closing

Thanks for the Miracles!—Praise God for the miracles he has performed.
Welcome

As kids arrive, ask them which “Fun at Home” activities they tried. Ask questions such as “What was one way you grew in faith last week?” and “Which books of the Bible did you read from during the past week?”

Tell kids that whenever you ring the clanging bell, they are to stop talking, raise their hands, and focus on you. Explain that it’s important to respond to this signal quickly so the class can do as many fun activities as possible. Practice the signal two or three times.

Attention Grabber

“Magic” or Miracle?

SUPPLIES: none

Say: I’m going to show you an object that you’ve probably never seen before. After I show it to you, tell me what the object is like. What colors do you see? What does the object remind you of?

Stretch out the accordion flower so kids can see only the accordion-like top. Have several volunteers share their observations with the class. Then have kids watch as you rotate the accordion flower into a circle and tap its base against your finger or against a harder edge to open it completely.

Ask: • Where did all the flowers come from? (From underneath; from inside.)

• Do you think I produced these flowers by doing some kind of trick? Why or why not? (Sort of, because they just appeared; no, they were hidden underneath all along.)

• Do you think I produced these flowers by a miracle? Why or why not? (No, only God can do miracles; miracles are more exciting than a paper flower.)

Show kids how the folds of the accordion flower tuck under each other to hide the different parts. Pass the accordion flower around so kids can examine it for themselves.

Ask: • What’s the difference between miracles and magic tricks? (Only God can do miracles; miracles are real, but magic is just a trick.)

Say: After I showed you how the flower worked, you realized it wasn’t magic. What people call “magic” is usually just a trick. Anyone can learn to do a trick. Miracles, on the other hand, rely on God’s power. Miracles don’t use tricks, and they can’t be explained away. ▶ Jesus performed miracles so people would believe in God. Let’s learn about one of Jesus’ miracles right now.

Retrieve the accordion flower and return it to the Learning Lab for use in future lessons.

Hands-On Bible Curriculum—Grades 3 & 4

Jesus Turns Water Into Wine

teacher tips

It’s important to say the Bible Point just as it’s written in each activity. Repeating the Bible Point over and over throughout the lesson will help kids remember it and apply it to their lives.

You may want to practice with the accordion flower before class. Bring the two bars together. Then tap the bars against your finger until the flower opens up. You might also try hitting the handle on a table edge. Opening the flower may take a few tries.

BIBLE POINT

Jesus performed miracles so people would believe in God. Let’s learn about one of Jesus’ miracles right now.
Lesson 6

Bible Exploration & Application

Miracle Punch

**SUPPLIES:** Bibles, cups, pitcher of water, spoon, pre-sweetened drink mix

Set out cups, pre-sweetened drink mix, a spoon, and a pitcher of water. Say: **Right now we’re going to hear about a miracle Jesus performed.** Distribute Bibles and have kids look up John 2:1-11. Have a volunteer read the passage aloud as other kids follow along in their Bibles. Have another volunteer summarize the passage.

Then hold up the drink mix and say: **To help us remember this Bible story, I’m going to perform a fabulous miracle. Using only the supplies you see on this table, I will turn this water into punch. Stand up if you think I can perform this miracle.**

Wait for kids to stand, and then motion for them to sit down again. Stir the drink mix into the water, and hold up the pitcher. Say: **Stand up if you think my miracle was successful.**

Wait for kids to stand, and then take a bow. Say: **Sit down if you’d like to sample my miraculous creation. Applaud loudly if you think I should become a professional miracle worker.**

Distribute drinks to the kids.

Ask: • **Did I turn this water into punch by my miraculous power? Explain.** (No, it was turned into punch by the drink mix; the only power you used was to stir it up.)

• **What’s the difference between Jesus turning the water into wine and me turning the water into punch?** (Jesus did a miracle, but you just used a drink mix to make punch; Jesus did something impossible, but you did something easy.)

Say: **Any chemist could explain exactly what happened when I turned the water into punch. But when Jesus turned the water into wine, he caused an unexplainable, miraculous event to occur:**

> Jesus performed miracles so people would believe in God.

**Bible Insight**

When referring to Jesus’ miracles, John frequently used the Hebrew word *semeíon*, meaning a sign or wonder. He advocated that these signs were not only grounds for belief in Jesus, but also evidence of God’s work.

Share-a-Snack

**SUPPLIES:** Bibles, doughnut, newsprint and marker or chalkboard and chalk

Say: **It would be nice to have something to eat with our punch. I brought a snack—my favorite kind of doughnut.** Hold up the doughnut. **This doughnut is so good, I want to share it with all of you.**

Pinch off a small piece of doughnut for each student. Say: **Check it out! I made this one doughnut feed the whole class. Now you must really be impressed with my miraculous powers!**

Ask: • **Do you think the way I divided the doughnut was a miracle? Why or why not?** (No, all you did was break off little pieces.)

Say: **You kids are hard to please! First I turned water into punch; then I made one doughnut feed the whole class. And you’re still not impressed. Well, I have to admit that there’s nothing spectacular about making punch or breaking a doughnut into crumbs. I’m really not in the miracle business. But Jesus is! Let’s look at another miracle Jesus performed.**
Form pairs. Distribute Bibles, and have kids read John 6:1-14. Have partners alternate reading and summarizing the verses. While kids are reading, write the following questions on a chalkboard or newsprint. Have partners discuss each question.

• Do you think the way Jesus divided the bread and fish was a miracle? Why or why not? (Yes, because he couldn’t have broken a loaf of bread into a thousand pieces; he had so much left over that it had to be a miracle.)

• How do you think the people felt when they saw that huge crowd being fed with just five loaves and two fish? (Amazed; they couldn’t believe it; curious about how Jesus could do it.)

• Jesus could have sent the people home to find food. Why do you think he fed them instead? (Because he didn’t want them to go hungry; to show them how powerful he was; he had so much to teach them that he didn’t want to take the time to send them home to eat.)

After a few minutes, ring the clanging bell. Wait for kids to respond, and then invite partners to share their responses to the questions.

After all the kids have shared their answers, say: Jesus fed all those people because he cared about their needs. He never performed miracles just to amaze people with his great power. Jesus performed miracles so people would believe in God.

**HANDS-ON BIBLE**

Give each student a sheet of colored paper and scissors. Show kids how to cut two identical shapes by folding the paper in half and cutting through both layers. Make sure kids have their Hands-On Bibles.

Have students turn to the ‘Jesus’ Miracles’ page in one of the four-color inserts in their Bibles and complete the activities found there. When kids are finished, ask:

• What’s the difference between the optical illusion and the miracles Jesus did? (The optical illusion is just a trick, and it doesn’t really do anything; Jesus’ miracles were real and powerful—he actually fed people and healed people and did other important stuff.)

• What exactly is a miracle? (A miracle is something that can’t be explained by science; only God can do it.)

• Has anyone else in history ever been able to do the things Jesus did? Explain. (No, doctors have learned how to heal some diseases, but not like Jesus did with just his words or touch; only God can do miracles.)

**Jesus Turns Water Into Wine**

**Supplies:** Bibles, “Astounding!” handout (p. 74), pencils

Before class, make photocopies of the “Astounding!” handout. Form groups of no more than four, and distribute Bibles and pencils. Have each group select a Reader to read the Bible passage, a Recorder to write down the story’s details, and two Reporters to “broadcast” the story. Write the following Scripture references each on a small slip of paper: Mark 2:1-12; Mark 4:35-41; Luke 8:40-42 and 44-56; and Luke 18:35-43. Give each group a Scripture reference.
Say: Pretend you’re living in Bible times. You’re just average citizens, and you’ve heard about Jesus and his amazing miracles. You’ve been asked to follow Jesus around for a while and write a story for the local newspaper about one of his miracles. Work together in your group to create a headline and news report for the story you’ve been assigned. You’ll have about five minutes to create your stories.

Give each group a copy of the “Astounding!” handout. Circulate among the groups to answer questions and contribute ideas.

After five minutes, ring the clanging bell. Wait for kids to respond, and then have reporters present their headlines and stories. After all the stories have been presented, ask:

• Do you think people in Jesus’ time would believe astounding headlines like the ones you wrote? Why or why not? (Yes, because the events really happened; not unless they actually saw the miracle.)

• Do you think people today would believe your stories? Why or why not? (No, because the headlines sound too much like the National Enquirer; yes, but only if they knew about Jesus.)

Say: Jesus performed many amazing miracles. But, unlike the stories we sometimes read in newspapers today, Jesus’ miracles really happened. When people saw the wonderful and amazing things Jesus did, they knew he was God’s Son. ►Jesus performed miracles so people would believe in God.

 Saving the Lost
SUPPLIES: Bibles, CD player

Say: Usually when people do “magic” tricks or optical illusions, they do them just for fun or to get attention. But that’s never why Jesus did miracles. ►Jesus performed miracles so people would believe in God.

Have students turn to Luke 19:10 in their Bibles, which reads: ►“For the Son of Man came to seek and save those who are lost.” Ask a volunteer to read the verse aloud while the others follow along. Then ask:

• What does this verse say about why Jesus came? (Jesus came to seek and save those who are lost; Jesus came to save us from our sins.)

Say: Let’s learn a song to help us remember why Jesus came and that ►Jesus performed miracles so people would believe in God. Play “For the Son” (Luke 19:10) (track 10) on the CD. The lyrics are in the back of this teacher guide. If you have time and want the students to learn the song, play it a second time, and have them begin to sing along.

Say: Jesus didn’t perform miracles because he wanted to show off. Jesus performed miracles because he cared about people and wanted to help them. And most of all, ►Jesus performed miracles so people would believe in God. That’s how much he loves us. Jesus wants everyone to believe in God and have eternal life with him in heaven. That’s why he came!
Closing

Thanks for the Miracles!

SUPPLIES: none

Say: Today we learned that Jesus performed miracles so people would believe in God. So how about it? Do Jesus’ miracles convince you?

Have students sit in a circle. Say: We’ve talked about lots of miracles today, and we could talk about plenty more. Hold up the pine cone. Think about your favorite miracle, the one that most helps you believe in God. It could be a miracle you know about from the Bible, or it could be a miracle of nature, or it could be a miracle that God has done for your family or a friend. We’re going to pass this pine cone around. When it comes to you, say, “Thanks, God, for the miracle of...” and tell us about your favorite miracle.

Give kids a moment to think. Then begin by telling about your favorite miracle, and pass the pine cone to another student. Continue until all the kids have had a turn to share. After everyone has shared, close in prayer, thanking God that Jesus performed miracles so people would believe in God. Return the pine cone to the Learning Lab box.

Growing closer to Jesus extends beyond the classroom.

Photocopy the “Hands-On Fun at Home” handout (at the end of this lesson) for this week, and send it home with your kids. Encourage kids and parents to use the handout to spark meaningful discussion on this week’s topic.
Astounding!

Headline

Who was there:

What happened:
Jesus performed miracles so people would believe in God.

Bible Basis: Jesus turns water into wine.

Bible Verse: “For the Son of Man came to seek and save those who are lost” (Luke 19:10).

Read Psalm 77:11-14 together. Then take turns remembering God’s miracles and celebrating them. Say, “I remember the miracles you did for…” Fill in the blank with your favorite Bible character, such as Moses or David. Then thank God for the little miracles he’s done for your family or others you know. Use the same sentence prayer but fill in the name of the person you know, and tell what God has done for him or her.

Read about faith as big as a mustard seed in Matthew 17:14-20. Buy a packet of mustard seeds at a garden shop. At dinner one evening, pass around the seeds so everyone can see how small they are. Plant a few seeds in a pot or in your back yard. Each time you water the plant, pray that your faith will keep growing, too.

Unlock the Door

Jesus said in John 14:6, “No one can come to the Father except through me.” Make a cardboard key like the one shown, and write “Jesus is the key to heaven” on it. Punch a hole in the top of the key, and thread a piece of yarn through it. Wear the key as a necklace or hang it from a doorknob to remind you of the miracle of Jesus’ love.