STUDY BIBLE WORKBOOK

John 2

The First Sign and the Father’s House

QUICK STUDY + DEEP DIVE

At a wedding in Cana, Jesus reveals His glory through His first sign. In Jerusalem He honors His Father’s house, points ahead to the resurrection of His body, and reveals that He knows what is in the human heart.

Scripture quotations: World English Bible (WEB)

HOW TO USE THIS WORKBOOK

Study at Your Own Pace

Quick Study: Begin with a focused 15–20 minute overview. Read John 2 in your preferred translation and consider the key movements, Bible words, Gospel Connection, and prayer.

Deep Dive: Continue through five full-WEB Scripture passages. Each page guides you through S.O.A.P. with substantive observation, personal application, prayer, and full-width writing space.

WESTERN GRACE MEDIA

CHAPTER CONTEXT

John 2 - Geographic Setting

Cana, Capernaum, and Jerusalem: John names these places in the chapter.

Numbered rings mark chapter locations; exact journeys and disputed ancient sites are not reconstructed.



Regional location



COUNTRIES IN YEAR 2020

Area shown on main map

John 2 locations

1 Cana of Galilee (2:1,11) - Wedding and first sign. Exact ancient site debated; atlas pin is illustrative.

2 Capernaum (2:12) - Short stay with family and disciples near the Sea of Galilee.

3 Jerusalem (2:13-25) - Passover, the temple confrontation, and response to signs.

Map notes

Shaded political regions and relief terrain provide historical context. The small locator shows today's surrounding countries. No specific roads are claimed.

Original WGM atlas artwork; regional colors and site placement are illustrative. Boundaries and Cana's exact site are uncertain.

QUICK STUDY

John 2 — The First Sign and the Father’s House

MAIN VERSE

“This beginning of his signs Jesus did in Cana of Galilee, and revealed his glory; and his disciples believed in him.” John 2:11, WEB

BIG PICTURE

John 2 moves between a wedding celebration and the temple at Passover. Jesus turns water into wine, revealing His glory and leading His disciples to believe. He then confronts commerce in His Father’s house and describes His body as a temple that will be raised in three days. The chapter closes with a warning: signs can attract attention without revealing the true condition of the human heart.

A Wedding in Cana (2:1–3)

Jesus and His disciples attend a wedding in Galilee. When the wine runs out, His mother brings the need to Him, bringing an ordinary family celebration into John’s account of Jesus’ glory.

“My Hour” (2:4–5)

Jesus’ reply establishes that His actions follow the Father’s timing, not human direction. His mother directs the servants to do whatever He says.

Water Becomes Wine (2:6–11)

Six large stone purification jars are filled with water. Jesus turns the water into wine, and the steward notices its quality. John explicitly calls this the beginning of Jesus’ signs.

A Brief Stay in Capernaum (2:12)

Jesus travels with His mother, brothers, and disciples to Capernaum. John records a short stay without describing any additional activity there.

QUICK STUDY NOTES

QUICK STUDY

The Chapter’s Major Movements

Passover and the Temple (2:13–17)

Jesus goes up to Jerusalem for Passover and confronts marketplace activity in the temple precincts. His words identify it as His Father’s house.

The True Temple (2:18–22)

Asked for a sign, Jesus speaks of raising “this temple” in three days. John explains that He means His body, and the disciples understand more fully after the resurrection.

Signs and the Human Heart (2:23–25)

Many respond to the signs, yet Jesus does not entrust Himself to them. John draws a distinction between outward attraction and faith rooted in who Jesus truly is.

QUICK STUDY FLOW

Wedding at Cana — the wine runs out

↓

Jesus says His hour has not yet come

↓

Servants fill six stone jars with water

↓

Water becomes wine — Jesus reveals His glory

↓

Jesus goes to Capernaum with His family and disciples

↓

Jesus goes to Jerusalem for Passover and clears the temple marketplace

↓

Jesus points ahead to His resurrection and knows the human heart

QUICK STUDY NOTES

QUICK STUDY

Important Bible Words

Word / Phrase	Simple Meaning	Why It Matters
Sign	A miracle that points beyond itself	John shows that Jesus' works reveal His identity and glory, not merely His power.
My Hour	The divinely appointed time for Jesus' climactic work	The Gospel progressively points to His death, resurrection, and glorification.
Purification Jars	Stone jars associated with Jewish washing customs	The setting underscores Jesus' action within real first-century Jewish life.
Glory	The visible disclosure of Jesus' greatness	The first sign reveals who Jesus is and leads the disciples toward belief.
Passover	Israel's feast remembering deliverance from Egypt	Jesus' public ministry unfolds against Israel's worship and redemption story.
Temple	The sacred center of worship in Jerusalem	Jesus calls it His Father's house and later speaks of His own body as the temple.
Zeal	Deep devotion and concern for God's honor	John connects Jesus' action with Psalm 69:9.
Belief / Entrusting	Trusting or committing oneself	John 2:23–24 uses related Greek vocabulary while distinguishing superficial response from Jesus' knowledge.

Translation Word Notes

Greek is a study aid, not a requirement for understanding the Bible. These are short NKJV, NIV, and NLT comparison phrases. Full Bible quotations in the workbook remain WEB.

Verse	Greek / Say it	NKJV	NIV	NLT	What It Means
2:4	**gynai** GYOO-nye	Woman	Woman	Dear woman	A respectful form of address in context, not an insult; Jesus stresses His appointed hour.
2:11	**sēmeion** say-MAY-on	signs	signs	miraculous signs	John treats the miracle as a sign revealing Jesus' glory.
2:16	**oikos / emporion** OY-koss / em-POH-ree-on	My Father's house	my Father's house	my Father's house	The house of worship must not be treated as a marketplace.
2:19	**naos** nah-OSS	this temple	this temple	this Temple	The term for sanctuary is used figuratively of Jesus' body (v. 21).

Pronunciation is approximate; CAPITALS mark the stressed syllable.

QUICK STUDY NOTES

QUICK STUDY

The Gospel Connection

The wedding sign reveals the glory of Jesus, but John does not stop with the wine. In the temple, Jesus points to the greater sign that will define His mission: His body will be destroyed and raised in three days (2:19–22). The same Savior who enters ordinary celebrations will give His life and rise again. Only through His saving work can sinners be reconciled to God. John invites us to believe in Christ Himself, not merely admire the extraordinary things He does (20:30–31).

Reflection: Am I trusting the risen Christ Himself, or only looking for striking experiences and answers that fit my expectations?

A Short Prayer from John 2

Father, thank You for revealing Your Son through His first sign and through His words about the temple. Forgive me when I seek benefits without seeking Jesus, or when I take worship lightly. Teach me to trust His timing, honor Your name, and believe the truth of His resurrection. In Jesus' name, amen.

Pray this in your own words:

QUICK STUDY COMPLETE

One Truth to Carry With You

Jesus reveals His glory through His signs, honors His Father's house, and points to His resurrection. Genuine faith receives Him on His terms.

READY TO GO DEEPER — NEXT PAGE

Ready to Go Deeper?

The Deep Dive follows S.O.A.P.: Scripture, Observation, Application, and Prayer. Read each WEB passage before the explanation. Take time to respond honestly. The Scripture itself remains the final authority.

S — Scripture

Read the entire passage slowly. Notice people, places, repeated words, and what Jesus says.

O — Observation

Ask what this reveals about Jesus, His Father, faith, worship, and the human heart.

A — Application

Consider what you need to believe, confess, change, obey, or trust.

P — Prayer

Respond to God using the passage, beginning with the suggested prayer if helpful.

Before I begin, what do I want God to help me see or understand in John 2?

Words, questions, or ideas I want to watch for as I read:

JOHN 2:1–5

A Wedding, a Need, and Jesus’ Hour

S — Scripture

1 The third day, there was a wedding in Cana of Galilee. Jesus’ mother was there.
2 Jesus also was invited, with his disciples, to the wedding.
3 When the wine ran out, Jesus’ mother said to him, “They have no wine.”
4 Jesus said to her, “Woman, what does that have to do with you and me? My hour has not yet come.”
5 His mother said to the servants, “Whatever he says to you, do it.”

John 2:1–5, WEB

O — Observation

What does this passage say? What does it teach about God, Jesus, people, faith, salvation, or obedience?

John places Jesus at a real wedding in Cana of Galilee. The wine runs out, creating a problem for the hosts in a culture where hospitality and honor mattered. Mary brings the lack to Jesus, but John does not report her specifying what He must do. The narrative invites us to see Jesus present in ordinary human life rather than distant from it.

Jesus addresses His mother as “Woman,” a respectful form of address in this setting rather than a rejection or insult. The idiom in His question signals that His mission cannot be directed by even a well-meaning family member. “My hour has not yet come” anticipates a theme that reaches its fullest expression in His death and glorification (John 12:23; 13:1; 17:1).

Mary tells the servants to do whatever He says. The passage does not promise that every human need will be resolved in the way we expect; it shows that Jesus acts according to the Father’s purposes, and faithful response begins with listening to Him.

My observations:

A — Application

When a need arises, am I willing to bring it to Jesus while submitting to His timing and commands?

P — Prayer

Lord Jesus, teach me to bring my needs to You without trying to control Your response. Give me trust in Your timing and a heart ready to obey what You say.

Pray this in your own words:

JOHN 2:6–11

The First Sign Reveals His Glory

S — Scripture

> 6 Now there were six water pots of stone set there after the Jews' way of purifying, containing two or three metretes apiece.
> 7 Jesus said to them, "Fill the water pots with water." So they filled them up to the brim.
> 8 He said to them, "Now draw some out, and take it to the ruler of the feast." So they took it.
> 9 When the ruler of the feast tasted the water now become wine, and didn't know where it came from (but the servants who had drawn the water knew), the ruler of the feast called the bridegroom
> 10 and said to him, "Everyone serves the good wine first, and when the guests have drunk freely, then that which is worse. You have kept the good wine until now!"
> 11 This beginning of his signs Jesus did in Cana of Galilee, and revealed his glory; and his disciples believed in him.

John 2:6–11, WEB

O — Observation

What does this passage say? What does it teach about God, Jesus, people, faith, salvation, or obedience?

The six stone jars belong to the setting of Jewish purification practices. John reports that each held two or three metretes, approximately twenty to thirty U.S. gallons. The servants fill the jars completely. Jesus then commands them to draw some out and deliver it to the head steward, who discovers that the wine is excellent.

John does not describe the physical moment of transformation or identify the exact type of wine. His emphasis is on the result and its meaning. Verse 11 explicitly calls this the beginning of Jesus' "signs": a miracle that reveals His glory. The servants know where the wine came from, and the disciples respond by believing in Him.

The abundance and quality of the provision show Jesus' power and generosity, yet the Gospel does not reduce the sign to an example of getting what we want. It invites us to see His true identity. We should also resist forcing every element of the six jars into an unstated symbolic code.

My observations:

A — Application

Am I most interested in what Jesus can provide, or in seeing His glory and trusting Him for who He is?

P — Prayer

Father, thank You for showing Jesus' glory through His first sign. Keep me from seeking only gifts, and draw my attention to the Giver. Strengthen genuine faith in Your Son.

Pray this in your own words:

JOHN 2:12–17

From Capernaum to the Father’s House

S — Scripture

> **12** After this, he went down to Capernaum, he, and his mother, his brothers, and his disciples; and they stayed there a few days.
>
> **13** The Passover of the Jews was at hand, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem.
>
> **14** He found in the temple those who sold oxen, sheep, and doves, and the changers of money sitting.
>
> **15** He made a whip of cords and drove all out of the temple, both the sheep and the oxen; and he poured out the changers’ money and overthrew their tables.
>
> **16** To those who sold the doves, he said, “Take these things out of here! Don’t make my Father’s house a marketplace!”
>
> **17** His disciples remembered that it was written, “Zeal for your house will eat me up.”

John 2:12–17, WEB

O — Observation

What does this passage say? What does it teach about God, Jesus, people, faith, salvation, or obedience?

John records a short stay in Capernaum before Jesus goes to Jerusalem for Passover. The Gospel gives the destinations, but not every road or detail of the journey. Passover remembers God’s deliverance of Israel from Egypt and gives the setting for Jesus’ confrontation in the temple.

Jesus sees animals for sale and money changers sitting in the temple. He makes a whip of cords, drives out the animals, overturns tables, and commands the dove sellers to remove their goods. The stated issue is that His Father’s house has been made a marketplace. The temple was not merely an impressive building; it was set apart for worship.

The disciples connect this moment with Psalm 69:9, which speaks of zeal for God’s house. The text does not justify uncontrolled human rage or violence whenever someone believes worship is wrong. It shows Jesus acting with unique authority as the Son who cares for His Father’s honor. The evangelist does not give every detail of the marketplace’s organization or motives.

My observations:

A — Application

Where have I allowed convenience, profit, or appearances to crowd out sincere worship and reverence for God?

P — Prayer

Father, give me reverence for Your name and truth. Forgive the ways I let distractions replace worship, and help me honor Jesus as Your Son.

Pray this in your own words:

JOHN 2:18–22

Destroy This Temple — Raised in Three Days

S — Scripture

> **18** The Jews therefore answered him, “What sign do you show us, seeing that you do these things?”
>
> **19** Jesus answered them, “Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up.”
>
> **20** The Jews therefore said, “It took forty-six years to build this temple! Will you raise it up in three days?”
>
> **21** But he spoke of the temple of his body.
>
> **22** When therefore he was raised from the dead, his disciples remembered that he said this, and they believed the Scripture and the word which Jesus had said.

John 2:18–22, WEB

O — Observation

What does this passage say? What does it teach about God, Jesus, people, faith, salvation, or obedience?

The leaders challenge Jesus to show a sign authorizing His actions. He answers, “Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up.” His hearers take the word “temple” to refer to the Jerusalem sanctuary and object that its construction has taken many years.

John immediately tells the reader what the hearers miss: Jesus speaks about the temple of His body. His death and resurrection will become the decisive sign of His identity. The statement is not a claim that Jesus would demolish the stone temple Himself, nor is it an ordinary architectural prediction.

After Jesus is raised from the dead, the disciples remember His words and believe both Scripture and what He said. John presents genuine understanding as something that deepens in light of the resurrection. The “forty-six years” reference concerns the temple building program, not the length of Jesus’ ministry.

My observations:

A — Application

How does the bodily resurrection of Jesus change the authority I give His words in my life?

P — Prayer

Risen Lord, thank You that Your resurrection vindicates Your promises. Help me trust Scripture, remember Your words, and build my hope on You rather than outward religious forms.

Pray this in your own words:

JOHN 2:23–25

Signs, Belief, and the Human Heart

S — Scripture

> **23** Now when he was in Jerusalem at the Passover, during the feast, many believed in his name, observing his signs which he did.
>
> **24** But Jesus didn’t entrust himself to them, because he knew everyone,
>
> **25** and because he didn’t need for anyone to testify concerning man; for he himself knew what was in man.

John 2:23–25, WEB

O — Observation

What does this passage say? What does it teach about God, Jesus, people, faith, salvation, or obedience?

During Passover in Jerusalem, many people believe in Jesus’ name as they watch the signs He performs. John records a real response but immediately adds a caution: Jesus does not entrust Himself to them because He knows all people.

The wordplay is important. The language for their “believing” and Jesus not “entrusting” Himself comes from the same Greek verb family. John does not specify the inner condition of each individual at the feast, so we should not declare every person there unconverted. Instead, he prepares readers for the difference between excitement about signs and the new birth Jesus explains in John 3.

Jesus knows the human heart without needing external testimony. His knowledge challenges shallow religious enthusiasm and invites honest self-examination. Genuine saving faith must not be reduced to amazement at a miracle or social affiliation with Jesus.

My observations:

A — Application

Is my confidence in Christ rooted in who He is and what He has done, or only in remarkable experiences and outward enthusiasm?

P — Prayer

Jesus, You know my heart completely. Search my motives, expose shallow responses, and deepen my trust in You as Savior and Lord.

Pray this in your own words:

DEEP DIVE

Hard Questions

Did Jesus insult His mother by calling her “Woman”?

No. The form of address itself did not necessarily convey disrespect in the first-century setting; Jesus uses it again at the cross (John 19:26). His reply emphasizes that His mission proceeds on the Father’s timing, not under human direction.

Does this miracle mean every wedding needs wine?

John describes what Jesus did at one wedding; it does not command Christians to drink or prescribe wine for weddings. Evangelicals may apply principles of wisdom and conscience differently regarding alcohol. The point of the narrative is the sign revealing His glory and inspiring faith.

Why six stone jars, and does each jar symbolize something?

John tells us the jars were for purification and gives their size. The setting is meaningful, but he does not assign a symbolic meaning to the number six or provide an allegory for each jar. Interpretations of symbolic fullness should be presented as possible, not as facts stated by the text.

Why does John record the temple cleansing early, while other Gospels put a similar event near the end?

Some evangelical interpreters understand John and the Synoptics to describe two distinct cleansings; others understand a single event presented with differing narrative placement. Both options attempt to honor the accounts, but John 2 alone does not settle the chronology. His purpose here is to highlight Jesus’ authority and the resurrection sign.

Was it wrong for worshipers to buy sacrificial animals or exchange money?

Purchasing animals or obtaining appropriate currency could serve legitimate pilgrim needs. John’s text focuses on the commercial activity Jesus opposes in His Father’s house. It does not state that commerce is wrong in every context or give all the details of abuses in the temple courts.

What is the “temple” Jesus raises in three days?

John explicitly answers in verse 21: Jesus was speaking of His body. The disciples understood the saying after His resurrection. He is pointing to His death and bodily resurrection, not announcing a construction project.

Why did Jesus not entrust Himself to people who believed?

John presents Jesus as knowing the hearts of all people. Their response to signs may not be identical to mature or saving faith, though John does not pronounce a final judgment on each person present. The next chapter develops the necessity of new birth.

DEEP DIVE

Reflection

When I pray about a real need, how can I trust Jesus' timing rather than demand my preferred outcome?

What does the first sign at Cana teach me about seeking Jesus Himself rather than simply seeking His gifts?

How does Jesus' concern for His Father's house reshape the way I approach worship and obedience?

What difference should Jesus' bodily resurrection make to my confidence in Scripture and His promises?

DEEP DIVE

A Prayer for Faith and Reverence

Heavenly Father, thank You for sending Jesus Christ into real human life and revealing His glory at Cana. Thank You that His authority is greater than a building or ceremony and that His resurrection is the decisive sign of Your saving work. Forgive me for shallow faith, distracted worship, and efforts to control Your timing. Search my heart as Jesus knows it completely. Help me obey His Word, live with reverence, and trust Him as my risen Savior and Lord. In Jesus' name, amen.

Pray this in your own words:

ONE TRUTH TO CARRY WITH YOU

Jesus reveals His glory through His signs, honors His Father's house, and points to His resurrection. Genuine faith receives Him on His terms.

Final Notes