

## Chapter 16: We Believe

Do you know someone who can do tricks or magic tricks? Why do you think they spend time learning how to do tricks? So they can entertain people! Do they perform miracles? NO. Their tricks can be learned by anyone if they practice enough times, and they use the things of this world and natural human ability.

Miracles, however, are acts of God. They are something extraordinary and wonderful that only God has the power to do...Miracles lead us to faith in God.

Today we will learn about miracles. Please read the definition of miracle in your text books in the glossary in the back? Something wonderful that is done by the power of God and that only God can do. So let's see if what we are about to read are tricks or true miracles which will help strengthen our faith.

**Read paragraphs 1 & 2:** Now read from the gospel of John:

### *The Wedding at Cana*

*Two days later there was a wedding in the town of Cana in Galilee. Jesus' mother was there. Jesus and his followers were also invited to the wedding. When all the wine was gone, Jesus' mother said to him, "They have no more wine."*

*Jesus answered, "Dear woman, why come to me? My time has not yet come."*

*His mother said to the servants, "Do whatever he tells you to do."*

*In that place there were six stone water jars. The Jews used jars like these in their washing ceremony. Each jar held about 20 or 30 gallons.*

*Jesus said to the servants, "Fill the jars with water." So they filled the jars to the top.*

*Then he said to them, "Now take some out and give it to the master of the feast."*

*So the servants took the water to the master. When he tasted it, the water had become wine. He did not know where the wine came from. But the servants who brought the water knew. The master of the wedding called the bridegroom and*

*said to him, "People always serve the best wine first. Later, after the guests have been drinking a lot, they serve the cheaper wine. But you have saved the best wine till now."*

*So in Cana of Galilee, Jesus did his first miracle. There he showed his glory, and his followers believed in him.*

What did Jesus do? What did He change, and into what? Where does wine usually come from? How long does it take to make wine? Who asked Jesus to do this miracle? What did She ask for? What did She tell the servants to do? Did anyone believe in Jesus because this happened? Was this a miracle or magic?

Mary, Jesus' mother acted as an intercessor (remember what a prayer of intercession is) She asked for something on someone else's behalf. What prayer do we all know that asks Mary to intercede for us? The Hail Mary.

By performing this miracle Jesus teaches us that: He can perform miracles; He is the Son of God; He loves others; and He answers prayers.

**Read paragraph 3:** Now let's listen to what Matthew wrote in his gospel: *Jesus Stops a Storm*

*That evening, Jesus said to his followers, "Come with me across the lake." He and the followers left the people there. They went in the boat that Jesus was already sitting in. There were also other boats with them. A very strong wind came up on the lake. The waves began coming over the sides and into the boat. It was almost full of water. Jesus was at the back of the boat, sleeping with his head on a pillow. The followers went to him and woke him. They said, "Teacher, do you care about us? We will drown!"*

*Jesus stood up and commanded the wind and the waves to stop. He said, "Quiet! Be still!" Then the wind stopped, and the lake became calm.*

*Jesus said to his followers, "Why are you afraid? Do you still have no faith?"*

*The followers were very afraid and asked each other, "What kind of man is this? Even the wind and the waves obey him!"*

Who was in the boat? What was Jesus doing? Why were the disciples afraid? Were they in danger? What happened? Is this a magic trick? Why can we say that this is a miracle? What does it say about Jesus?

Look at the picture on page 80 in your text books. What is it about?

Do you think Jesus knew there was a big storm while He was sleeping? Who asked Him to wake up and perform this miracle? His disciples. We too can ask the Communion of Saints to pray for us. Why do you think that Jesus waited for the disciples to ask for help? Maybe to show that He answers our prayers. Do you think Jesus would have allowed the boat to sink in the water? Of course not. The disciples had faith that Jesus could help them, just like we too should know that Jesus is always there for us.

What did the disciples say at the end of the gospel reading? "What kind of man is this? Even the wind and the waves obey him!" Surely, they knew that Jesus was not just a man, but the Son of God. Their faith was made stronger by witnessing the miracle.

Give the class a piece of bread. Ask them if they each received a piece of it. Count how many kids there are. Are there any leftovers? NO. Ask if this piece of bread can feed 1,000 people. NO. Remember material goods, when given away, are gone- but not spiritual gifts. Feeding 1,000 people with a loaf of bread is impossible and would need a miracle.

**Read paragraph 1 on p 81:** Now let's listen to what John wrote in his gospel:

*Jesus looked up and saw a large crowd coming toward him. He said to Philip, "Where can we buy bread for all these people to eat?" (Jesus asked Philip this question to test him. Jesus already knew what he planned to do.)*

*Philip answered, "Someone would have to work almost a year to buy enough bread for each person here to have only a little piece."*

*Another follower there was Andrew. He was Simon Peter's brother. Andrew said, "Here is a boy with five loaves of barley bread and two little fish. But that is not enough for so many people."*

*Jesus said, "Tell the people to sit down." This was a very grassy place. There were about 5,000 men who sat down there. Then Jesus took the loaves of bread. He thanked God for the bread and gave it to the people who were sitting there. He did the same with the fish. He gave them as much as they wanted.*

*They all had enough to eat. When they had finished, Jesus said to his followers, "Gather the pieces of fish and bread that were not eaten. Don't waste anything." So they gathered up the pieces that were left. They filled 12 large baskets with the pieces that were left of the five barley loaves.*

*The people saw this miracle that Jesus did. They said, "He must truly be the Prophet[a] who is coming into the world."*

*Jesus knew that the people planned to come and take him by force and make him their king. So he left and went into the hills alone.*

Why were there so many people to feed? How much food did they have to share? What did Jesus do before sharing the bread and fish? How many people did it feed? Were there any leftovers? Do you think this was possible that it was a trick? No! It was a real miracle. Do you think that the people believed in Jesus after seeing this?

Now let's continue on with the gospel of John:

*That evening Jesus' followers went down to Lake Galilee. It was dark now and Jesus had not yet come to them. The followers got into a boat and started across the lake to Capernaum.*

*The people found Jesus on the other side of the lake. They asked him, "Teacher, when did you come here?"*

*Jesus answered, "Are you looking for me because you saw me do miracles? No! I tell you the truth. You are looking for me because you ate the bread and were satisfied. Earthly food spoils and ruins. So don't work to get that kind of food. But work to get the food that stays good always and gives you eternal life. The Son of Man will give you that food. God the Father has shown that he is with the Son of Man."*

*The people asked Jesus, "What are the things God wants us to do?"*

*Jesus answered, "The work God wants you to do is this: to believe in the One that God sent."*

*So the people asked, "What miracle will you do? If we can see a miracle, then we will believe you. What will you do? Our ancestors ate the manna in the desert. This is written in the Scriptures: 'God gave them bread from heaven to eat.'"[a]*

*Jesus said, "I tell you the truth. Moses was not the one who gave you bread from heaven. But my Father gives you the true bread from heaven. God's bread is the One who comes down from heaven and gives life to the world."*

*The people said, "Sir, give us this bread always."*

*Then Jesus said, "I am the bread that gives life. He who comes to me will never be hungry. He who believes in me will never be thirsty."*

Jesus Himself is the Bread of Life. He gives us His very Body and Blood in the Eucharist or Holy Communion (which is the bread and wine changed into Himself). Just as Jesus turned water into wine, and calmed the storm, and fed 5,000 people with 5 loaves of bread, He has the power to change bread and wine into His Body and Blood.

Miracles help us to understand that Jesus is the Son of God and our Saviour.

**Read bottom of p 81 and page 82:** Now let's listen to the gospel of Matthew:

*While Jesus was saying these things, a ruler of the synagogue came to him. The ruler bowed down before Jesus and said, "My daughter has just died. But come and touch her with your hand, and she will live again."*

*Jesus continued along with the ruler and went into the ruler's house. Jesus saw people there who play music for funerals. And he saw many people there crying. Jesus said, "Go away. The girl is not dead. She is only asleep." But the people laughed at Jesus. After the crowd had been put outside, Jesus went into the girl's room. He took her hand, and she stood up. The news about this spread all around the area.*

## *Jesus Heals More People*

*When Jesus was leaving there, two blind men followed him. They cried out, "Show kindness to us, Son of David!"*

*Jesus went inside, and the blind men went with him. He asked the men, "Do you believe that I can make you see again?"*

*They answered, "Yes, Lord."*

*Then Jesus touched their eyes and said, "You believe that I can make you see again. So this will happen." Then the men were able to see. But Jesus warned them very strongly, saying, "Don't tell anyone about this." But the blind men left and spread the news about Jesus all around that area.*

Who came to Jesus for a miracle? How old was his daughter? Was she alive or dead? What did Jesus do and say? What happened to the girl? Does anyone remember who else Jesus raised from the dead? Lazarus, and Jesus Himself) What about us, when we die, will we rise from the dead? YES. Jesus is even more powerful than death!

Again, Jesus performed or did all these miracles so we would believe in Him and strengthen our faith in Him. He loves us and helps us to believe.

Do you believe in the miracles we learned about today? Can other people perform miracles? Not of their own power; they can intercede and ask Jesus to do a miracle.

Are tricks or magic miracles? Why? Remember miracles cannot be done by humans, and miracles help give us faith in God.