

EXTENDING OUR BELIEF

What Jesus did here in Cana of Galilee was the first of the signs through which he revealed his glory; and his disciples believed in him. (John 2:11, NIV)

PRACTICE, PRACTICE, PRACTICE. It is the demand of any disciplined endeavor and the secret to success. Learn to do things well, then do them repeatedly, and you create a habit that is reproducible when the game is on.

Most of us, even if we are not committed to the extent of a professional athlete or world-class musician, say, recognize the value of careful repetition. We know that experience today makes us better tomorrow—better in body, better in mind, better in spirit. Excellence really can become “second nature” in many contexts. But what about in our believing God? Can we really advance our faith, deepening our belief that God is faithful and able in every circumstance?

Yesterday, we examined one aspect of Jesus’ miracle at the Cana wedding, where he turned water to wine. We saw that Jesus’ character of mercy and love overlays the traditions of Scripture and certainly supersedes the religious traditions of people.

Today let’s take a second look at that account and note the response of Jesus’ disciples to what they saw that day. We read that when they saw this first miracle of Jesus’ ministry, they “believed in him.” Some translations render this “they put their trust in him.”

What is fascinating about this belief is that these disciples were already following him. In John 1, several days ahead of the wedding in Cana, they had left their stations, so to speak, and gone on the road with Jesus. Both Andrew and Simon had even announced to others that, in Jesus, they had found the promised Messiah. Yet we read here in John 2 that they “believed.”

Was this a new belief? Was it a furthering of belief? Likely it was something of both. But what is significant to recognize is that their belief was progressive. They were said to believe again after Jesus cleared the temple later in this chapter, and belief seemed to descend on the disciples multiple times in the Fourth Gospel.

In truth, we nearly all start seeking and even following Jesus before we say “yes” as those who profess to believe. And each day our belief can grow as we see more and more of the work he is doing in his love for us and for others. So let’s keep looking that we may believe!

Opening questions Would you call yourself one who believes easily or one who is normally skeptical? Describe a time when you came to believe something or someone that you at first doubted.

READING John 2:1-11; Acts 2:22-24 & 2:36-41; Deuteronomy 4:32-40

The belief of the disciples

What did the disciples see at Cana that added to their belief? What does reading this account do for your own belief in Jesus?

The person and work of Jesus

In Peter’s sermon in Acts 2, he speaks of what Jesus’ miracles meant. Then as the chapter closes, we see that he called for a response to Jesus. What response did he encourage the people to offer to Jesus?

The God who wants our hearts

In Deuteronomy, God’s own call to his people to respond in faith is similar to Peter’s call to the people in Jerusalem on the day of Pentecost. What reasons did God give for claiming the peoples’ hearts? What reasons have you seen for giving him your own heart today?

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