

COMMUNITY GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE

Spring 2025 - Signs - "The Glory of His Joy"

Monday, Mar. 3 - Sunday, Mar. 9 (Week 5)

EMPHASIS FOR THE MONTH: **Building Relationships.** This month, we are focusing on deepening the relationships within our groups. Strong community is built on intentional connection and taking the time to truly know and care for one another. Whether through eating together, thoughtful questions, or simply creating space for honest conversation, I want to encourage you to invest in the bonds that make our groups a place of belonging and growth. Relationships take time to develop, but every small step toward deeper connection strengthens the foundation of our groups. Let's be intentional, lead with care, and cultivate a culture of trust. I'd love to hear how it's going! Please share any wins or creative ideas!

ICE BREAKER: If you could turn water into any beverage for a party, what would it be and why?

CAB ANNOUNCEMENTS:

1. We hope you will join us every Tuesday evening at 6:30 PM for our weekly corporate prayer gathering.
2. Join the Prime Timers (50+) for a Pizza Outing! Come enjoy an evening of great food and fellowship at Mangiamo Pizza Restaurant in Paramus on Saturday, March 22, at 6 PM. For \$25 per person (cash only), you'll get pizza, salad, and pitchers of soft drinks. Sign up by emailing info@churchatbergen.org by Wednesday, March 19. Questions? Contact Keith and Elisa Mandra at: kem777@optonline.net
3. On Sunday, March 9th directly after the morning gathering, there will be a baptism class for any and all interested in being baptized. This is not necessarily a commitment but a great way to learn more about what baptism is and means and how we practice it here at Church at Bergen. Please email Pastor Dave if you are interested in attending: dave.levesque@churchatbergen.org

PRAYER FOR DISCUSSION: Leader or Co-Leader prays for the discussion time. Pray that the The Holy Spirit would assist in the conversing, processing, and listening of the discussion.

SERMON DISCUSSION TIME: Have someone read the passage: John 2:1-11, and then read this sermon summary to jog everyone's memory:

In this sermon, Pastor McKinney focuses on the first sign performed by Jesus at the wedding in Cana, where he turns water into wine. Over the next seven weeks leading to Easter, we will embark on a journey that examines the seven signs found in the Gospel of John. These signs are not just miracles, but are meant to reveal deeper truths about the glory and majesty of Jesus. Seeing Jesus for who He is leads to a natural, impulsive response of faith, love, and worship. This sermon highlights that each sign points to a greater reality, specifically the future marriage feast between Christ and His Church, therefore showing the profound significance of Jesus's actions. Pastor McKinney dives deep into the details of the sign, explaining how it took place at a wedding (a representation of God's design for marriage) and how the jars used for purification symbolize the limitations of ceremonial cleanliness as they were incomplete without Christ. Jesus's provision of wine, exceeding the groom's best offerings, embodies the abundant joy and spiritual satisfaction found in Him.



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Ultimately, the joy of knowing and loving Jesus surpasses all worldly satisfactions, as He willingly suffered on the cross to secure our invitation to eternal joy in His presence.

QUESTION #1: What does the term "sign" mean in the context of Jesus' miracles, and how does it differ from simply calling them miracles?

In the context of Jesus' miracles, the term "sign" refers to an act that points beyond itself to reveal a deeper truth or reality. While a miracle is an extraordinary event that demonstrates divine power, a sign is specifically intended to reveal something about Jesus' identity and mission. In John's Gospel, signs are meant to manifest the glory of Jesus and lead people to faith in Him. They are not just displays of power but are intended to direct attention to the spiritual truths about who Jesus is—the Christ, the Son of God—and to invite belief in Him.

QUESTION #2: Why do you think Jesus chose a wedding to perform his first sign? What does this setting reveal about His character and mission?

Jesus chose a wedding to perform His first sign because weddings are significant events that symbolize joy, celebration, and covenant relationships. By performing His first sign at a wedding, Jesus highlights the importance of relationships and community. This setting also points to the ultimate wedding feast—the marriage supper of the Lamb—where Jesus, as the bridegroom, will be united with His bride, the Church. It reveals Jesus' character as one who values joy and celebration and His mission to bring about a new covenant relationship with His people, marked by abundance and transformation.

QUESTION #3: Discuss the significance of Jesus turning water into wine, especially in the context of Jewish purification rituals. What does this transformation symbolize about Jesus' mission? In what areas of your life do you need Jesus to transform the ordinary into something extraordinary?

The transformation of water into wine is significant because it occurs in jars used for Jewish purification rituals. These rituals were part of the Old Covenant, symbolizing the need for cleansing before approaching God. By turning the water into wine, Jesus signifies the inauguration of a new covenant, where true purification comes not through ritual but through His sacrificial death and resurrection. The wine symbolizes the blood of Christ, which cleanses believers from sin. This act points to Jesus' mission to fulfill and surpass the old purification system, offering a deeper, spiritual cleansing and abundant life through His sacrifice.

QUESTION #4: The sermon mentions that in God's presence there is fullness of joy (Psalm 16:11). How do you currently experience joy in your relationship with Jesus?



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QUESTION #5: How does obedience to Jesus lead to a deeper experience of His presence and joy?

Identify one area of your life where you feel called to greater obedience.

Obedience to Jesus leads to a deeper experience of His presence and joy because it aligns our lives with His will and opens our hearts to His transformative work. When we obey Jesus, we demonstrate trust in His wisdom and love, which strengthens our relationship with Him.

Obedience allows us to experience the fullness of life that Jesus promises, as we walk in the path of life He has set before us. It removes barriers of sin and disobedience that can cloud our spiritual vision, enabling us to see and savor the beauty and glory of Jesus more clearly. As we follow His commands, we find true joy and satisfaction in His presence, as promised in Psalm 16:11.

PRAY TOGETHER: Spend time taking ***and recording*** prayer requests and then pray together as a group (*I strongly encourage you to send out the prayer requests weekly to your group to keep everyone informed and in the loop on how to pray for one another throughout the week. This also makes it easier to check-in with people who have shared requests to see how the Lord has been working in their lives*).



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