

**“Seven Signs in John’s Gospel” Naples UCC Winter Bible Study
9AM and 1PM Nelson Hall Wednesday, January 7, 2026
Sign #1: Water Into Wine, John 2: 1-11**

Introduction to the Seven Signs

Discussion Questions:

1. What is Jesus’s first response when his mother asks him to do something about the crisis (v. 4)? Why is Jesus initially reluctant to get involved?
2. The signs in John’s gospel are the moments when heaven is opened and when the transforming power of God’s love bursts into the present world. Why did Jesus debut the first sign here (at a wedding)? What was it about this occasion that might have been the right setting for a miracle?
3. What is the role of Mary in this text? Does Jesus talk back to her? How does she impact Jesus in this story?
4. It often gets said that Jesus’s humanity and Jesus’s divinity are both on display in this text. How so?
5. Imagine yourself as one in attendance at the wedding. How does the wedding attendee experience this miracle?
6. In John’s gospel, Mary (Jesus’s mother) only appears twice. Mary reappears at the foot of the cross (John 19). How do these two appearances act as a set of bookends to John’s gospel?
7. What do you think John might be hinting at when he says that this first sign took place “on the third day” (v. 1)?
8. Is there any larger meaning to taking what is plain (water) and turning it into something sweet (wine)?
9. In many ways, this story is about transformation. Theologically speaking, how do you define that term? How does transformation happen?
10. What might the “sign” of Jesus transforming water into wine mean for us today?

**“Seven Signs in John’s Gospel” Naples UCC Winter Bible Study
9AM and 1PM Nelson Hall Wednesday, January 14, 2026
Sign #2: Healing the Official’s Son, John 4: 43-54**

Discussion Questions:

1. What do the Galileans think of Jesus? What does Jesus think of the Galileans?
2. What is the deeper meaning of verse 44?
3. What is the significance of Jesus performing a miracle on behalf of someone in Herod’s army?
4. Do you think the royal official had selfish motives and was desperate for a miracle worker? What does he learn about Jesus? How does the royal official’s faith progress in this text?
5. Is verse 48 a rebuke? If so, how?
6. What does this scripture have to say about your “theology of miracle?” Are miracles necessary to believe in Christ? Are miracles enough? Can you receive a miracle with the wrong motive? How do miracles yield right motive?
7. Sometimes this sign/miracle gets referred to as “the long-distance miracle.” 75% of all Jesus’s miracles in the gospels involve direct human contact with another human being. This is not one of them. What do you make of this? Why doesn’t Jesus go to see the boy personally?
8. What do verses 51 and 52 teach us about the theme of journey as it relates to healing?
9. What do verses 50-53 teach us about the theme of timing as it relates to healing?
10. What does this sign have to teach us about our faith journey today?

9AM and 1PM Nelson Hall Wednesday, January 21, 2026
Sign #3: Healing the Paralytic, John 5: 1-15

Discussion Questions:

1. How long had the man that Jesus encountered been lying sick beside the pool (v. 5)? Why might this be important for interpreting the meaning of the story?
2. Explain what this healing pool was. What are some examples of 21st century healing pools?
3. Why does Jesus ask him if he wants to be made well? What does this question imply?
4. Explain verse 7. How might it illumine for us the psyche of this man?
5. What do verses 9-11 teach us about the Sabbath and Christ's intention for it?
6. Why does Jesus come back later in verse 14 to deliver this news to the man? What happens in between the time the man is healed and his recognition of who was behind it all?
7. How is sin (v.14) in any way a part of this story? Was the man's healing only physical or was there something more going on?
8. Verses 13-15 are mysterious and perhaps give us some insight into the man's progression of faith and understanding of healing. What do these verses teach about a healing journey?
9. Scholars often say that this miracle is somewhat unique in scripture as, ordinarily, faith in Jesus is essential to the cure. The man's faith, however, comes later in this text. What might this mean?
10. How might this story apply to our lives and world today?

9AM and 1PM Nelson Hall Wednesday, January 28, 2026
Sign #4: Feeding the 5,000, John 6: 1-14

Discussion Questions:

1. What does Jesus suggest that he and his disciples need to do for the great crowd that has gathered around them (v.5)? Why might this have sounded a bit crazy to his disciples?
2. Explain the mentality and faith (or lack thereof) as it relates to both Philip and Andrew.
3. Why would Jesus want to “test” (v. 6) in this way?
4. Is there any significance to the fact that it was a young boy who brought forth the five loaves and two fish?
5. The miracle may foreshadow the Lord’s Supper. Is there anything this miracle can teach us about Holy Communion?
6. Why is Jesus so concerned about there not being any waste (v. 12-13)?
7. Verses 14 and 15 suggest that the people present may not have fully understood who Jesus was. Did they?
8. Regarding this sign, some would say that Jesus functions as the “Great Multiplier.” How do you understand Christ’s knack for multiplying?
9. Does this text/sign have any ethical or social implications as it relates to food and hunger?
10. What encouragement does this sign/miracle bring to our lives of faith?

9AM and 1PM Nelson Hall Wednesday, February 4, 2026
Sign #5: Walking on Water, John 6: 16-21

Discussion Questions:

1. How do the disciples react when they first see Jesus walking toward them during the storm (v.19)?
2. Explain the time and setting of this story. How do they shape your interpretation of this text?
3. What happens as soon as Jesus gets in the boat? Why is this significant for understanding the story?
4. Theologically speaking, how is this story like the story of Moses leading Israel out of Egypt through the Red Sea (Exodus 14: 10-18)?
5. What does it mean to take Jesus into the boat of our lives?
6. Some refer to verse 21 as the “second miracle” of this story—that the boat arrived safely on shore. Was this a miracle too? If so, how?
7. Verse 23 references Jesus’s feeding of the 5,000. What is the relationship between these two miracles?
8. Explain the mystery of verses 22-24. Where did Jesus go?
9. Is there any evidence in this text that either the disciples or the crowd come to any further belief in who Jesus is?
10. How might you apply this story to your life or to the life of the church?

“Seven Signs in John’s Gospel” Naples UCC Winter Bible Study
9AM and 1PM Nelson Hall Wednesday, February 11, 2026

Sign #6: Healing the Blind Man, John 9: 1-41

Discussion Questions:

1. Explain the disciples' question in verse 2. What does their question reveal about their beliefs related to people born with disabilities?
2. How does Jesus correct the disciples' understanding and simultaneously reveal more about God's work in the world (v. 3-5)?
3. Why did the Judeans seek out the parents of the blind man (v. 18-19)?
4. Explain the fear and/or anxiety that undergirds the blind man's parents' response to the Judeans.
5. What argument does the blind man use to defend that Jesus is from God (v. 30-33)?
6. Why do the Judeans respond by throwing him out of the synagogue (v. 34)?
7. How does the man respond to Jesus's question (v. 36 and v. 38)?
8. Throughout the chapter, what progression of belief do you see in the man?
9. Why do you think the man believes while the Pharisees remain unbelieving?
10. How is verse 41 a complete reversal of where the chapter begins?
11. What is it about this story that could be applied to our own faith?

9AM and 1PM Nelson Hall Wednesday, February 18, 2026
Sign #7: Raising Lazarus, John 11: 1-48

Discussion Questions:

1. When first hearing that Lazarus was sick, Jesus responded. How?
2. What expectations do Mary and Martha have of Jesus, and how does Jesus go about reshaping these expectations?
3. Explain Jesus's comment that "people who walk in the daytime don't trip up, but people who walk around in darkness do" (v. 9-10).
4. What is the first thing Martha says to Jesus when he finally arrives in Bethany?
5. How does Jesus continue to point Mary and Martha forward in this text?
6. What is the meaning of Jesus's tears (v. 33-35)?
7. What are the differences and similarities between Jesus's resurrection and Lazarus's resurrection?
8. What might this story teach us about prayer and how we pray?
9. What seems to be the biggest fear amongst the chief priests and the Pharisees when they hear of the sign Jesus has performed in raising Lazarus (v. 48)?
10. How might this story apply to our own faith?