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**Title:** Lessons from Lasso: Believe

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**Text:** [John 2:1-11](#)

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[Watch the service.](#)



This is week two of our worship series, Lessons from Lasso, exploring some of the lessons from the television show Ted Lasso, along with some of the stories from Jesus' early ministry. Last week, we learned to Be a Goldfish, that a goldfish is the happiest animal on earth because it has a ten-second memory. In new life in Christ, we are

called to be goldfish, learning that the past does not define us, rather it is God's future and God's unconditional love in which our lives are rooted.

Today's lesson comes from a scene during halftime of a game in which the first half for English Premier League Club AFC Richmond has not gone well, in a match that has costly ramifications if they lose. The team is despondent and wondering where they go from here, while still having a second half to play. This scene highlights a particular theme that is the overarching theme of the whole television series.

*"Now I don't need y'all to answer that question for me. But I do want you to answer that question for yourselves. Right now. Do you believe in miracles?"*

In some ways, Believe is just a word on a poster that Ted Lasso hung in the locker room. But in other ways, it is a core tenet by which Ted Lasso lives his life. That without a belief in something good and true, life does not hold much. Ted believes in his team, even when they don't believe in themselves. He believes in the goodness of people and the goodness of community, even when experience could tell him something different. Even when all else fails, Ted Lasso believes. As he said, "I believe in believe."

Ted Lasso is asking his team if they believe.

- In themselves.
- In him as their coach.
- In their teammates.
- In the power of working together as a team.
- In the power of working towards one singular goal as a community.

- If they believe in something greater than just themselves, greater than what they see around them at any given moment.

Roy Kent is the player that is the most skeptical in his coach and the approach his coach takes. Roy is the salty veteran, at the end of his playing career, diminished skills, but still pretty good. If Ted Lasso can get Roy Kent to believe, then pretty much anything can happen. It might be the greatest miracle he can pull off. When Ted Lasso quotes Al Michaels phrase from the United States vs Russia hockey game in the 1980 Olympics, "Do you believe in miracles?" he may be talking about his team winning the match or he may be talking about converting the greatest skeptic among the group to believe in the power of believe.

Early in John's gospel, Jesus, his mother Mary, and their friends are invited to a wedding in the village of Cana.

*"On the third day there was a wedding in Cana of Galilee. Jesus' mother was there, and Jesus and his disciples were also invited to the celebration. When the wine ran out, Jesus' mother said to him, "They don't have any wine." Jesus replied, "Woman, what does that have to do with me? My time hasn't come yet." <sup>5</sup> His mother told the servants, "Do whatever he tells you." Nearby were six stone water jars used for the Jewish cleansing ritual, each able to hold about twenty or thirty gallons. Jesus said to the servants, "Fill the jars with water," and they filled them to the brim. Then he told them, "Now draw some from them and take it to the headwaiter," and they did. The headwaiter tasted the water that had become wine. He didn't know where it came from, though the servants who had drawn the water knew. The headwaiter called the groom and said, "Everyone serves the good wine first. They bring out the second-rate wine only when the guests are drinking freely. You kept the good wine until now." This was the first miraculous sign that Jesus did in Cana of Galilee. He revealed his glory, and his disciples believed in him." John 2:1-11 CEB*

Weddings in antiquity were events. Of course, modern weddings are events, but a wedding in Jesus' day was a sight to behold. They typically lasted a week. Not the ceremony itself, but the celebration around the wedding. In typical fashion, they always served the good stuff first- the good food and the good wine. Notice that the headwaiter says to the groom, everyone serves the good wine first, they only bring out the second-rate wine when the guests are drinking freely. The headwaiter recognizes that it's the moment in the celebration when it's time to bring out the two-buck chuck.

In a moment of lack, Jesus' mother asks him to do something, to perform his first public miracle. She knows who he is and what he has come to do,

but most do not. He speaks back to his mom, addressing her as woman, which I don't know about you, but I can only imagine what would happen if I addressed my mother as woman. However, in Jesus' day, this was a term of respect. After some back and forth, good wine appears where water once was. An abundance of the good stuff, more than anyone could have imagined.

So, do you believe? I'm not even asking if you believe in miracles, I'm just asking if you believe.

Let's address the miracle part. Is this a miracle, Jesus turning water into wine? I know some people if not many people have trouble with miracles. Especially miracles in the first century, when it is easier to dismiss because people then simply did not have as much knowledge as we do now. So, I understand if you are saying, "there has to be something else happening here."

The Gospel of John doesn't call this a miracle. Jesus himself never calls this a miracle.

It is a sign. The text says, "*...he revealed his glory and his disciples believed in him.*" John 2:11b

In this act of turning water into wine, Jesus challenges us today to believe.

It is a sign of something different.

- A sign of abundance from scarcity.
- A sign of love over law.
- A sign of our assumptions about order and control.
- A sign about where God is found and how God is known.
- A sign about how things around us work.
- This is the first sign of the kingdom of God.
- It's the first sign of the kingdom of God, but certainly not the last.  
Those signs are still with us today.

The headwaiter doesn't see the signs. I think he is part of this story for us to see what it looks like to not believe, to not see the signs of the kingdom of God. He thinks it's the groom who didn't follow wedding protocol and served all the bad wine first, and then at the end, when it looks like they are out of wine, brings out the good wine.

This sign of God's presence and God's goodness doesn't fit with his carefully ordered vision of the world. It doesn't fit in one of the tiny compartments he has built for God. One of our greatest sins is that our vision is too narrow.

He believes he knows where God is found and how God is known, he has put the work of God into his own little God-box.

He won't allow himself to believe that he might be wrong, that his vision might be limited. He won't allow himself to believe that Jesus turns the water into wine, and not just any old wine, but the good stuff. The good stuff. Do you see how it fits? What Jesus provides isn't just any old thing, it's the good stuff. The real, truly good stuff.

In 1964, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr gave a Nobel Lecture, and he would say this, "Modern man has brought this whole world to an awe-inspiring threshold of the future. He has reached new and astonishing peaks of scientific success. Yet, despite these spectacular strides in science and technology and still unlimited ones to come, something is basic is missing. There is a sort of poverty of the spirit, which stands in glaring contrast to our scientific and technological abundance. The richer we have become materially, the poorer we have become morally and spiritually. We have learned to fly the air like birds and swim the sea like fish, but we have not learned the simple art of living together as sisters and brothers."

Why are we willing to have a broad, expansive, and inclusive vision of so many things, but when it comes to God, when it comes to the kingdom of God, why do we have such limited vision?

Why are we so willing to believe in endless possibilities about many things, yet when it comes to God, we feel compelled to make God so small, small enough to fit in our little God box?

In his speech, Ted Lasso brings up the phrase, "It's the hope that kills you" but corrects it to say, "I believe it's the lack of hope that comes and gets you. I believe in hope. I believe in believe."

I mentioned earlier that in that locker room on that day, Roy Kent is the most skeptical in his coach's outlook on life. He's the headwaiter in the room. He rolls his eyes when his coach speaks, goes out of his way to not see the signs his coach points out. But on this day, as his coach challenges his players to believe, to answer the question if they believe in miracles, on the way out of the locker room, ready to take the pitch, they all touch the believe sign in the locker room. Roy Kent is the last one out and he pauses, looks at the believe sign, and touches it. And at that moment, he becomes the leader of the team that they have needed all along. He believes in hope. He believes in believe. He's ready to see the signs.

- When we doubt ourselves.
- When our offering seems far too small.

- When the box we've put God into is far too small.
- When the lack of hope comes and gets us.
- When we are far outside of our comfort zones.
- When we aren't willing to see and love others as God does.
- When our inadequacies are speaking louder than our strengths.
- When our team is on the precipice of relegation, and we have little hope of winning.

Then, Believe becomes a deliberate choice.

Do you see the signs?

Do. You. Believe?

Now I don't need y'all to answer that question for me. But I do want you to answer that question for yourselves. Right now. Do you believe? Not just in Jesus, but in what Jesus can do with you.