

WORSHIP TO ZEAL

CORE PASSAGE: JOHN 2:13-22

CONTEXT

Jesus performed many more miracles than were recorded in the Gospels (John 20:30-31), though Jesus's earthly ministry was more than a series of miraculous signs. Jesus demonstrated He is the Son of God in other ways too, including His driving out the vendors from the temple. John recorded an earlier temple cleansing than the one recorded by the other Gospel writers that took place during the week prior to His crucifixion. In this earlier incident, everyone who witnessed the event recognized that Jesus asserted authority like no other teacher of the law.

KEY CONCEPT

Jesus has the authority to purify all things because it all belongs to Him.

As you examine John 2:13-22:

- Recognize that the temple, where God dwelled with His people, had become a place of business and greed as opposed to a place of worship.
- Dwell on the fact that Jesus pointed to His future death and resurrection as a sign of His authority for His actions.



TIMELINE

John Baptizes Jesus
in the Jordan River
(Matthew 3:13-17)

Jesus Calls Disciples to Follow Him
(John 1:35-51)

SESSION STUDY:
Jesus Cleanses the Temple
(John 2:13-22)

Jesus Is Tempted in the Wilderness
(Luke 4:1-13)

Jesus Performs His First Miracle at
the Wedding in Cana (John 2:1-11)

Nicodemus Visits Jesus
at Night (John 3:1-21)

Daily Readings

- Day 1:** John 2:13-15
- Day 2:** John 2:16-17
- Day 3:** John 2:18-21
- Day 4:** John 2:21-22
- Day 5:** John 2:23-25
- Day 6:** Psalm 69



Scan this QR code
to access this session's
Scripture passages.

PERSONAL PREPARATION

JOHN 2:13-17

JESUS IS ZEALOUS ABOUT HOLINESS AND PURITY.

Underline the words describing actions Jesus took in the temple.

13 The Jewish Passover was near, and so Jesus went up to Jerusalem. **14** In the temple he found people selling oxen, sheep, and doves, and he also found the money changers sitting there. **15** After making a whip out of cords, he drove everyone out of the temple with their sheep and oxen. He also poured out the money changers' coins and overturned the tables. **16** He told those who were selling doves, "Get these things out of here! Stop turning my Father's house into a marketplace!" **17** And his disciples remembered that it is written: Zeal for your house will consume me.

VOICES FROM CHURCH HISTORY

"Christian churches and chapels, no doubt, are very unlike the Jewish temple. . . . But they are places where God's word is read, and where Christ is specially present. The man who professes to worship in them should surely behave with reverence and respect. The man who brings his worldly matters with him when he professes to worship, is doing that which is evidently most offensive to Christ."¹

—J. C. Ryle (1816–1900)

Key Concept: Jesus has the authority to purify all things because it all belongs to Him.



When Jesus arrived in Jerusalem, He found two types of businesses occurring in the temple—almost certainly in the outer court known as the Court of the Gentiles. First, people were selling animals used for sacrifices in worship. Worshipers at the temple were required to bring a sacrifice to the temple three times a year. For worshipers traveling a long distance, purchasing animals at the temple was more convenient to ensure the animals wouldn't get sick or injured along the way.

The second type of business being conducted was money changing. Worshipers came from various regions in the Greco-Roman world, and they needed to pay the temple tax with the appropriate currency. John did not provide any evidence that the business practices occurring were inherently corrupt. Yet Jesus's anger was provoked because the temple, a place of worship, had become a place of business and greed.

What practices help you worship God in a reverent manner?

Making a whip out of cords, Jesus drove the people and animals out of the temple complex. This was no sinful fit of rage—it was righteous indignation that a place

intended for the solemn dignity of worship had become focused on commercial gain. These events caused Jesus's disciples to recall Psalm 69:9, in which David wrote, "Zeal for your house has consumed me," which foreshadowed the zeal of Jesus for His Father's worship.

Jesus's foes did not understand His profound zeal to worship the Father. His zeal led Him to call for reform. The word "consume" took on double meaning in John 2:17. Not only did zeal consume Jesus's soul, but Jesus's enemies eventually consumed His life on the cross because they hated His zeal. Part of their testimony against Him related to this episode, though false witnesses distorted His words (see Matthew 26:61; Mark 14:58).

How has Jesus's zeal for worshipers from all nations caused you to adjust your life?

GOSPEL CONNECTION



In purifying the temple, Jesus revealed His authority as well as pointed to His future death and resurrection.

PERSONAL PREPARATION

JOHN 2:18-22

JESUS'S DEATH AND RESURRECTION WOULD PROVE HIS AUTHORITY.

Underline all the statements made and questions asked about the temple in these verses.

18 So the Jews replied to him, "What sign will you show us for doing these things?" **19** Jesus answered, "Destroy this temple, and I will raise it up in three days." **20** Therefore the Jews said, "This temple took forty-six years to build, and will you raise it up in three days?" **21** But he was speaking about the temple of his body. **22** So when he was raised from the dead, his disciples remembered that he had said this, and they believed the Scripture and the statement Jesus had made.

THEOLOGY CONNECTION

RESURRECTION: Both the Old and New Testaments teach that one day believers will experience a resurrection of the body from the dead (Isaiah 26:19; Ezekiel 37:12-14; John 11). The promise of the resurrection is found in the resurrection of Christ from the dead, and it will take place at the future return of Christ. Because Christ was the firstfruits of the resurrection, Christians can be assured that their resurrection will be similar in nature, both bodily and glorious (Philippians 3:20-21; Romans 8:22-23). The hope of the future resurrection gives Christians confidence that death has been defeated in the death and resurrection of Christ.

Key Concept: Jesus has the authority to purify all things because it all belongs to Him.

The Jews questioned Jesus's authority to call for righteousness. When John referenced "the Jews" here, he was not identifying Jewish people in general. The label signified Jewish leaders, probably the temple authorities or the Sanhedrin, the Jewish ruling council. While Jesus wanted people to ask Him questions, their questioning was wrong on at least two levels. First, they seemed unconcerned with whether Jesus's cleansing of the temple was just. They were more concerned that someone might usurp their authority.

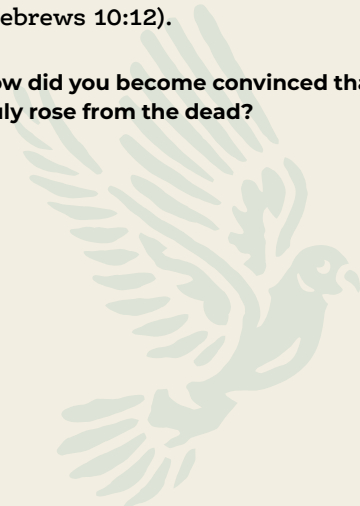
Second, they wanted a miracle-on-demand to prove Jesus possessed authority. Time and again in the Gospels, Jesus rebuffed those who demanded supernatural works before they would believe (see Matthew 12:39; 16:4; John 4:48). Ample evidence for faith in Christ was readily available, including His miracles. That evidence is available to us too. We must trust Jesus based on the evidence provided in His Word.

What has helped you surrender to Jesus's authority in your life?

The greatest sign of Jesus's authority was yet to come: His death and resurrection. However, the Jewish leaders misunderstood what Jesus said. They thought His reference to "this temple" meant the temple building in Jerusalem, which King Herod the Great had begun renovating forty-six years earlier (2:19-20). But Jesus meant "the temple of his body" (v. 21).

Under the old covenant, God manifested His presence to His people in the temple. Jesus inaugurated a new covenant as He was Immanuel, God with us. Jesus's body is the new temple. When the Son of God took on humanity, He "dwelt" (literally, "tabernacled") among us, a reference to the temple's precursor structure (1:14). Through His incarnate glory, Jesus revealed God to us because He is God (v. 18). There is no longer a need for a temple building since Jesus's sacrificial death fulfilled the old system (Hebrews 10:12).

How did you become convinced that Jesus truly rose from the dead?



GROUP EXPERIENCE



ESTABLISHING AUTHORITY

Compare the actions, words, scriptural basis, and sign demonstrated or alluded to by Jesus in these two passages.

JOHN 2:13-22

MATTHEW 12:1-14

ACTIONS

WORDS

**SCRIPTURAL
BASIS**

SIGN

When have you seen zeal for God's house lead to reform?

In the management of your own temple—your physical body where the Holy Spirit dwells—are there steps you need to take to keep it holy?



Key Concept: Jesus has the authority to purify all things because it all belongs to Him.



HEAD

In what areas of life are you most prone to drift from God's standards of holiness?

PRAYING SCRIPTURE

Read Psalm 69. Ask God to remove the sin in your life that dishonors Him (v. 6). Pray for increased zeal for His standards of holiness (v. 9). Thank God for offering you "faithful love" and "sure salvation" in Jesus (v. 13).

PRAYER REQUESTS AND PRAISES



HEART

What hinders you from confessing to Jesus the areas in which you have drifted and asking Him to restore you?



HANDS

How will you initiate a conversation this week with someone about their need to follow Jesus as Lord and Savior?

