

LIFE GROUP QUESTIONS

March 12, 2023



Part 9 – Jesus Cleanses the Temple

During Jesus' earthly ministry, he entered and cleansed the temple twice. Once at the beginning of his ministry and once before he died on the cross. His zeal for the purity, sanctity, and holiness of the house of God was clearly seen as he cast out the moneychangers and those who sold animals in a desire to restore the sanctuary to a house of prayer. Today, our bodies are the temple of God. The body of Christ, his church, is also the temple of God. In many ways we have let moneychangers and merchants into our lives which has robbed us of prayerfulness and the beauty of God's presence. Thankfully, Jesus is still in the temple cleaning business as he seeks to restore true worship to our lives, his church, which is his body.

Biblical Insights

1. What are some differences in Jesus' interactions with the temple systems from his birth and dedication (Luke 2:21-40), to the first cleansing of the temple (John 2:13-22), and then the final cleansing of the temple (Matthew 21:12-17)?
2. Read Jeremiah 7:1-15. Jesus quotes a phrase from this passage (v.11) when he compares what the temple of God in his day has become. Jeremiah rebukes Israel for their false trust in the temple while their actions are evil. What can we learn from this passage about true temple worship and righteous living?
3. Read Isaiah 56:1-8. Jesus quotes a phrase from this passage (v.7) as he reveals his desire for his people to be a people of prayer. What can we learn from this passage about keeping the Sabbath, foreigners, and prayer?

Application

1. As followers of Jesus we can get into a consumeristic mentality. Even during Jesus' days, many followed Jesus because he gave them food to eat and healed their sicknesses. But when he spoke some hard sayings that they had to live out, some people left. As you examine your Christian life and walk with the Lord, in what ways can you see consumerism in your life? What changes can you make to cultivate a service first attitude like Jesus?

2. Throughout the Old Testament and particularly in Jesus' days with the Pharisees, there was a lot of hypocritical living. Jesus spoke into the religious hypocrisy of his day. In what ways can you see religious hypocrisy in your life? Are there ways in which your life at church is different from your work or family life? What can you do to live sincerely?
3. There was a lot of injustice in society during Jesus' day. Jesus sought to bring equality to the people as he reached out to the poor, disenfranchised, and oppressed. How might Jesus be calling you to be a voice for the voiceless and to stand up for justice?