

Cleansing the Temple

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[0 : 00] Good morning, or good whenever it is you're listening to this. This is the second Sunday in a row we've had to miss church service because of weather.

! Hopefully next Sunday we'll be okay. But since God has blessed us with technology and we felt like it wasn't good that we would get so far behind in our study of John, I've been tasked to make this recording so that we can still continue on with our study.

Making a recording is not easy. I've started over several times because I get tongue-tied. But anyway, hopefully this one won't be as bad.

I have the verses immediately following the wedding celebration that we studied where Jesus turned water into wine. And in that there's the story of the cleansing of the temple where Jesus threw out the money changers and stuff.

And, you know, I said story. I should be saying event because stories sometimes can be made up. But this event, it really happened.

[1 : 16] And I keep telling my Sunday school children this. These are not just stories. These are events. That we can learn from. This is history.

We're going to be talking about the cleansing of the temple and a little bit about anger. A little bit about the Passover. And we'll try to learn something from it.

Let's pray first and we'll get started. Lord, I thank you for your word. I thank you for all the things that you've revealed to me. Lord, I'm never going to be able to regurgitate all the stuff that I've learned and been blessed with.

But I pray, Father, whatever does get regurgitated here will be exactly what needs to be done. And people will learn more about you. And we'll learn about each other.

And maybe we'll learn how we should treat other people, Father. And how we should act so that we're pleasing to you and more like Jesus.

[2 : 27] I thank you, Father, that you've given us the technology to talk to people when we can't see them face to face.

I thank you, Father, for the safety that you've given all of us so far in the storms. And I pray, Father, that you just keep us safe and keep us warm.

Please keep our power on. In Jesus' name, amen. In verse 12, it says, After this, he went down to Capernaum.

Now, after this was after that wedding feast or festival where Jesus turned water to wine. He was with his mother and his brothers and his disciples, and they stayed there for a few days.

I don't know why they went to Capernaum. But John records this. And, you know, this is a historical record.

[3 : 26] And he just tells us that he went down to Capernaum with his mother and his brothers and his disciples. And they stayed there a few days. Then in verse 13, it says, The Passover of the Jews was at hand, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem.

Now, all of these places are actually, Jerusalem is actually south of Capernaum. And it says Jesus went up to Jerusalem.

That something might be, you know, you might be thinking, well, that's a mistake there. But what they're talking about is elevation. Because Capernaum is about 600 feet below sea level.

And Jerusalem is 24 to 2,500 feet above sea level. So actually, almost anywhere you are in Israel, you're going to, if you go to Jerusalem, you have to go up.

So they're talking about having to climb a hill to get there. So that's what that means when it says go up to Jerusalem.

[4 : 37] And then in verse 14, it says, In the temple he found those who were selling oxen and sheep and pigeons and money changers sitting there. Now, let me tell you.

Jesus is going to get mad here. Now, is he getting mad because they were selling oxen and sheep and stuff in the temple? No. That's not a reason for him to be mad.

Because that was kind of instituted in Deuteronomy 14. Where it says if you're coming from a long distance, then you don't need to bring your own animal.

You can purchase one when you get there. So, you know, you just sell the one that you have that you're going to use. And buy one when you get there. So it was kind of, it was already instituted.

The problem was, though, that they had started to take advantage of people. They were charging way more for the animals than what they should have.

[5 : 36] And then on the other hand, they were people who did bring their own animals. They had to be inspected by a priest who had at least 18 months of training to inspect animals.

And invariably, the priest would find a blemish or something on the animal. And the people weren't allowed to use that animal.

They had to purchase their own animal. I mean, purchase an animal from the temple. And then there was the money changers. Those guys, so to visit the temple, you had to pay a temple tax.

And that was also an okay thing. It was an instituted thing where you came and you just, to assist with the upkeep of the temple, you paid this coin to come into the temple.

The temple only accepted this special coin. You couldn't bring your Roman money or Greek money or whatever it is, money you had.

[6 : 46] You had to get it exchanged. And that's another place where the money changers were there, taking advantage of people by charging them, you know, transfer or conversion costs to get the temple coins.

So, Jesus got mad because they were taking advantage of the people. People were coming to worship him.

And the temple officials were using this opportunity for their personal gain. I think God probably gets mad at a lot of televangelisms that we have today.

I think, you know, I'll just mention some names. Joel Osteen with his prosperity gospel, you know, that guy has so much stuff, jets and mansions and all that stuff.

I think of my poor grandmother who had her daughter, one of my aunts, living with her. And she was really into the 700 Club.

[8 : 13] And she would fuss at my grandmother about, you know, you need to send money to those people. You're going to go to hell if you don't send money to those people. And she just would pretty much send all of her money.

My aunt would send all of her money. And my grandmother, she was a little bit more savvy. But she had to endure that. Her daughter writing her all the time about sending money to these people because, you know, they're taking advantage of people.

And I think that God doesn't like that. So in verse 15, it says, And making a whip of cords, he drove them all out of the temple with the sheep and oxen.

And he poured out the coins of the money changers and overturned their tables. And in verse 16, Notice, He took the time to make a whip of cords.

So it wasn't that he flew off the handle when he saw what he saw. When he saw what was going on. He didn't lose his temper. But he got angry.

[9 : 40] And he, we call this like a righteous anger. And righteous anger always results in the right action.

So Jesus took the time to make a whip. And then he drove those people out.

Now, I had one person, I think it's John MacArthur, was saying, this is a miracle, even though John, in the book of John, he talks about seven miracles in the book of John.

But, but, MacArthur was saying, that this is a miracle in itself. And that, with all of those people there, that Jesus, by himself, was able to drive out all of those people, without someone, some big burly type person, grabbing a hold of him, you know, and put him in a bear hug or something, and say, hold on there little fella, you can't, you can't be acting this way.

But, Jesus was able to do that, because of his passion, and his authority, he was able to drive those people out. How many people was it?

[11 : 00] Well, historians like Josephus tell us, and I've seen different numbers, but, there was probably around 200,000 people, in Jerusalem, as a regular population.

But then, when the Passover time came, and all those people came, to Jerusalem, which, by the way, that's, that's the, that's the place to be, for the Passover celebration, was in Jerusalem.

Um, anyone who lived, within about 15 miles, of Jerusalem, was required to be there, for the Passover.

And, anyone beyond that, you know, it was recommended, that they come, and, they wanted to be there, because that was the thing. Um, it says that Jesus went down, back down to Jerusalem, because of the Passover, and, we know his disciples went, because we'll see them again, in the story.

And, probably his mother, and, and his brothers went too, but we don't know that, for sure. But, probably they did, because, it was such a big deal. Uh, the last, uh, the last words, that they say, at the end of the festival, is next year, in, in, in Jerusalem.

[12 : 22] Uh, so, there was probably, uh, maybe two million people, in Jerusalem, at the time. Uh, there were some people, say it could be up to five million, I don't know.

But, there was a lot of people there. So, they were using, the house, of God, for their own personal gain, taking advantage of people, and God doesn't like that.

And, it says in verse 17, his disciples remembered, that it is written, or that it was written, zeal for your house, will consume me. Remember John, the purpose, that John wrote, this book, it's in, uh, John 20, 31, he says, but these things, are written, that you may believe, that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that by believing, you may have life, in his name.

So, that was John's purpose, for writing this book. And, he's giving evidence, in all these things, in all these things, that he's saying, like, yet, Jesus fulfilled, another, another, uh, scripture, by saying, you know, the zeal for your house, it's the way he was acting.

So, John's giving, the evidence, that Jesus is the Christ. Uh, and then in verse 18, says, the Jews said to him, what sign do you show us, for doing these things?

[13 : 57] Jesus answered them, destroy this temple, and in three days, I will raise it up. The Jews then said, it has taken 46 years, to build this temple, and you will raise it, in three days.

But he was speaking, about the temple of his body. When therefore, he was raised from the dead, his disciples remembered, that he had said this, and they believed the scripture, and the word, that Jesus had spoken.

I find it interesting here, that, they didn't understand, the disciples, you know, they were probably, on the same, wavelength, with the, uh, the Jews, who, you know, said, it's taken 46 years, you know, and you're going to rebuild it.

They didn't understand, what Jesus was talking about. Um, for how long? For, well, this, he was probably 30 here, because this was the beginning, of his ministry.

He died at 33, so for, it was three years later, before they realized, oh, I know what he meant, by that. And to me, I, I think it's interesting, that, um, God will reveal stuff to you, in the right time.

[15 : 20] You may not be, you may not understand, something right now, but just trust him. You'll understand, at some point. Um, it took them three years, but they didn't leave him.

It was, uh, I remember a place, in the scripture, where, uh, a lot of people, stopped following him. I think it was when he was saying, you know, about eating his body, and drinking his blood, and a lot of people, turned away from him then, because they just didn't understand.

And, uh, I, I, I just say, hold on. When you don't understand, what God is doing, when you don't understand, uh, what he means, or you can't figure out, what, where, God, where are you going with this?

God, why is, why are these things happening? I don't understand. Instead of just abandoning him, and walking away, just trust his heart, and know that, eventually, I'll understand.

I just trust you, Lord. I'm going to keep trusting you, even when I don't understand. I just thought I'd throw that in there, if it was a little, a little tidbit.

[16 : 30] Um, so, let's, let's talk about anger a bit. The, the, Jesus obviously got angry.

And, there are, there are, different reasons, uh, for people to get angry. Now, most of the time, you and I don't have, the type of anger, that we're supposed to have.

We should have a righteous anger, like Jesus does. But, most of the time, our anger is not that way. And, if you want to know some verses, uh, about, uh, anger, there's a whole bunch of them, in the Bible.

So, what about being angry? Well, uh, like, Ephesians 4, 26, is, be ye angry. That's the first word. That's, that's not a, that's not a, uh, uh, suggestion.

That's a command to be angry. And so, you might be thinking right away, oh man, finally a command I can, I can do, I can do this one. I've got this one nailed down. I'm good at it.

[17 : 41] But then the next verse says, the next part of that verse says, and sin not. So, you're like, yay! Oh. All right there together.

Be angry and sin not. So, when you get angry though, it says, and the next word says, let not the sun go down upon your wrath.

So, you need to do something about it. As soon as you get angry, go ahead and take some action on it. So many times, especially with married people and stuff, we end up going to bed angry.

Uh, and that's not, that's not a good thing to do. Don't let the sun go down on your wrath. Cause you go to bed angry, you're going to wake up angry. And, uh, you know, you might be saying, well, you might wake up feeling a little bit better, but, you tell your spouse, well, I love you.

I didn't love you last night, but I love you today. But, um, go ahead and, and do something about it. Uh, it's in that same Ephesians 4, 26 through 32.

[18 : 50] It says, neither give place to the devil. Let him that stole steel no more, but rather let him labor working with his hands, the thing which is good that he may have to give to him that needeth.

And then the next ones, which was a lot of what happens when you're angry is, is let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to be used for edifying and ministering of grace to, to the hearers.

Uh, and then don't grieve the Holy spirit where, where, where, where, where you've been sealed, uh, for the day of redemption, let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and evil speaking be put away from you with all malice and be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake has forgiven you.

So why do we get angry? That's a question that we might, James tells us in four, James four, one through three says, what causes fights and quarrels among you?

Don't they come from your, your desires that battle within you? So when you're angry, most of the time we're angry over selfish reasons.

[20 : 10] It's because we don't get what we want. In verse two, he says you desire, but you don't have, so you kill, you covet, but you cannot get what you want.

So you quarrel and fight. And if you, uh, you know, inspect yourself or, uh, search yourself, you'll, and think about what makes you angry.

Most of the time it's for selfish reasons. We're not, uh, we're not, uh, having a righteous anger like, like God had where he was angry because others were being, um, mistreated or taken advantage of.

So things that make the Lord angry, it's found in the Bible. It's in, uh, Proverbs. Proverbs six is these six things that the Lord hate.

Yeah. Seven are an abomination to him. A proud look. Uh, some translation calls it haughty eyes. Uh, just, uh, being proud, not only of yourself, but causing that to look down on others, to look at others as being inferior to you or not as good, or, uh, thinking that you're better than them.

[21 : 34] God doesn't like that. Number two is a lying tongue. God is a God of truth. And, uh, lies are of the devil.

He's the father of lies. So that's directly against God. So a lying tongue, hands that shed innocent blood.

Again, God is looking out for other people, for others. And, um, next one says a heart that deviseth wicked imaginations, or not only somebody that, that, uh, that dwells on, uh, wicked things, but, but conjures them up in their mind.

Think ways to be evil, ways to be wicked, and feet that be swift in running to mischief. Um, and then, uh, a false witness that speaketh lies, and that soweth discord among the brethren.

So these things are things that God hates, and makes God angry. You and I are created in the image of God, and when we are born again, we have the Holy Spirit living within us, and we then should be like God.

[23 : 07] So, what makes you angry? Are these things, what makes you angry, or are you stuck on getting angry for selfish reasons? Um, and not only that, if you think about it, uh, your body being the temple of God, does God need to, have a wit to drive things out of your temple, to clean your temple up?

If, if, if, if his, he didn't want his, uh, that, uh, temple made of stone to be defiled, how much more does he not want this temple made of flesh to, to not be defiled?

Something to think about, that you, uh, you being in the image of God, and being, uh, a child of God, should act like God, should be angry at the same things God's angry at.

You should have the same zeal for the, the temple of God. So you need to be taking care of the temple, and taking care of, uh, uh, other people that God, uh, has, has created in the, that he loves.

In closing, let me share a few more verses with you, about anger, how we should act. James 1, 19 through 20 says, my dear brothers and sisters, take note of this.

[24 : 37] Everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak, and slow to become angry, because human anger does not produce the righteousness that God desires.

Some other words of wisdom comes from Proverbs. Proverbs 15, one says, a gentle answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger.

I, I get accused of this quite often, having a harsh word. And I, I, and it's that I, I don't mean it to be harsh, but, evidently, it comes out that way.

And I, uh, I, I really have to be careful of how I say things, because it can be taken harshly. I, I must confess, I did have issues, uh, when I was younger, uh, anger issues.

Not, not really, really bad, but my mother always said I had a bad temper. Um, there's a story of, uh, a guy went to a therapist over, uh, his anger issues.

[25 : 45] Um, and the therapist told him, said, well, look, here's, here's the best way to deal with anger, is to, uh, write letters to all of those people who you're angry with, and then burn them.

And, uh, he said, well, I must confess, it really did help a lot. Uh, however, I, I don't know what to do with all these letters now.

So, see, that's the bad part about being on a recording is, you can't look at people's faces and, and, uh, because there's somebody out there, you know, that didn't get that.

They're sitting there, what, what, what does he mean? You just burned them. Anyway, think about it, you'll get it. Um, Proverbs, uh, 15, 18 says, a hot tempered person stirs up conflict, but the one who is patient calms a quarrel.

Proverbs 14, 17 says, a quick tempered person does foolish things. Ecclesiastes 7, 9 says, do not be quickly provoked in your spirit, for anger resides, resides in the lap of fools.

[27 : 11] So, what do we want to do about our anger? Can you take these verses to heart and think about it? You know, Jesus took the time to make a whip, and, uh, he used it as a tool, and Jesus, you know, he's perfect.

He, he, he, he didn't even have to take time to make the whip. Uh, the time, a lot of times, though, will cause you to cool down a little bit before you open your mouth.

You know, they say, uh, count to 10 before you say anything, and if you're really mad, count to 100. Um, but there, there's, there's wisdom in that.

Just calm yourself down before you say something that hurts other people, because you can't take it back. A lot of times, we, we, uh, will be angry, and we'll say something that, you know, we always have to come back, and, and apologize for, uh, because we're foolish that way.

Um, so, take the time, calm yourself before, and, and, and remember these verses, you know, don't, don't be harsh.

[28 : 42] Don't be quick tempered. And, and if it jumps on you, you know, just make a whip. Uh, but then you don't, you know, of course, don't use it.

Um, and that's, that's today's message I wanted to put out. I, I hope, you know, I, I stopped and started this, uh, recording so many times.

I feel like I've said everything that I wanted to say, but it may not be on this recording. It may have been on some of the ones that I deleted. But anyway, I hope, uh, that the message that today, uh, hits home with, with some of you or with all of you.

And remember that, uh, Jesus loves you. You are the temple of the Holy Ghost. So, make sure that your temple is clean.

Because God doesn't like it when it's not. Make sure that you're not taking advantage of other people. Make sure, make sure that you're not just looking out for number one.

[29 : 51] That what makes you angry is what makes God angry. Let's pray. Father, I thank you for your word. I thank you for this opportunity.

And I pray, Father, that these words will, will help somebody. Lord, they're your words. So, you know, it's out of my hands. I thank you, uh, though, Father, again, for a warm house.

And I pray, Father, that, uh, you'll bring us back together next Sunday. And if there's anyone, Lord, who doesn't know you, who's listened to this, Lord, and said, you know, well, this wasn't really a, uh, an evangelistic type message.

But, Father, uh, you are the Christ. Christ. And, no one comes to the Father, but through you.

And I pray, Father, that they, that maybe, uh, who, somebody listening to this might realize, my goodness, he, he really is God. And, I need him. And I pray, Father, that they'll come to know you.

[30 : 59] Father, because there, there, there's coming a time where they won't have another, an opportunity. So, I pray, Father, that all who hear these words will know you as their Savior before it's too late.

In Jesus' name, Amen.