

# Cleansing Blood Abounds For You

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[ 0 : 00 ] Well, in John chapter 2, we have heard of these two feasts. Did you catch that, children? Two feasts. One is the wedding feast, and the other is the Passover feasts.

John puts them back to back to set up a contrast. I want to show you today, walking through this whole chapter as best we can, the wedding, it's in an out-of-the-way place, a small town. It's among the poor. However, the people are extremely simple, yet they are generous and joyful. I want to show you why. And it represents a wedding. Think about what a wedding represents. It represents new beginnings.

It's a time of trust and bonding. And what we see then in the response of the servants and of the disciples is that they believe and obey. That's the wedding. What a glorious picture of the gospel. And then the Passover feast is very different. The Passover takes place in a powerful city. It's at the heart, the very city center, the temple itself. And it's a place that's been gated and guarded off by the powerful, the manipulative, the rich and elite that are greedy.

[ 1 : 11 ] And as the people approach this feast, they're met with not joy and trust and hope. They experience frustration. And the zeal of the Lord consumes Jesus when he sees that.

And his actions at the wedding feast to bless and to sweeten their celebration, it's foiled by this contrast at the Passover. What he does there is he overturns that old establishment. And he shows what you have turned this religion into is so far removed from the heart of God. So I believe this, and I just want to give it to you up front and then walk you through to try to prove it to you.

I believe this whole chapter is getting at the heart. Did you catch how this wonderful passage ends? Jesus knew. Look at the very last verse. Jesus knew what? He knew what was in the heart of man. That's what God has always been after is the heart of his people. So I want to try to prove to you this. The cleansing blood of Christ abounds for you.

[ 2 : 17 ] That's what the feast of the wedding is about. That's what Christ's zeal is burning to show you when he comes to the temple. The cleansing blood of Jesus Christ abounds.

That means there's an abundance. There's plenty. You will never run out. It abounds for you today, church, as well. And now here's why I hope you will pay attention to these words from John 2.

If you choose to ignore a life-saving sign, you can expect to suffer tragic loss.

That's a true statement. We know that. If you choose to ignore a life-saving sign, you can expect to suffer tragic loss. This is a real headline one month ago. Subway surfer, age 15, has arm ripped off after staying on subway car when it went through a tunnel.

If you choose to ignore a life-saving sign, you can expect to suffer tragic loss. His arm had to be shorn off.

[ 3 : 28 ] There's the verb. Shorn off below the elbow. Because as he was riding this subway, maybe for fun or maybe just to get a free ride around New York, this happened in the borough of Queens.

He was looking around. Didn't see the obvious life-saving sign. There's the platform. There's the sign for it. That was his moment to jump off. And he stayed on that subway car illegally, subway surfing. And another train passed by and tore off his arm.

Well, I think you can appreciate that's a true fact in life. Now, let me make the connection for you. If you choose to ignore God's wondrous works, what do we mean by that?

The Latin term is *magnalia dei*, the wondrous works of God. And it's his signs in creation and his word which reveals and explains what he's about.

If you choose to ignore that, you can expect to suffer tragic loss as well. We're told in John chapter 2, these two events are signs.

[ 4 : 28 ] And the sign points to something. It signifies there's something important you must attend to and respond to. God reveals himself through signs throughout all the Bible.

The word of God gives meaning to what was taking place. So revelation is really just that. It's unveiling God's glory. Moses, think about it. Moses turned water into blood.

That was a sign that only God provides. His people should not set their hearts on Egypt. They should not put their false hopes on that. The Egyptians put their hopes on the Nile River.

It turned to blood. They got death. A different example. God told that wicked leprous general, Naaman, to dip seven times into the muddy Jordan River to be cleansed of his leprosy.

Children, do you know what leprosy is? Well, leprosy is a horrible disease. Your skin turns white. It's extremely painful. And then if really there was no cure in the ancient days, and so eventually it would start to deteriorate the periphery of your limbs, and you would start to lose, your nose would fall off, your ears would fall off, your fingers would fall off.

[ 5 : 36 ] And the Lord said, I'll give you a sign. You dip into the muddy Jordan River as a response of faith, and you'll be cleansed. Because that's the point of God's signs.

He gives them to unveil his glory to sinners like you and me so that we can be forgiven. And leprosy is a picture of sin. So in this context of John 2, the theme of cleansing and the signs that God will give to a people who know they need cleansing, that's really what's at the heart of his message. Jesus wants them to know this. Believe in the one whose cleansing blood abounds, and you will have life. All right, well, let's walk through our passage.

I want to show this to you. Let's start in chapter 2, verse 1. Verse 1 we read, On the third day. Now, if you trace your finger back up through chapter 1, you'll notice how he does this.

He's been marking out for us this time. You know, time is passing, day after day after day. So, I'll give you a couple examples. Look at verse 29. The next day. So, John chapter 1, verse 29.

[ 6 : 47 ] The next day. Then skip down to verse 35. John 1, 35. The next day. Then skip down to 43. The next day. So, he's picking up, counting time. And in chapter 2, he says, On the third day, which was typically counted.

That previous day we're referring about is day one. One day in the middle. And now we're on day three. And that's why Christ was, you know, buried for three days. Friday, Saturday, and Sunday he rose. He counts as the three days.

So, if you trace back from John 1 to now, the beginning of John 2, scholars have understood this to mean that he's counted out six days. So, the day of this wedding feast would most likely be Friday.

At least in this literary sense of counting up to that last day of creation, the new creation theme. So, remember, this is taking place on a Friday, the day before the Sabbath of the Jews.

And we read there that the mother of Jesus was there and the disciples also invited. But then wine runs out. Verses 1, 2, and 3. So, it's an out-of-the-way place.

[ 7 : 48 ] Cana, probably nine miles north of Nazareth. So, a good walk, but you could walk there from where Jesus grew up and where Mary, his mother, lived. Most likely, then, this would have been a relative of her, someone that lived close by.

Mary's the first one to know that they ran out of wine. And what happens if one of your relatives is having a wedding? All the relatives show up and help. So, she's keeping an eye and serving probably close to the preparation area.

So, she notices they ran out of wine. And then Mary approaches Jesus. And she tells Jesus they've run out of wine. The mother of Jesus said to him, They have no wine.

Verse 3. Now, in Mark chapter 6, early in Jesus' ministry, he was called the carpenter. In other places, he's called son of the carpenter. But it's possible that by this time, Jesus has now inherited his father's contracts.

And he's a builder. And he goes as a carpenter to help frame up new constructions. So, now he's no longer the son of the carpenter. He's the carpenter. So, it'd be normal for Mary to view him as the provider of their family.

[ 8 : 49 ] And this is something that their larger family, their relatives, would feel shame over.

Probably for years to come. Maybe for the rest of this married couple's life. That they had run out of wine at this celebration.

Now, verses 4 and 5. Jesus calls her woman. And he says, What does this have to do with me? And the phrase, What does this? It could also be translated, What do you have to do with me?

The way that Jesus speaks to his mother, it does a couple of things. It distances himself. He's not calling her mommy or mother. He's calling her woman.

We should not think that this is disrespectful in their culture. It would be more like saying, Ma'am. You know, and children, if you're raised with civility, Your mother tells you to do something, You say, Yes, ma'am.

You know. So, Jesus calls her woman. But I think there's even more theology here. Because remember, John's writing this probably toward the very end of his life. He's looking back and remembering. And he was the one entrusted to care for Mary, the mother of Jesus.

[ 9 : 49 ] So, he knows her very well. And even John is distancing himself a little bit. He's not calling her Sacred Mary or Hail Mary. The Reformers made a big deal about this. There's an important and theological distance.

She was the vessel, the person God used to bring the God-man into the earth. But she is not to be worshipped. Even more than that, Sinclair Ferguson helped me to see. This reference to Mary as the woman, That should remind you of Genesis 3.15.

Remember that glorious promise? It's that the seed of who? The seed of the woman would bring forth the one who would crush the serpent's head. And Mary was not offended by this at all.

In fact, look at her reaction, her response. Verses 4 and 5. Mary says, go and do whatever he tells you to do. Now, Jesus, by this response and by what Jesus says, I think that both Mary and Jesus had the same expectation in mind.

Jesus says, my hour has not yet come. Do you see that? Jesus says, my hour has not yet come. Look how else John uses that phrase later in the same gospel. John chapter 12.

[ 11 : 02 ] He tells us this in verse 27. Now is my soul troubled, said Jesus. And what shall I say? Father, save me from this hour. But for this purpose, I have come to this hour.

So when Jesus talks about his hour, he is thinking about the hour where he will lay down his life for the forgiveness of sins. And Mary, he says to Mary, who am I to you?

What is this to you? Who am I to you? Are you the seed of the woman? Do you still believe that by faith? What the angel told you, Mary? And she responds, go and do whatever he tells you to do.

You know, it's like her version of my Lord and my God. He will be the one whose hour will come.

And therefore, he's bringing God's kingdom now. Our duty is to obey whatever he says.

What a great example we have of faith. Now look at verses six and seven. We're told that what Jesus told these servants to do was to fill six jars.

[ 12 : 03 ] Picture big stone jars with water. And you see how much water each one could contain. They're full to the brim. That would equal about 150 gallons of water.

Now, here's something that I was very curious about. Why at this wedding feast are there these 150 gallons worth of stone vessels just sitting around?

And it was so interesting for me to learn this, that before a wedding, people that are doing their best to follow the ceremonial law that God gave them through Moses, they would make sure that the bride would be especially cleansed before the wedding celebration.

So the ritual bath that a bride would take before her wedding was called the mikvah. And that still happens today among Orthodox Jews. So it's possible that these vessels for cleansing were used not only for other ritual cleansing, but especially to cleanse the bride right before this wedding celebration.

Now, the number six, why were there six stone jars? The number six, again, him using it this way, was less about the water, more about the literature that he's trying to build and show that in all that God has revealed and done, everything points directly to Christ.

[ 13 : 16 ] The number six, there are six of these vessels. That's significant. What day of creation was Adam and Eve made? Day number six, right before the Lord said it was all very good and the Lord rested.

So day six has always been in the mind of the Jews, man's day. That's the day when man was made. What's day seven? The Sabbath? That's the Lord's day. Day six is for man. And man will always come short of the glory of God.

So six means we're not full. We're not complete yet. And when you think about even in the book of Revelation, the number six, six, six, it represents a lack of thorough lack of completeness.

Man's religion will always come short without the grace of God. So there are six of these, one less than complete. And it also shows that there is something further needed.

This ceremonial cleansing brought them to this point. And now the, just like the wedding ceremony is going to be consummated by the couple. There is something further needed. Well, look at verse eight and nine next.

[14:21] We're told simply that this miraculous event was not, it was not done like a cheap circus act. In fact, it could not be more subtle and downplayed. The fact that God, that God, Jesus Christ, transformed water into wine.

And God could have done it without using water at all. He could have simply said those empty vessels would be full of wine, but he wanted them to fill them with wine, with water first. And then he transformed the water.

So there's significance in what Christ did. The water turns to wine. I want to draw your attention. John chapter 19, verse 34.

We have this mixture of water with wine. Once more, we're told this, that one of the soldiers, as Christ is hanging on the cross, took a spear. And with that spear, he's, he pierced Jesus's side. And at once there came out blood and water. And some have said Jesus never fully died on the cross. Maybe it was a swoon. Well, the heart right here on this left side is enveloped by a sack that, if there is water in the sack to protect the heart, and then the heart becomes pierced.

[15:37] The blood from the heart will mix with the water. So as his heart is pierced, it verifies biologically he was dead. His heart was now draining out water mixed with wine.

That's how the same apostle uses water and wine together. And you remember, what was the first sign that God did through Moses as he was bringing his people out of bondage and slavery? Moses touched the Nile River with the staff, and the Lord turned the water into blood. So wine is to remind you of blood. And there's life in the blood.

And without the shedding of blood, there is no forgiveness of sins. Do you see how John is weaving through these rich gospel themes? And he's saying, behold, the new and greater Moses is among you.

His first sign is to pave the way for your forgiveness. Now look at verses 10 and 11. It's interesting that we're told the only ones who saw this sign of Christ's glory were the servants who filled the jars with water, and the groom, I'm sorry, servants of the groom.

[16:47] And probably the groom did not know, neither did his main master of the feast. But the disciples noticed the sign, and they believed, we're told. So this is significant as well.

The pronouncement that you have saved the best for last, and that this humble groom who ran out of money and was going to be put to shame and exposed before all, you have honored him.

And so we're told that is how Jesus began that public ministry with these signs, that they point to more than just what God did as a miracle.

One scholar, Alistair Roberts, said, Signs are more than miracles. Beyond being powerful acts, they reveal something of Christ. We see beyond the spectacle to the significance of what is taking place. So let's try to pull it together. What was it that this first sign revealed about Christ? What is the significance? Jesus wants these people to know that it's blood that brings true cleansing.

[17:47] The waters would not cleanse their soul before a holy God. That was a ceremonial preparation, a picture of a greater work that was to come. It would take the wine, the blood of Christ, to truly cleanse them and bring forgiveness.

And he wants them to know there is wine or blood of Christ in abundance. 150 gallons filled to the brim. You will never run out.

His blood is for you who trust in him alone to provide all you need for life and godliness in him.

Turning water to wine means that Christ came to transform the old ceremonial external requirements of the law.

And he wants to make it something that will be in your heart. The blood of Christ is for your soul. It's for the inner man. It's like wine that you consume and it warms you and it's now inside of you and it brings you joy.

That's what the gospel of Jesus does. That's how much greater the blood of Christ is over the law of man. In 2 Corinthians 5.17 we read that the old has passed away.

[18:58] Behold, the new has come. Even though we once regarded Christ according to the flesh, we regard him thus no longer. Yes, Christ came on the earth, but he's now exalted in a glorified body and his blood is effectual for you.

His once for all sacrifice, where he poured out his blood on the cross for the forgiveness of your sins, ushered in a new creation, a new kingdom that is spiritual in nature.

And therefore he concludes, if anyone is in Christ, he is. Right now, today, you are a new creation. How can that be? Christ put himself under the law.

He fulfilled all the moral, civil, and ceremonial law for you. He did not get rid of the water of the ceremonial cleansing, but he transformed it. He fulfilled the law.

The old covenant waters of purification are now made to be the very thing that gathers his people to celebrate the wedding feast of the Lamb. And why is it significant that this happened on the sixth day, Friday?

[ 20 : 06 ] Well, it was on Good Friday that our Lord spilled his blood for the forgiveness of sins to cleanse his people. And who is this good news for?

Who is it that can see this as a sign of spiritual salvation? It's for you, if you're like those who look to Christ as your provider, like Mary.

Lord, we have run out. We have no more. Every day I run out by the end of the day. Lord, I come to you once more, Jesus. You are my provider.

Then his blood is for you. And it's for whoever obeys what he says, like these servants. Go and fill those water vessels to the brim. Then this promise is for you. You will get to behold the sign.

He's called you to obey and you've responded. You've not ignored this life-saving sign. And it's for you. If you're a disciple of Jesus, you're walking with him.

[ 21 : 05 ] You get to behold the wonderful works of God every day. What does that look like in the simple ways? It means that your eyes are open and you're paying attention.

And maybe it's one of your children that you've been praying for every single day. Confessing sin on their own, not without anything from a person, nothing external.

It's the Holy Spirit working in their life. You just beheld a wondrous work of God. Maybe it's in your own sanctification. You feel like you have run out.

You have no more strength to fight sin. And God says to you, I am your provider. Look to me. I take simple vessels like you. And I fill you to the brim with my Holy Spirit.

And I cleanse you. Not from the outside with the law. I cleanse you from the inside. I transform the very content of your soul. If you are a jar of clay, a vessel that belongs to me.

[ 22 : 06 ] Martin Luther said, where our trust is, what is, there is our God. So here at this poor wedding in an out of place way, these, you could say nobodies, they don't even have enough to have a decent wedding without running out.

They were the ones who got to taste the sweet wine of heaven. They were the ones who got to celebrate and see this humble groom be honored. And you got to see this bride who had been cleansed ceremonially now be the very picture of the bride of Christ, the church.

What a glorious gospel we have. We're told in verse 11, his disciples believed in him. In John 7, verse 38, we read, whoever believes in me, as the scripture has said, out of his heart will flow rivers of living water.

So here's the sign for you. Do you see the sign, this work of Christ? You must do like the disciples. You must believe in the one who's cleansing blood abounds for you.

How does God do it? God cleanses your record against him as the holy God. He declares you to be righteous by the finished work of Christ on the cross.

[ 23 : 20 ] He has washed you clean by the blood of the lamb. Jesus also cleanses your conscience and unites you to himself and your baptism. Here's water and blood mixed together once again at baptism.

Think about what baptism is. On the outside, your flesh is being dipped in the water like a ceremonial cleansing, preparing you for the consummation with your groom, Jesus Christ.

Christ and you rise up out of those waters as a new creation and you are given his name. You are now in the name of the father, the son and the Holy Spirit. You belong to the bride, his church, just like a bride being married takes on the name of the groom.

That's what you get at baptism, but he does not stop cleansing you by his blood. God also cleanses your desires. And he promises if you truly are grafted, united to Christ, you will bear fruit in your life, the fruit of the spirit from the inside, the fruit of the kingdom of heaven, the wine of heaven inside of you now bearing fruit.

And that's what the spirit delights to do every day you're alive. He is sanctifying you and he's cleansing you for the great day of consummation. When Jesus Christ returns and his bride is made one with him, not only spiritually, but fully consummately when he rules forever.

[ 24 : 44 ] For who is this such good news for whom? Is it for me? Could it be for a sinner like me? If God knew my thoughts, even today, this week, the Bible says it's for whosoever believes in the one who's cleansing blood of balance.

This promise is for you. Well, our transition comes then in verses 12 through 13. Take a look there. I want you to see, I believe this is a historical transition.

In other words, this cleansing of the temple took place in this near event, this near time, because he says after that, he left and then he stayed a few days and on his way.

And so those are, those are historical words. It's, it's implying that there's real movement. And shortly thereafter, Jesus goes from this remote town of a wedding, into the big city near the temple. And he comes to cleanse it.

The reason I highlight that I believe this is a historical transition. It truly happened soon is because all three other gospels, Matthew, Mark, and Luke, they only tell of one cleansing of the temple and they give it at the very end of his ministry, right before his passion begins, because he knows that by doing this act, he will be arrested and taken and killed.

[ 25 : 56 ] But because John also gives us at the beginning, I believe that there were two, most, most scholars I've read believe there were two cleansings of the temple. The second one was the final straw. They were put up with this no longer.

And this first one was a sign. It was a pronouncement. The second Moses is here, he has come to cleanse the very thing you have corrupted. So we're told Jesus went up to Jerusalem.

Now, Jerusalem is on a hill. So the Psalms of Ascent, they would sing them as they were approaching Jerusalem, hiking up toward this city on a hill. One of the mountains is called Zion. And so Zion then becomes a picture and a reference point of the future kingdom of God come to earth. And as they're ascending, you can only imagine what is it that's going through Christ's mind. Most likely he's, he's meditating and that's memorized these Psalms of Ascent. And they're setting the tone and they're, they're really setting the focus of our Lord as he approaches. And in Matthew 23, we have this really open eye opening insight into what Christ was feeling toward Jerusalem.

[ 26 : 57 ] As he approached, we read, Oh, Jerusalem, Jerusalem, Christ, Jesus, the city that kills the prophets and stones, those who are sent to it.

And Jesus knows this is his fate, not fate. This is his providence. This is what God has laid out as the path. He will walk. He will join this great line of those who reveal the true God to the people so that all would come to him and he'll do it to his very death.

And then we're told that the Passover was at hand. It's estimated that there were over 200,000 people participating. As the crowds would have been gathering.

I just want to try to set the scene. It would have been extremely loud. The scene that's going to be described is probably in the outer courts, which was a place where the Gentiles, that was as close as they could get to the Holy God.

And Jesus is seeing this money, money changing. He's seeing all these animals come and it's the festivities have begun. The blood is spilling down this canal.

[ 27 : 59 ] And that blood is for the cleansing of sinners. It's for the forgiveness of sins of all who will come by faith in God, trusting that God has given them a ceremonial way to be cleansed so their consciences can be at rest and they can enjoy the peace of God.

And so here come the poor and the scattered, even Gentiles, flocking to the city from all around.

And Jesus is seeing this all take place. But what happens next? What does he see?

Look at verse 14. In the temple, Jesus found those who were selling oxen and sheep and pigeons.

In Leviticus, we're told what every animal is supposed to accomplish in the forgiveness of sins.

And every animal represents a people group or the different, the different parts of the nation of God, his kingdom. The oxen represents an entire tribe.

The bull represents the high priest or the elders of that tribe, kind of the representative heads. The sheep represent the women and children. They're, you know, innocent to be protected by a shepherd.

[ 29 : 08 ] And then what about the pigeons? Well, the pigeons were there for those who were extremely poor and those who had no other means of being forgiven. And the point is this. God has

provided, even for the people of Israel, he has provided forgiveness of sins through the shedding of blood and making it available to all.

Everyone has access. It doesn't matter how poor you are. You could never dream of owning one little lamb in your whole life. There is an abundance of blood for you. And a pigeon will be provided. So that's the heart of God with these sacrifices. Now notice in verse 14, the tone changes. The money changers were sitting there.

Money changers, if you've ever traveled internationally or been to Chuck E. Cheese, either one will work. It's a ripoff. They want you to come in. They want you to take real money that you've worked hard for.

Change it at the airport or some tourist trap. You're going to change it into something that they say is required. Then you're going to use whatever that was to get the real thing. And if you think about like at Chuck E. Cheese, you could get the best toy there for probably \$4.

[ 30 : 17 ] You know, you're required to buy these tiny little tokens and have this, you know, Las Vegas experience and then exchange these tokens for something that you should have been able to get very, very cheap.

That's exactly what these money changers were doing. They were using extortion. They were doing just like the established church was doing right before the Reformation. They're trying to dangle up the forgiveness of God, which abounds and it's available.

The blood is there in the pigeons and in every animal. Everyone should be able to come and find forgiveness. And they have blocked it off with the authority of these Judean elites. And the priests are behind it.

And the teachers of the law. Well, that's the type of heart in these people that are ruling over the temple. That's supposed to be the place where even the Gentiles could come near and receive ministry and forgiveness.

And they're extorting people and abusing that withholding the forgiveness of God. Now, if God is just and if God is powerful and if it's the heart of God to forgive sinners, that's why Jesus came.

[ 31 : 19 ] Why would the zeal of Christ not burn against them? How could it not? Look at verse 15 and 16. What did Jesus do? He drove them all out of the temple.

Can you hear the coins hitting the ground? He overturned their tables and he told those who sold the pigeons specifically, they're going after the poor. Take these things away.

Do not make my father's house a house of trade. The real word there. The Greek word is emporium. They have turned the place that should be for worship and forgiveness of sins.

They've turned that into an emporium. In Mark 11, 17, we're told Jesus said, my house shall be called a house of prayer for who?

For all the nations. That's the purpose of the temple all along, that all the nations could approach their creator, be forgiven of their sins and worship him. But you have made it a den of robbers.

[ 32 : 22 ] Now look at verse 17. The disciples remembered that it was written. Zeal for your house will consume me. Turn to Psalm 69.

This is what they're quoting. In Psalm 69, you need to see this with your eyes. Psalm 69, what was Jesus fulfilling, what the disciples were recalling and what was coming to mind.

It gives us an insight into the heart of their Lord, of Jesus Christ, as he did this. So Psalm 69, verse nine, for the zeal of your house has consumed me.

Now look at verse 10. I wept and humbled my soul. So you remember the wedding feast, that groom that was about to be married.

He was very humble. He was low. He's about to be put to shame for how low he was. Jesus said, I will make myself low. I will take on a body being God, a very God lacking nothing.

[ 33 : 25 ] I will make myself low for you. I will humble myself to be near you. And now look at verse 12. I am the talk of those who sit at the gate. Well, there's the Judean elite.

They're sitting at the gate. They're keeping away the poor. They're keeping away the Gentiles, the nations that are supposed to be coming to pray to God. And now look at verse 22. This is what, what the psalmist, Psalm of David.

So David prays this in verse 22, as he sees this corruption of worship, he says, let their own table before them become a snare. And when they are at peace, let it become a trap.

So David sees the wicked and he curses them. He says, they are at peace and they have their table set up. Let that very thing that's giving them security and comfort become a snare to their soul.

So David's praying down curses on them. Now, we don't have this given to us clearly, but I want you to think about when Jesus overturns the tables.

[ 34 : 29 ] Think about that. Jesus is not praying a curse on them. He is getting their attention. He's giving them a sign.

He says, don't you know Psalm 69? Are my disciples the only ones that know the Bible? This table, you money changers, this is a snare for your soul for eternity.

Repent. Turn. You need to be like this table. I will flip you upside down if that's what it takes for you to believe in the son of God, whose blood abounds for true cleansing and forgiveness of sins.

That's the zeal of Christ. It's that even these greedy money changers would repent and turn to him. He's not praying curses on them. He's drawing their attention to the only one who can forgive their sins.

So do we worship a zealous God? Yes, yes, we do. Amen. Praise God. And his true disciples will have that zeal growing more and more.

[ 35 : 35 ] It's a zeal that the house, the dwelling of, of God's people, Jesus himself will be a place where all the nations gather to be forgiven. It's a place where we gather to pray for his gospel to go out to the nations, that every kingdom will be toppled over until Christ reigns supreme.

That's the gospel. Now look at verses 18 through 22 back in John chapter 2. Is this a stretch to say that Jesus is having his work on the cross on his mind as he does this?

Is that a stretch? Look at verse 18. So the Jews, they're not going to back down. He got their attention now. He's given them all a sign and the Jews gather around him.

They could have done more, but they decide to begin with discourse. What sign do you show us for doing these things? It's a direct question. You created a scene here, man.

You turned over everything that we're doing. Who are you? Isn't that ironic? That is the sign. He just gave them the sign. He says, you want a greater sign?

[ 36 : 46 ] Keep watching the son of God. Keep watching the son of God. Look at verse 19. Jesus answered them, destroy this temple. And in three days, I will raise it up.

Do you see where Jesus is in his mind? He knows this is what he came to do. He's tired of this blood of animals draining from the city. He's coming to bring the wine of heaven, his own blood that will sweeten and transform the inside.

Verse 20. Then the Jews said, it has taken 46 years to build this temple. See, they're in such a different place, aren't they? They are so clueless about what God is coming to do.

And they're referring to the third temple that was built by Herod the Great. Herod the Great. He's the one who wants to make Jerusalem be like Rome. You notice how it's John setting it up.

The people of God are so close to being like Rome that they're almost indistinguishable. And you know the moment when it finally happens? Okay. The people of God are the same as the world.

[ 37 : 45 ] It's when they're all gathered as one mob saying crucify him. That's where it leads when the church is worldly. Jesus, Jesus, in verse 21, was speaking about the temple of his body.

Verse 22. When therefore he was raised from the dead, his disciples remembered that he had said this, and they believed the scripture that the word of Jesus was spoken in.

But I want you to remember and take away is this. Verse 23.

Jesus knows what is in your heart. His zeal will consume all false idols.

And if God is turning your heart over and he's causing you to believe that there is blood that can forgive even a sinner like you, that's the zeal that will draw you into his kingdom.

[ 38 : 56 ] And that's the zeal that will cleanse you from the inside. And it's the zeal that will prepare you for heaven. There was a little girl who wrote this letter to a missionary.

She said, Dear sir, please receive this small contribution. She had saved up some of her money from working chores around the house. She said, My mother has taught me to pray the Lord's Prayer every day.

And every day I pray, Your kingdom come, Your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. And I realized, wrote the little girl, How can I pray this for God's kingdom on earth if I do nothing about it? So please use this small contribution for your kingdom, for God's kingdom purposes. She wrote this to the missionary from Scotland in the 1800s. See, that's the contrast with the money changers and the greeting.

In Mark 2, we're told, Jesus does not come to put new wine into old wineskins. Because if he does, the wine will burst, the skins, and both the wine and the wineskins will be destroyed.

[ 40 : 04 ] But the new wine is for fresh wineskins. Jesus says, You church, if I have given you a new heart that's able to receive and hold this gospel, this new wine, it's because you are my temple. You are in me, and I come to dwell in you. The Holy Spirit lives in you to prepare you for eternity with Jesus Christ. And if you're confused, then maybe you're feeling, I don't know what's in my heart.

My heart is a mix right now. That should be your prayer. Let Christ show you. Pray and ask him, reveal what's my heart. He commands his disciples to lay up for yourself treasures in heaven where neither moth nor rust destroy, nor where thieves break in and steal.

For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also. God did not need anything from the poor feast. We don't give anything that he needs.

But he delights to transform your heart, to win your heart over to him. And ask him to show you what that looks like for you today. Let's pray. From Zephaniah chapter 9.

[ 41 : 17 ] Oh Lord, our provider, you promised that on that day, it's the day when Christ will accomplish your gracious salvation. He enacted it on the cross, in time and space, in human history, once for all, for your people, for all nations.

On that day, the Lord our God will save us as the flock of your people. For like jewels of the crown, we will shine in your land.

We look forward to that day, Lord, when your kingdom is on earth. For how great is your goodness, and how great your beauty, O Lord. The grain shall make the young men flourish, and new wine the women.

So now, Lord, we ask that you will make your church flourish with the bread and the fruit of the vine as we enjoy the supper together. May it be a foretaste of your eternal wedding feast.

Amen.