

January 16, 2022

John 2: 13-25

## Jesus Clears the Temple

Well, I have wondered back onto the path that is our lectionary. This is a very interesting and confusing passage to start out with. So let's get into it.

What is the most angry you have ever gotten? Were you ever so angry that you lost it, as they say? While losing it, did you realize that you were not in control of yourself? What was the thing that set you off? This morning's gospel tells us of the time when Jesus lost it.

This is a great continuation from last week's sermon about how Jesus shocks us with His words and then His actions. This week things are in reverse. Jesus goes straight into shocking us with His actions and then later His words. So why would the order be reverse this week. There are times in life when talking to people about their actions has no effect on their behaviour. I suspect that was the case with the people selling things in the Temple. Jesus could have talked to them about how disrespectful they were being to God. Most likely His words would have no effect on what they were doing. They would ignore Jesus and keep on selling their stuff. Seems like making money there was more important than being respectful of the Temple space. Jesus's best option was to take action.

Jesus's response really reflects how the seller's actions deeply hurt Him. Jesus's response was very personal. It truly expressed how hurt and

angry Jesus was. For someone to search and look for cords and then plait them into a whip shows some serious and focused intent. The whip is the key to how angry Jesus was. A whip is a personal weapon and when you use it on people it becomes even more personal for them. When you use a whip on a person chances are you get to see their faces and look into their eyes and hear their screams. The personal actions Jesus took expressed how very upset and angry He truly was.

The thing that upset Jesus was the commercialization of Passover in His day. Did these people selling stuff have to be on the steps of the Temple? Could they not move their stuff to the market? There is a lot of irony in this parable here for us today. Yet it forces us to think and ask the question, is there a way to have religious celebrations with less commercialisms? Is Christ still in Christmas?

After the Temple clearing incident, Our Lord's words would be equally shocking. I am sure that those present who heard His words were stunned. Not only did He clear the Temple and make a mess, but now He says He will destroy the Temple and rebuild it in three days. AS we now know, Jesus was not talking about the Temple that He just cleared. Jesus was speaking of His physical body. Jesus is speaking of His resurrection and how after three days in the tomb He would rise from the dead. Early on in John's gospel there is a spoiler of how this is going to end. Only after Our Lord rose from the dead would His disciples remember His words and this incident.

The Lord's clearing of the Temple is a drastic event. It was very threatening to those around. It reminds us that anger does have its place and time. Jesus's actions point to how far the Jews have

wondered away from God. There are times we need to question our actions. Do we need to be selling stuff on the Temple steps? Their disrespect for God and the Temple personally effected Jesus. However He takes the appropriate actions for the situation in order to correct their behaviour. Sometimes anger inspired actions have their place as a last option.

I remember a spiritual father I had who reminded me of this passage. I was angry at myself for being angry with and other person. I reminded me that being angry was a normal human emotion . He said that even Our Lord got angry and brought up this passage. I often think that we have difficulty expressing anger when we need to as a last resort. It can be a great learning tool that shocks people out of their disrespectful complacency.

In the times and situations we live in, we are finding and experiencing a lot of unwanted and misdirected anger. Please be kind and gentle with each other. God bless and take care, Pastor D