

**Jesus, The True Temple (John 2:12-22)**  
**The Gospel of John: That You May Believe**  
**Southern Hills Baptist Church**  
**September 11, 2016**

**WELCOME**

Happy Sunday to you! We have the joy of hearing from God's Word tonight. I hope your hearts are hungry to hear from Him. If you have your Bibles, and I hope you do, please open up to John 2. We will be considering verses 12-22 tonight.

**INTRODUCTION**

Jesus is a complex man. His message is a simple one in many ways to be sure, but the person of Jesus is complex.

- Jesus is gracious, but He also loves justices.
- Jesus is tender, yet we see Him hold the Pharisee's feet to the fire on multiple occasions.
- Jesus offers freedom and demands obedience.

There is great complexity in the person of Jesus.

**Red Flags – Simplified Savior**

Something that should cause red flags to go off in our heads is when we see people boiling Jesus down to just one of His attributes. You don't have to look too far to find people who boil Jesus down to love. There is no greater love than the love of Jesus to be sure, but to boil Jesus down to nothing more than love is to dismiss the rest of who Jesus is.

**Example: Jesus is Love**

How many people have you talked to throughout your life that told you that Jesus was love and they used this truth to excuse sin in their life or the life of someone else? Yes, Jesus is love, but He also hated sin and told us that if we loved Him we would obey His commandments.

**Example: Jesus Hates Sin**

You can look to the other side of this pendulum and find groups like the Westboro Baptist Church, which I shudder when I call them Baptist, ugh, but this group has focused in on the words of Jesus that condemn sin and they overlook His mercy and grace altogether.

**Bending Jesus to Your Image**

Neither of these pictures of Jesus is accurate, are they? **They are characters of Jesus. They are efforts to reframe Jesus after your own image. They are efforts to bend Jesus to fit your will and it is all done behind the veil of following Jesus.**

**John 2 – Scene 1: Tenderhearted Service**

This truth comes to mind for me tonight b/c John 2 doesn't allow for this kind of thinking and I was smacked in the face with it this week. Last week Matthew walked us through the story of Jesus turning water into wine so that a couple getting married would not face great social shame. Jesus had multiple purposes in performing this miracle. Chiefly, He was working to establish faith in His followers, but in addition to that He was bailing out some friends at a wedding. Their lives were not in danger, they were merely facing great embarrassment. He was caring for people who had found themselves in a stressful situation. As Matthew pointed out last week, there is just a great picture of tender love shown here as Jesus cares for the emotional well-being of this couple.

## **John 2 – Scene 2 – Running People from the Temple**

Now just a couple of verses later we have a picture of Jesus that runs in the opposite direction in many ways. Jesus just got finished caring for this couple and now we see Him fashioning a whip out of chords, cracking it, and demanding merchants to run from the Temple before He makes them. Where did Jesus meek and mild go?

### **If You Only Know the \_\_\_\_\_ Jesus...**

You see, if you only knew "water into wine Jesus," you would have missed out on much of who Jesus is going forward. If you only know "cleanse the temple with a cracking whip Jesus," you would have missed out on much of who Jesus is as well. I would go even further and say that **if you only have a partial view like this, ultimately you don't know Jesus.**

### **Can't Have Blinders On**

Now certainly, we don't have to know every aspect of who Jesus is to know Him. Jesus is infinite in His person, meaning finite folk like us will never know all of who He is. **However, if we have intentionally put blinders on, as to only focus in on one aspect of who He is, we are not following Jesus, we are following our own will and wisdom and painting a cheap Jesus veneer over it to validate ourselves.**

### **John Won't Allow It. Behold Jesus!**

As I said before, John won't allow that to happen so he follows up this tender story of Jesus caring for those who may have been embarrassed on their wedding day with a story of Jesus' righteous anger as He clears and cleanses the temple. It is fascinating to see these stories side by side like this.

With that said, let's me open us in a word of prayer and we will read our text...

*Dear Heavenly Father,*

*We come tonight wanting to know you more, wanting to see your glory, wanting to better understand who you are by beholding the perfection that is your Son, Jesus. Open our eyes that we may see you clearly. Open our hearts that we may behold your glory. Cause our hearts to rejoice over your greatness. Help us to define ourselves in light of who you are as revealed from this text. To you be honor, and glory, forever and ever, Amen.*

Let's read our text...

### **John 2:12-22**

[12] After this he went down to Capernaum, with his mother and his brothers and his disciples, and they stayed there for a few days. [13] The Passover of the Jews was at hand, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem. [14] In the temple he found those who were selling oxen and sheep and pigeons, and the money-changers sitting there. [15] 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. [16] And he told those who sold the pigeons, "Take these things away; do not make my Father's house a house of trade." [17] His disciples remembered that it was written, "Zeal for your house will consume me."

[18] So the Jews said to him, "What sign do you show us for doing these things?" [19] Jesus answered them, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up." [20] The Jews then said, "It has taken forty-six years to build this temple, and will you raise it up in three days?" [21] But he was speaking about the temple of his body. [22] 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.

## Not the Same Story

Now, you may hear this passage and think, "Oh, I know this story!" But do you? Do you really? Maybe you do, but what I learned that was interesting about this account of Jesus cleansing the Temple is that it was likely a different event than what we get in Matthew, Mark, and Luke. In the 3 Synoptic Gospels, Matthew, Mark, and Luke present this situation at the end of Jesus' ministry. Here, John presents it at the beginning of Jesus' ministry. Additionally, there is variation in the accounts. Jesus addresses the crowds differently in John than in Matthew, Mark, and Luke.

## My Takeaway

So my takeaway from the reality that Jesus cleansed the Temple on more than one occasion is that the truths that we get in this passage are clearly dear to Jesus. These are no small matters as the issues that were raised in these situations spurred Jesus to very serious actions and on multiple occasions.

## Roadmap

So what important truth do we get from this unexpected event? This passage reveals 3 things to us about Jesus. We get insight into...

- Jesus' Great Passion
- Jesus' Victorious Promise
- Jesus' Divine Person

## JESUS' GREAT PASSION: THE GLORY OF GOD (vs. 12-18)

Verse 12 tells us that Jesus, His Family, and Disciples were all in Capernaum when the time of the Passover was at hand. As you will remember, the Passover was the greatest of the Jewish feasts. It was a time of worship where Israel would stop and remember God's powerful deliverance from Egypt or more specifically, Israel would remember how God passed over homes, who in faith, had painted the door frames of their homes in the blood of a sacrificial lamb.

## Long Walk

We read in verse 13 that Jesus went to Jerusalem to celebrate Passover. Let's not speed past this too fast. Capernaum, where Jesus was in verse 12, was 85 miles from Jerusalem. That is a long walk, right? **This just shows us the priority that Jesus made worship.**

## The Priority of Worship

It was common for Jews to make the pilgrimage to Jerusalem for this feast, but the further you were the less likely it was for a family to make it to Jerusalem. Despite the great distance, Jesus went, He made the sacrifice. I doubt He saw it as a sacrifice as worship should be a thing of joy.

## What Priority does Worship Have in Your Life?

Worshiping with the people of God ought to be a priority in our life as well. **At times we are going to feel like taking a pass** because we have other things going on or maybe we are just tired from a busy weekend, however, **we need to make worship the priority in our life that Jesus made it in His life.**

## Arriving to a Infuriating Scene

So Jesus heads down to Jerusalem to celebrate Passover with the people of God. When He arrives He makes His way to the temple, the center of worship, but what He finds greatly troubles Him. What does He find? Let's reread verse 14....

## **John 2:14**

[14] In the temple he found those who were selling oxen and sheep and pigeons, and the money-changers sitting there.

### **Cultural Context**

So what's the story here, why are animals being sold in the Temple? Why are bankers hanging out to change money?

### **The Traveler's Dilemma**

Well, during Passover Jerusalem was flooded with visitors from other cities and regions who are all coming to celebrate Passover. Part of the Passover celebration includes offering up a sacrifice to God. Now when you are traveling any distance bringing a lamb, an ox, or some pigeons along with you for the ride is less than convenient. They didn't have a backseat they could throw them in or a trailer to tow them in. It slowed down a trip considerably and brought a great deal of extra work to bring this sacrifice.

### **What Probably Happened – Seeing a Need**

So, what most travelers would do was buy the sacrifice they needed in Jerusalem. This was really just a matter of convenience. Now we can probably imagine what happened pretty easily, right? There is now a growing market for oxen, sheep, and pigeons during the Passover celebration. Merchants learn this and start selling during the Passover celebration and one enterprising fella thinks, "You know what, I get a fair amount of business being positioned here in the city, but what if I opened up a shop inside the Temple, in the Gentile courts. Everyone has to pass through the Gentile Courts and when they do they will see me. 100% of my target customers will know I am here and I will make life easy on them so they don't have to search the city looking for me."

### **A Profitable, Shameful Solution**

So Homeboy goes and sets up shop. He quickly finds out that all the people who need to buy from him have a variety of currency to pay with since they are from different cities and regions, so he partners up with a banker to change out money for a fee. I have to imagine business is booming, but not for long because every other merchant in the city catches wind of what is going on as their sales plummet and thus they all move their stands into the Gentile Courts in the Temple during Passover.

### **Imagine the Scene – Market Business**

Can you imagine what the Temple looked like to Jesus when He walked in? There wasn't one or two simple stands off in the corner of the Temple. There were likely lots and lots of merchants with all of their livestock vying for the attention of those coming into the Temple in order to land a sale. When Jesus walked into the Temple He probably wondered if He had walked into the Temple or a Bazaar, the market place downtown.

### **Jesus' Response**

So what did Jesus do? Did He command a crowd as He stood up and delivered a piercing sermon on the purity of worship and the ugliness of greed? That might be what we would expect from Jesus. Instead, He did this...

## **John 2:15-16**

[15] 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. [16] And he told those who sold the pigeons, "Take these things away; do not make my Father's house a house of trade."

## **Whips and Overthrown Tables**

Boom! Jesus isn't playing games. He made a whip and then drove them out of the courts. How do you drive someone with a whip? You crack it at them! So Jesus is swinging a whip at people and overthrowing all the tables sending the money scattered all over the ground. He isn't politely asking people to move along, He is making them move and forcefully dismantling the idolatrous marketplace in the process.

## **An Unexpected Response**

Now, I know most of you already knew this story, but try to remember back to the first time you heard about it. It was a little unsettling, right? It wasn't what we expect from Jesus, the friend of sinners, the one patient enough to explain and reexplain things to the disciples, the one who turned the other cheek and reviled not against those who reviled Him.

## **Why So Angry?**

So what is the deal? Was Jesus just having a bad day? Did He overreact? Why was He so harsh? These are all good questions. What was the deal here?

## **Passionate for God's Glory**

The first thing we need to know is that Jesus had a heart, a zeal, a passion for God's glory. Listen to what Jesus says in John 7...

### **John 7:18**

[18] The one who speaks on his own authority seeks his own glory; but the one who seeks the glory of him who sent him is true, and in him there is no falsehood.

## **God's Glory the Goal of Jesus**

This is Jesus describing Himself in comparison to others. Jesus didn't come seeking His own glory, but rather He came seeking the glory of God the Father. He desired to see God the Father exalted and made much of. He wanted people to enjoy God and find Him to be the satisfier of their hearts.

## **What Was the Temple?**

The Temple played a large role in Jesus' desire to see God glorified. The Temple was designated as a place of worship for the people of God. **It was to be a place where people would come and single-mindedly focus their hearts on the God who had delivered them time and time again.** Time in the Temple was to be time spent treasuring God. This is why it was prophesied of Jesus in Psalm 69:9 that, **Zeal for God's house would consume Him." Jesus' zeal for the Temple was a zeal for God's glory.**

## **The Market's Problem – Distraction from God**

**Yet, how were people going to set their hearts and minds solely on God when the Temple was full of merchants interested in negotiating deals for those who had come in from out of town?**

Imagine yourself there. Merchants barking out deals. Customers negotiating prices. The sound of coins clinking together. The sheep baaing, the oxen moo, and the pigeons chirp, how was anyone going to devote their sole focus to God?

## **Jesus' Statement – House of Trade**

**Jesus saw these merchants as distracting people from the true purpose of being at the temple** and the true purpose of the Passover celebration, which was remembering and celebrating God. We hear this sentiment ring in Jesus' command to the merchants to leave, telling them not to turn His Father's house a marketplace or house of trade.

## Still, Is This an Overreaction?

So Jesus had a heart for God's glory in the worship of His people and the house of God. Now you may hear this and think, "Ok, that is good, but still this was an overreaction. Couldn't Jesus just have explained to all that things had grown out of control and some balance needed to be brought?"

## Jesus' Divine Knowledge

What we need to remember is that Jesus knew far more than we ever could hope to. Verse 25 of this chapter tells us...

### John 2:24-25

[24] But Jesus on his part did not entrust himself to them, because he knew all people [25] and needed no one to bear witness about man, for he himself knew what was in man.

Jesus knew the heart of all the merchants that were there in the Temple selling animals. What He saw were men who needed to be driven out with a whip. **Who am I to question the Son of God who sees and knows men's hearts? What He saw in their hearts was clearly greed.** They had set up shop in the Temple, not to merely be of help to weary travelers, but to maximize their earning potential, no matter the impact.

## Profiteering Off God's Glory

These merchants were seeking to profit and feed their idolatrous hearts off of something God instituted for His glory. I think it is all becoming clear as to why Jesus was so angry.

## Relating to Jesus' Anger

I know some of the times I have been the most angry and sad have been when I have seen people take the name of God and use it for some kind of personal gain. It is always heartbreaking to hear stories of pastors who are found embezzling money, or televangelists who are calling upon people to send in offerings so they can supplement their millionaire lifestyles. **A love of God doesn't fuel these ministries, a love of money does. And just as Jesus drove these merchants out of the Temple He will drive away these greedy posers from the gates of Heaven.**

## Jesus Passion

What Jesus shows us about Himself in this interaction is that the glory of God is the great passion of Jesus' life, is it yours? I think we all would like it to be. As Christians that should be our goal.

## Application: A Quick Test

Here is a quick test to help determine if the glory of God is the great passion of your life...

- What makes you mad? What gets you angry?
  - Do you find yourself mad when your agenda is interrupted?
  - When your expectations are not met?
  - When people don't do what you wanted them to?
  - When life doesn't go as you had expected?
  - When your will was thwarted?
- Or
  - Do you find yourself angry when other's take credit for God's work?
  - When others demean God?

- When God is used as a means to an end?

**How easy do we find it to be unaffected by the dishonoring of God's name all the while being outraged over the dishonoring of our name?** I think this all very revealing of where our hearts lie.

May we be a people driven by a passion for the glory of God as our Savior is. May we grow to see God as the great treasure of our lives so nothing matters as much as Him.

### **An Often Abused Text**

Before we leave this portion of our text let me make one more note. **This text is often abused as a self-justification for our anger.** I am not sure if you have experienced this, but I have seen more than one Christian who was upset over something and went on a tirade. When being encouraged to calm down or to take a step back, they have responded by pointing out that Jesus drove people out of the Temple with a whip and turned tables over. They explained they were just following Jesus' lead.

### **Careful with the 1 to 1 Comparison**

Now, let me acknowledge this. It is possible to be angry and not sin. Jesus is our example of that. **However, I would add that it is dangerous to do a 1 to 1 comparison between yourself and Jesus with this situation. Here is the deal, you are not Jesus. Jesus was the Lord of the Temple. Jesus saw into the hearts of these men and knew what was necessary to restore God's temple. That ain't you my friend.** So when you are angry, even angry over sin or unholiness, we need to be slow in our response. **Our righteous anger should produce righteous actions.** Don't be naive and throw a fit or go off on someone and say it was ok because Jesus did the same. No! Jesus' example was different. I am not saying that it might not be appropriate at some point to turn some tables, but we better be slow to get to that point as we don't have the divine knowledge and wisdom of Jesus.

I'll let James have the final word on this particular issue...

#### **James 1:19-20**

[19] Know this, my beloved brothers: let every person be quick to hear, slow to speak, slow to anger; [20] for the anger of man does not produce the righteousness of God.

### **Transition**

Let's turn our attention back to our text. So Jesus has just scared the tar out of all the merchants in the Temple, driving them out, along with their livestock. He has made ruins of their market place. What will the fall out be? How will the people respond? Jesus has done something really serious here. Let's reread verses 18-22...

#### **John 2:18-22**

[18] So the Jews said to him, "What sign do you show us for doing these things?" [19] Jesus answered them, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up." [20] The Jews then said, "It has taken forty-six years to build this temple, and will you raise it up in three days?" [21] But he was speaking about the temple of his body. [22] 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.

### **Demanding a Sign**

So in response to Jesus' shocking actions the Jews, who were likely the leaders of the Temple who were near by, questioned Him, asking, "What sign do you show us for doing these things?" This is their way

of asking, by what authority do you do these things? They were asking for Jesus to demonstrate His authority with an on-demand miracle.

### **Seeing Something Different**

Now, a couple of interesting things to note in the response of these Jewish leaders. First, had these Jewish leaders thought Jesus was just some rabble-rouser or someone who was mentally unstable they had every right and authority to arrest Him. They didn't do that though. In fact they asked Jesus to preform a miracle. Do you think that was a common demand of someone who had done something like Jesus had just done? I can't imagine it was. Thus, what I take from this is that they saw something different in Jesus. They suspected that He may just be a heaven-sent prophet. Again, this just speaks to how Jesus was different by His very nature.

### **Who's Authority?**

Secondly, they don't appear to stop and do any assessment to the claims that Jesus has made. They don't stop to consider if they have really allowed the House of God to be made a common place of commerce. They don't take the time to think through the charges of Jesus. Rather they just want to know by who's authority Jesus acts. They didn't seem to be concerned about the purity of worship in the Temple of God's glory being the central goal. They just wanted to know if Jesus was within His jurisdiction to take these kinds of actions.

### **Transition**

The response that Jesus gives to this request for a sign reveals a glorious, sin-defeating promise, as well as some precious truth about His person.

### **JESUS' VICTORIOUS PROMISE: RESURRECTION VICTORY OVER DEATH (vs. 18-22)**

Again, the Jews wanted a sign, a miracle for Jesus to authenticate His authority for the extreme actions He took. They were asking for the wrong thing from Jesus though. Jesus is God, not a domesticated dog who sits on command. He does as He pleases. His miracles come on His timetable, not at the whim of any man.

### **Jesus' Enigmatic Reply**

Rather than giving them a sign, a miracle, right there, Jesus foretells of His greatest miracle that is yet to come, when He enigmatically says, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up." Now this statement was perplexing, no doubt, to the Jews. They respond by showing their confusion. They point out that the Temple took 46 years to build and Jesus invites them to destroy it so that He could rebuild it in 3 days?!? Even the disciples didn't understand what Jesus meant with this statement. We read that after Jesus' death and resurrection they thought back to this moment and pieced it together. Up until that point they had likely thought that Jesus was saying He could miraculously rebuild the Temple in 3 days.

### **2 Layers of Meaning**

This was a challenge the Jews were not very likely to take Jesus up on, but of course this isn't what Jesus really meant with this statement. What did He mean? I believe there are 2 layers of meaning to this enigmatic statement from Jesus.

### **Jesus' Greatest Work**

The first layer of meaning is what the Disciples came to understand after His resurrection. They realized that this statement was a foretelling of Jesus' greatest work, His resurrection victory over sin and death. This is what John reveals when he says...



### **John 2:21-22**

[21] But he was speaking about the temple of his body. [22] 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.

So Jesus' promise to rise again from the death is the ultimate sign that Jesus had authority to drive the merchants out of the Temple and rebuke the leaders for allowing His Father's house to be made a place of trade is that Jesus holds power over life and death. Death cannot defeat Jesus, but Jesus overcomes death.

### **Implications of the Resurrection**

What the disciples learned was that this promise of resurrection victory carried with it implications far richer than they could have ever imagined.

### **Unheld by Death**

It is Jesus' resurrection that means we have a Savior who lives on and can't be held by death...

#### **Romans 6:9**

[9] We know that Christ, being raised from the dead, will never die again; death no longer has dominion over him.

### **Forgiveness**

It is Jesus' resurrection that makes the forgiveness of our sins possible...

#### **1 Corinthians 15:17**

[17] And if Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile and you are still in your sins.

### **New Birth**

It is Jesus' resurrection that makes the new birth possible, giving us spiritual life that we may behold Jesus in faith...

#### **1 Peter 1:3**

[3] Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! According to his great mercy, he has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead,

### **Prayed For**

It is Jesus' resurrection that guarantees us an intercessor with God. Because Jesus lives He sits at the right hand of God praying for us and ensuring we are given what we need to follow Him...

#### **Romans 8:34**

[34] Who is to condemn? Christ Jesus is the one who died—more than that, who was raised—who is at the right hand of God, who indeed is interceding for us.

### **Resurrection Life**

It is Jesus' resurrection that guarantees resurrection life to all who are in Him. There is life beyond this life in Jesus...

#### **1 Corinthians 15:20-21**

[20] But in fact Christ has been raised from the dead, the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep. [21] For as by a man came death, by a man has come also the resurrection of the dead.

### **Jesus' Validation**

The Jewish leaders at the Temple wanted a sign, a miracle, something that would validate Jesus, giving Him the authority to do the things He had just done. As we work through the book of John we will see that Jesus delivers this sign in spades. He provides the greatest miracle of all time, God become man to lay down His life for broken, wayward, rebels. This miracle did more than prove that Jesus is the Son of God and the Lord of the Temple, it accomplished something eternal, it purchased salvation for any and all who would put their faith in Him!

### **Have You Believed?**

Have you placed your faith in Jesus? Have you trusted Him as Savior? Have you run to Him believing that there is hope in no other name? Our only hope is in the resurrected Savior. The Scriptures tell us that today is the day of salvation. Put your faith in Him today!

### **Transition**

This response from Jesus about rebuilding the Temple has yet another layer of meaning that we need to consider and rejoice over.

### **JESUS' DIVINE PERSON: THE TRUE TEMPLE (vs. 18-22)**

Jesus' reply to the Jews is also making a statement about His person, His Divine Person. When Jesus said, "If you destroy this temple, I will rebuild it in 3 days," **He was speaking to how He would be the New Temple. If the Temple, the physical building were taken down, He, Himself would be the rebuilding of the Temple.** It would be a new Temple, a Better Temple. He was going to rebuild the Temple as He had come to replace the Temple. Jesus is teaching that He is the True Temple.

### **The Law's Fulfillment**

We have talked about this in the past, but Jesus is the fulfillment to all ceremonial law that was given to guide and regulate worship in the Old Testament.

- Jesus is the better sacrifice.
- Jesus is our Great High Priest.
- Jesus provides us our eternal Sabbath Rest.
- Jesus is the true Mercy Seat.

We could go on and on as we think of the many ways that Jesus has fulfilled the Old Testament ceremonial law.

And here in these words of Jesus, we see Him showing us yet another way He is fulfilling the Old Testament law for us. Jesus is the True Temple.

### **Examples of Jesus the True Temple**

This is something that the Scriptures teach us directly. Jesus previews it for us in John 4 when He is talking to the woman at the well. Listen to their interaction...

### **John 4:19-23**

[19] The woman said to him, "Sir, I perceive that you are a prophet. [20] Our fathers worshiped on this mountain, but you say that in Jerusalem is the place where people ought to worship."  
[21] Jesus said to her, "Woman, believe me, the hour is coming when neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem will you worship the Father. [22] You worship what you do not know; we worship what we know, for salvation is from the Jews. [23] But the hour is coming, and is now here, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for the Father is seeking such people to worship him.

You see, in the past worship was connected to a place, Jerusalem, the Temple. **However, Jesus explains, the day is coming where true worship will not be attached to a place, but rather a person. The place has been replaced with something greater, someone greater, Jesus.** And thus, true worshipers will worship in spirit and truth. Worship is about a person, not a place. It is about Jesus, who is the True Temple.

### **Something Greater!**

Jesus speaks to it more specifically in Matthew 12:6 when talking to the Pharisees about the Law. He says...

#### **Matthew 12:6**

[6] I tell you, something greater than the temple is here.

Jesus is that something greater. He brings the fullness of God to us and He does so in miraculous ways, putting on flesh and dwelling amongst us.

### **Its Temple is the Lamb**

One more passage that speaks to this reality, Revelation 21:22-23

#### **Revelation 21:22-23**

[22] And I saw no temple in the city, for its temple is the Lord God the Almighty and the Lamb.  
[23] And the city has no need of sun or moon to shine on it, for the glory of God gives it light, and its lamp is the Lamb.

Jesus, the Lamb of God, is the True Temple. My goodness. I can't wait to live in eternity with Jesus serving as the Light of the World and God the Father as our Sun. The beauty will be incredible. It will be infinite. We will spend forever drinking in its awe-inspiring views.

Again, here it is, we are told that Jesus is our Temple.

### **What Does This Mean for Us?**

What does this mean for us? What does it mean that Jesus is our temple? Let's start answering this question by understanding God's purpose and function for the Temple.

### **Temple's Purpose**

The Temple was given to Israel as a gift of grace.

- It would be where the **presence of God would dwell.**
- It would be a place for Israel to come and **commune with God through worship.**
- It would be a place to find **mediation with the priests.**
- It would be a place to find **forgiveness through atoning sacrifices.**

**As the True and Better Temple, Jesus is all of these things for us in infinitely better and complete ways.**

### **A Better Presence**

You see, the presence of God dwelt in a sacred place of the Temple, known as the Holy of Holies. Not just anyone was allowed back there. Even the priests couldn't go back that often. They were allowed back once a year under very strict guidelines. There was a thick veil that separated the presence of God from His people.

### **Jesus' Better Presence**

It was a grace that God had made a dwelling place in the midst of His people, to be sure, but Jesus came and did one better. Jesus came and lived in the midst of His people.

#### **John 1:14**

[14] And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth.

### **The Torn Veil**

To symbolize the radical change that had come through Jesus, our True Temple, upon Jesus' death God rent the thick veil that stood between the Holy Place and the Holy of Holies in two.

#### **Matthew 27:51**

[51] And behold, the curtain of the temple was torn in two, from top to bottom. And the earth shook, and the rocks were split.

This wasn't a random event, it was God saying that through Jesus, the True Temple, there is no separation. **You can come to me in Jesus at any time, from any place.**

Jesus is our Better and True Temple.

### **A Better Place**

The Temple was to be a place for Israel to come and commune with God through worship. Thus pilgrimages were made at least yearly of all those who lived outside of Jerusalem. Long trips were taken for this privilege and joy.

### **With You Always**

Jesus says this though...

#### **Matthew 28:20b**

"And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age."

And as He told the woman at the well, we can now worship Him in Spirit and Truth. Our worship isn't connected to a place, it is connected to a person, our True Temple, Jesus.

### **A Better Meditation**

The Temple was a place of mediation between God and man. The priests were on hand to help mediate between the people and God. They served an intercessory role, helping you worship and fellowship with God. This necessary work took place in the Temple

## **Incomplete and Imperfect Work**

The work of the priests was always incomplete though, it was imperfect, it wasn't long lived. People would go back to the priests week after week to have sacrifices offered up and the priests were there day after day, offering up sacrifices.

## **Complete and Perfect Work**

The mediation found within the True Temple, Jesus, on the other hand... listen to what the author of Hebrews writes...

### **Hebrews 7:23-27**

[23] The former priests were many in number, because they were prevented by death from continuing in office, [24] but he holds his priesthood permanently, because he continues forever. [25] Consequently, he is able to save to the uttermost those who draw near to God through him, since he always lives to make intercession for them. [26] For it was indeed fitting that we should have such a high priest, holy, innocent, unstained, separated from sinners, and exalted above the heavens.

The intercessory work that goes on in the True Temple, Jesus is an eternal work that is complete and pure. Jesus, as the True Temple, offers us an eternal hope.

## **A Better Sacrifice**

The Temple was also where the forgiveness of sins was found through sacrifices that were offered up. These sacrifices were only band aide solutions however. They were never enough. As more sin entered an individuals life, more sacrifices needed to be offered up.

## **Once For All**

The sacrifice offered up with our True Temple was a perfect and complete sacrifice however.

### **Hebrews 10:11-14**

[11] And every priest stands daily at his service, offering repeatedly the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins. [12] But when Christ had offered for all time a single sacrifice for sins, he sat down at the right hand of God, [13] waiting from that time until his enemies should be made a footstool for his feet. [14] For by a single offering he has perfected for all time those who are being sanctified.

The sacrifice offered up in our True Temple is a **once-for-all sacrifice that has perfected for all time those who are being sanctified.**

## **Rejoice in the True Temple**

**It is a good thing, brothers and sisters, that we can call Jesus our True Temple.** It is through Him we meet God. It is through Him we worship God. It is through Him we have an intercessor with God. It is through Him that we find forgiveness of our sins.

## **CONCLUSION**

The story of Jesus' cleansing of the Temple teaches us so much about Jesus.

## **Great Passion**

It shows us His great passion, the glory of God. God's glory needs to be our passion as well. We need to live for Him and die to ourselves daily.

### Victorious Promise

We also got to see Jesus' victorious promise to overcome sin and death, rising to life after He laid it down for the church. We have eternal hope because Jesus came through on this glorious promise.

### Divine Person

We also know the person of Jesus better as He reveals Himself to be our Temple. He is where we find God and the forgiveness our souls need.

### He is Everything!

As we study the person of Jesus week in and week out as we walk through the Gospel of John we see so many layers to who Jesus is. We are only 2 chapters into our study and already I am left thinking to myself, Jesus is everything. He is all we need.

He is...

- The Word
- The True Light
- The Lamb of God
- The Son of God
- Rabbi
- Messiah
- The All Knowing One
- Jacob's Ladder
- The True Temple

**What isn't Jesus to us?!? He is all we need. He is our All-Satisfying, Sufficient Savior and Lover of our Souls.** I pray that as we continue to walk through John you allow the weight of each passage, each lesson to build until you find yourself completely submersed and overwhelmed by the grace of God as expressed in the person of Jesus!

Let's Pray.

