

THE CHRIST-CENTERED LIFE

Cleansing

John 2:13-22

INTRODUCTION: WELCOME

THE CHRIST-CENTERED LIFE

Are you allowing what God's Word tells us about the life of the Lord Jesus to directly impact your life? For instance,

- The first thing we examined a few weeks ago was God Becomes Man. We saw one of the reasons The Son of God became a man, in addition to His primary purpose of being our Savior through His death on the cross was to be an example to us.
- So, are you comparing His life to yours to learn and to change from His example?
- Did you examine your baptism to see if it was a biblical baptism?
- This last week, when temptation came, did you use the Scripture to gain victory over temptation?
- During a difficult time, did you respond by declaring your trust in God rather than putting Him to the test?

This morning we have another opportunity as we examine another event in the life of Christ. We read about it in John, chapter 2.

John 2:13–22 NKJV 13 Now the Passover of the Jews was at hand, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem.

14 And He found in the temple those who sold oxen and sheep and doves, and the money changers doing business. 15 When He had made a whip of cords, He drove them all out of the temple, with the sheep and the oxen, and poured out the changers' money and overturned the tables. 16 And He said to those who sold doves, "Take these things away! Do not make My Father's house a house of merchandise!"

17 Then His disciples remembered that it was written, "Zeal for Your house has eaten Me up." (Zeal – strong passion; deep feelings for the house of God and the people of God.)

18 So the Jews answered and said to Him, "What sign do You show to us, since You do these things?" 19 Jesus answered and said to them, "Destroy this temple, and in three

days I will raise it up.” 20 Then the Jews 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 of the temple of His body. 22 Therefore, when He had risen from the dead, His disciples remembered that He had said this to them; and they believed the Scripture and the word which Jesus had said.

Let me share a couple of notes about this text that will help us understand it better.

- First, Matthew, Mark, and Luke, all describe Jesus cleansing the temple.
 - However, each of them is describing Jesus cleansing the temple during the week of His crucifixion.
 - John is telling us about Jesus’ cleansing the temple about six months after He was baptized.
 - Jesus cleansed the temple twice. Once at the beginning, and once at the end of His ministry.
 - We are looking at the first time.
- Jesus’ action takes place just before Passover.
 - Passover was a very important celebration to the Jews.
 - During Passover, the Jews remembered God’s miraculous deliverance of them from slavery in Egypt, accomplished by the blood of the Passover lamb.
 - It was a time when Jews focused on the power, mercy, and kindness of God to them as a people.
 - This is important because it sets the context for what Jesus did, and it impacts our application of the truth communicated here in God’s Word for us.

So, look at verses 13 and 14.

John 2:13–14 NKJV 13 Now the Passover of the Jews was at hand, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem.

14 And He found in the temple those who sold oxen and sheep and doves, and the money changers doing business.

Why were these animal sellers and money changers even in the temple?

- One group were inspecting animals for sacrifice to make sure they were acceptable and selling animals to those who needed them.

- The other group was changing the foreign currency of Jews from other lands into the Jewish half-shekel, with which each male Jew had to pay the temple tax.
- The two groups were performing a necessary service.
- It was not what they did but how they did it, coupled with where they did it that ignited the fiery wrath of the Son of God.
- It is a matter of historical record ...
 - That those selling sacrifices customarily rejected any animal as “blemished” which were not purchased from them.
 - Having thus forced the worshipper to buy from the temple store, exorbitant prices were charged.
 - Additionally, the money changers charged from 10 to 25 % to convert currency to the required temple coins.
- What really enraged Jesus was that the dedicated pilgrims who had come long distances to worship and honor God were being fleeced by greedy swindlers and that it was being done in the name of religion.
- The very purpose of the temple as a place of worship was being subverted to make it a place of dishonest trade.

So, to a city full of people about to participate in a time to remember the goodness, mercy, and power of God, the Son of God says, “Clean up!”

- Get rid of the greed.
- Do away with the lies.
- Make an end of dishonesty!
- See the poor as an opportunity to demonstrate the compassion of the Lord, which compassion He had on you when you were slaves in Egypt.
- See the pilgrim as a brother and sister in need of lodging and help rather than a foreigner to be tricked and turned into an easy source of profit.
- If you indeed would worship the Lord your God for His salvation through the shedding of the blood of the Passover lamb, then get your hearts right. Does this sound right? Does this resonate with you that this is something the people should have done?

This was a very similar message to the one given by the Holy Spirit through the Apostle Paul as he wrote to the church at Corinth about people participating in the Lord’s

Supper. The Lord's Supper – worship God by remembering salvation brought through the breaking of Christ's body and the shedding of His blood.

Paul said,

1 Corinthians 11:23–29 NKJV 23 For I received from the Lord that which I also delivered to you: that the Lord Jesus on the same night in which He was betrayed took bread; 24 and when He had given thanks, He broke it and said, "Take, eat; this is My body which is broken for you; do this in remembrance of Me."

25 In the same manner He also took the cup after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in My blood. This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me." 26 For as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death till He comes.

27 Therefore whoever eats this bread or drinks this cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord. 28 But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of the bread and drink of the cup. 29 For he who eats and drinks in an unworthy manner eats and drinks judgment to himself, not discerning the Lord's body.

Jesus was saying, "Before you commemorate the deliverance brought by the blood of the Passover lamb, clean up your act."

The Holy Spirit here is saying, "Before you commemorate the salvation brought by the shedding of the blood of the Lamb of God, examine yourselves. Repent of sin that is in your life. Re-commit yourself to the Lord whole-heartedly."

Before taking the Lord's Supper together, we are going to take a few minutes for each of us to make preparation by examining ourselves.

Psalms 139:23–24 NKJV Search me, O God, and know my heart; ... And see if there is any wicked way in me, ...

PRAYER – We can never be worthy, Lord, but we want to eat this supper in a worthy manner that we may honor You as we remember what You have done for each of us.