



**(SLIDE #1) GREAT EVENTS OF THE BIBLE -- CLEANSING THE TEMPLE.**

**Introduction:**

- A. There Are Two Examples Of Jesus Exerting His Authority And Showing How He Despised The Desecration Of The Temple -- One At The Beginning Of His Ministry; Another Just Before His Death.
- B. **(Slide #2)** Cleansing Of The Temple At The Beginning Of His Ministry: John 2:13-25 **(Slide #3)** “Now the Passover of the Jews was at hand, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem. <sup>14</sup>And He found in the temple those who sold oxen and sheep and doves, and the moneychangers doing business. <sup>15</sup>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. <sup>16</sup>And He said to those who sold doves, ‘Take these things away! Do not make My Father’s house a house of merchandise!’ **(Slide #4)** <sup>17</sup>Then His disciples remembered that it was written, ‘*Zeal for Your house has eaten Me up.*’ <sup>18</sup>So the Jews answered and said to Him, ‘What sign do You show to us, since You do these things?’ <sup>19</sup>Jesus answered and said to them, ‘Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up.’ <sup>20</sup>Then the Jews said, ‘It has taken forty-six years to build this temple, and will You raise it up in three days?’ <sup>21</sup>But He was speaking of the temple of His body. **(Slide #5)** <sup>22</sup>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. <sup>23</sup>Now when He was in Jerusalem at the Passover, during the feast, many believed in His name when they saw the signs which He did. <sup>24</sup>But Jesus did not commit Himself to them, because He knew all *men*, <sup>25</sup>and had no need that anyone should testify of man, for He knew what was in man.”
- C. **(Slide #6)** Cleansing Of The Temple Just Before His Crucifixion.
1. **(Slide #7)** Mt. 21:12-13 “Then Jesus went into the temple of God and drove out all those who bought and sold in the temple, and overturned the tables of the money changers and the seats of those who sold doves. <sup>13</sup>And He said to them, ‘It is written, ‘*My house shall be called a house of prayer,*’ but you have made it a ‘*den of thieves.*’”

2. **(Slide #8)** Mk. 11:15-19 “So they came to Jerusalem. Then Jesus went into the temple and began to drive out those who bought and sold in the temple, and overturned the tables of the money changers and the seats of those who sold doves. <sup>16</sup>And He would not allow anyone to carry wares through the temple. <sup>17</sup>Then He taught, saying to them, ‘Is it not written, **(Slide #9)** *‘My house shall be called a house of prayer for all nations’?* But you have made it a *‘den of thieves.’*’ <sup>18</sup>And the scribes and chief priests heard it and sought how they might destroy Him; for they feared Him, because all the people were astonished at His teaching.”

**I. (Slide #10) Jesus’ Anger When He Observed The Money Changers At The Beginning Of His Ministry; He Cleansed The Temple. 14-17**

- A. “Now the Passover of the Jews was at hand, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem. <sup>14</sup>And He found in the temple those who sold oxen and sheep and doves, and the moneychangers doing business. <sup>15</sup>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. <sup>16</sup>And He said to those who sold doves, ‘Take these things away! Do not make My Father’s house a house of merchandise!’ <sup>17</sup>Then His disciples remembered that it was written, *‘Zeal for Your house has eaten Me up.’*”

**B. (Slide #11) Jesus Had Just Recently Begun His Ministry.**

1. He was baptized by John the Baptizer at the Jordan River; as He was baptized the Holy Spirit affirmed Him and the Father declared, “This is My beloved Son!”
2. Immediately He went into the wilderness and was tempted by Satan; He overcame Satan!
3. Tonight’s event was at the time of the first Passover since His baptism; thus, the first Passover during His ministry.
  - a. He had previously been doing His work in Galilee; now He comes to Judea.
  - b. This event is where He begins to assert His authority and to show who He really was and to cause people to listen to His message.
4. Why did He wait until age 30 to begin His ministry?
  - a. This was the age when a Jew would become or be viewed as a “rabbi.”
  - b. Was Jesus a Jewish “rabbi?”
    1. Well, he was a Jew!
    2. And He certainly was a teacher!
    3. And many viewed Him as a “rabbi!”
      - a. Judas Mt. 26:25
      - b. Judas when he betrayed Jesus. Mt. 26:49

- c. Peter. Mk. 9:5; 11:21
  - d. Andrew and another disciple of John. Jn. 1:38
  - e. Nathanael. Jn. 1:49
  - f. Nicodemus. Jn. 3:2
  - g. The Lord's disciples. Jn. 4:31; 9:2; 11:8
  - h. People who followed Jesus to the other side of the Sea of Galilee the day after He fed the 5,000. Jn. 6:25
4. 2 times He was called "Rabboni":
    - a. By the blind man. Mk. 10:51
    - b. Mary. Jn. 20:16
  5. He was NOT a "rabbi" of the Jewish establishment; He was THE DIVINE Master Teacher, He did not come to guide men to Judaism; He came as the Messiah who came to guide ALL men to God and to provide redemption to all sinners -- Jew AND Gentiles, to destroy prejudicial pride and bigotry, and to unite Jews and Gentiles in one Body, His Church!
    - c. So, at age 30 He would be viewed culturally as one who had the right to be a teacher.
5. Jesus went up to Jerusalem to observe the Passover as He had done each year; remember that we have the record of Him at the Temple when He was twelve years old. 13
    - a. The Passover was the first feast of the year -- the important feast remembering God's providential care for Israel -- this feast originated at the last plague in Egypt; it reminded Israel of God delivering Israel from Egypt! See Ex. 12.
    - b. Massive crowds came to Jerusalem for this feast.

C. (►) Jesus Found People Selling Oxen, Sheep, And Doves For Sacrifice And Moneychangers Exchanging Money. 14

1. There were several specific areas of the Temple.
2. **(Slide #12)** Those areas:
  - a. The Temple proper -- Most Holy Place and Holy Place.
  - b. The Court of the Israelites.
  - c. The Court of the Jewish women.
  - d. The Court of the Gentiles.
3. The money changing and animal selling was occurring in this Gentile Court.
4. Literally hundreds of thousands of animals would have been in this courtyard.

5. Money changers were exchanging money so animals could be purchased and so worshipers could pay the “Temple tax” of a half of a shekel. This tax had to be paid in Jewish money; it could not be paid in foreign money. See Ex. 30:13; Mt. 17:24.
- D. **(Slide #13)** Jesus Made A Whip Of Cords And Drove These Merchants Out Of The Temple Area!
1. The Greek word “scoivwn” suggests that the whip may have been made of “rushes” (think of tough grasses or a willow switch). Some think of a whip made of ropes.
  2. Jesus drove all of them out of the Temple:
    - a. The sellers of sheep and oxen along with their animals.
    - b. The moneychangers -- He poured out the coins and turned over their tables.
    - c. Those who sold doves -- He told them to take the doves away and do not make my Father’s house a house of merchandise (market).
- E. **(Slide #14)** Later As They Reminisced About This Event, The Disciples Remembered That It Was Written, “Zeal For Your House (Will Consume Me) Has Eaten Me Up!” 17
- F. It Seems That The Jews Understood That This Was A Statement Of Authority. Jn. 2:17-22
1. “Show us a sign.” Jn. 2:18
  2. Their question suggests, “Who gave you the authority to do this?”
  3. Jesus’ sign: “Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up.” Jn. 2:19
- G. The Jews Asked Him For A Sign To Validate His Authority To Do This Action. Jesus Gave Them A Sign: “Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up.”
1. They knew it had taken 46 years to build the Temple. “Will You raise it up in three days?”
  2. He was speaking about His Body!

## **II. (Slide #15) Jesus' Anger Three Years Later Just Before His Crucifixion.**

- A. (Slide #16) Jesus And His Apostles Came To Jerusalem On Monday, Just Before His Crucifixion.
  
- B. (▶) Jesus Went To The Temple And BEGAN TO DRIVE OUT ALL OF THOSE WHO WERE SELLING IN THE TEMPLE.
  1. He overturned the tables of the moneychangers and the seats of those selling the doves.
  2. He did not even permit anyone to carry a vessel through the Temple.
  3. He then taught them saying, "I will quote what had already been written and still exists, 'My house will be called a house of prayer but you have made it a den of robbers.'"
  4. (▶) The reaction of the chief priests and scribes -- they sought how they might destroy Him!
  5. REMEMBER -- the first time Jesus cleansed the Temple, the Jews said, "What's the sign that shows you have the authority to do this?" Well, they will receive the sign in just a few days after this second cleansing!

## **III. (Slide #17) Lessons From These Events:**

- A. (▶) God Despises Unrighteousness (Taking Advantage Of People).
  1. Events at the Temple -- cattle, sheep, goats, pigeons, and doves were offered at the Temple in sacrifices.
  2. Each person who came to worship was obliged to offer an animal.
  3. There were two ways of obtaining a sacrificial animal:
    - a. The worshiper could bring his animal from home. Deut. 12:10-15
    - b. He could buy it in Jerusalem.
  4. The Jewish religious leaders discouraged worshipers from bringing their own animals:
    - a. The Jewish leaders set up a LUCRATIVE business for selling animals; they saw the Jewish feasts as an opportunity to fleece the feast attendees by providing animals for sacrifice.
    - b. Many believe that Annas, the High Priest Emeritus, ran this enterprise.
    - c. The logic they may have given might have been:
      1. "That's too hard"
      2. "We'll make it easy, just come and buy your sacrificial animal from us!"
    - d. They charged exorbitant prices for these sacrificial animals.

- e. The worshipers came from many countries; they would have to exchange money before they bought the animal -- fees were charged to change money; thus, the worshipers were being “gouged” again.
  - f. This unrighteous fleecing of the worshipers was the reason for Jesus’ anger!
    - 1. They were unrighteous thieves -- they were taking advantage of the Lord’s people who came to worship!
    - 2. Someone might ask, “Why did Jesus get so upset? Weren’t these leaders providing a convenience to those worshipers who had traveled so far when they made those animals available?”
    - 3. These Jewish leaders were robbing these worshipers.
    - 4. They were practicing covetousness.
5. Why do you have these two different events? They seem almost like the SAME event.
- a. In the first event, Jesus is establishing Himself as One with authority.
  - b. In the second event He is pointing to His Death and Resurrection -- He will be shown to be TRUE Messiah!
  - c. Observe one difference:
    - 1. In the first cleansing of Jn. 2, He said, “Do not make **My Father’s house** a house of merchandise!” (He is emphasizing that He is the SON of God!
    - 2. In the second cleansing, He said, “**My house** shall be called a house of prayer.” (He is asserting His Divinity!)
6. Questions about the legitimacy of practices today:
- a. What about selling items in the Church building: “Is selling in the church building sinful?”
    - 1. “Does this text condemn the practice of Gospel Preachers coming to our Bible Series or to our Gospel Meetings and bringing and selling books?”
    - 2. “OR does this text condemn the practice of our children asking us if we would like to have Girl Scout Cookies, candles, or coupon books?”
  - b. Does this passage condemn preaching about giving? Does it condemn focusing upon building projects and urging everyone to make freewill offerings to support that project?”
  - c. These are legitimate questions and likely some that many of us have asked in our minds when we have read our texts today.
  - d. The answer is a resounding “NO!”
    - 1. Jesus is not opposed to people having good sound materials to read so that we might mature out faith.
    - 2. Jesus is not telling us that it is sinful for us to support our children’s school, sports, or scout activities.

3. Jesus commanded us to give as we have been prospered. I Cor. 16:1,2. We are to purpose in our hearts, II Cor. 9:7. We have to support the Church to keep up facilities and to proclaim the Gospel!
    - a. But remember, the church is about “freewill offerings;” not bake sales, garage sales, or business enterprises.
    - b. This in NO WAY suggests that people cannot do such things of their own volition at home or elsewhere and give the proceeds to the Lord.
  - e. REMEMBER, Jesus was talking about people being covetous THIEVES!!!
- B. (►) Christians Should Imitate Jesus If And When People Desecrate The Lord’s Church!
1. What was the source of Jesus’ anger?
    - a. Was it a temper tantrum that you might call a “Temple Tantrum?” NO WAY!
    - b. It was the DESECRATION of the Temple!
    - c. Righteous indignation is godly; in a pluralistic, postmodern, non-critical world, there is a real need for the Lord’s people to have some “moral outrage” and indignation at desecration of the Church!
  2. Do You Get OUTRAGED At Desecration Of The Church?
    - a. Paul challenged the Corinthian Christians who had miraculous gifts, “Do you not know that you are the temple of God and *that* the Spirit of God dwells in you? <sup>17</sup>If anyone defiles the temple of God, God will destroy him. For the temple of God is holy, which *temple* you are.” I Cor. 3:16,17
    - b. In doctrine?
      1. False teaching is a desecration of the Lord’s Church and His people.
      2. How does Jesus feel about false teaching?
        - a. Mk. 8:38 “For whoever is ashamed of Me and My words in this adulterous and sinful generation, of him the Son of Man also will be ashamed when He comes in the glory of His Father with the holy angels.”
        - b. I Tim. 4:16 “Take heed to yourself and to the doctrine. Continue in them, for in doing this you will save both yourself and those who hear you.”
      3. No false teacher should be given a voice by the elders of a congregation.
      4. Elders, ministers, and members should be outraged at such desecration!

- c. In perversion of Christ's ordained worship?
    - 1. Jesus despises desecration of His ordained worship!
      - a. Jn. 4:24 "God *is* Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth."
      - b. Gen. 4:6 "So the LORD said to Cain, 'Why are you angry? And why has your countenance fallen? <sup>7</sup>If you do well, will you not be accepted? And if you do not do well, sin lies at the door. And its desire *is* for you, but you should rule over it.'"
      - c. I Sa. 15:22 "Has the LORD *as great* delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, As in obeying the voice of the LORD? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, *And* to heed than the fat of rams."
      - d. God's declaration to Nadab and Abihu who offered unauthorized fire on the altar. "By those who come near Me I must be regarded as holy; And before all the people I must be glorified." Lev. 10:3
    - 2. Lord's Supper on ANY Day?
      - a. This Day was established to honor the Resurrected Lord Jesus!
      - b. The Lord's Day is when people are to remember HIS Death during worship! It's disrespectful to do it on other days!
    - 3. Instrumental music in worship.
  - d. In bring an unholy life to worship holy God?
    - 1. Am. 5:21-24 "I hate, I despise your feast days, And I do not savor your sacred assemblies. <sup>22</sup>Though you offer Me burnt offerings and your grain offerings, I will not accept them, Nor will I regard your fattened peace offerings. <sup>23</sup>Take away from Me the noise of your songs, For I will not hear the melody of your stringed instruments. <sup>24</sup>But let justice run down like water, And righteousness like a mighty stream."
    - 2. It is desecration of the Lord's Church to bring a hate-filled heart, hand dripping with blood, a lust-focused mind, a filthy tongue, a drunken life into worship and expect God to smile and accept your worship. It is desecration of the Church!
    - 3. Tolerated sinful living by Christians desecrates the Church!!!! I Cor. 5:6 "Do you not know that a little leaven leavens the whole lump?"
3. Do you feel "responsible for" or "protective of" the Lord's Church?
- a. Jesus did!
  - b. How should WE be responsible for or protective of the Lord's Church?
  - c. Would "zeal for His House" eat you up if people tried to desecrate the Church today?
  - d. If you do not have a personal attachment, if you do not feel protective, something is wrong either in your understanding of or in your commitment to the Lord and His precious Church!

- e. Does your heart yearn and do you say and sing, “I LOVE THY KINGDOM LORD!”

**(Slide #18) Conclusion:**

- A. Love The Lord, Love His Church, Love Holy Living!
  
- B. Despise Desecration In Your Own Life!
  
- C. Despise Desecration In The Church.
  
- D. Would Christ Commend Your Zeal For Righteousness?