

Small Group Discussion Guide

“Miracle Man” (pt. 2) – 5/25/2014

Scripture: John 2:12-25

Bottom Line: Jesus is the new and better temple.

INTRODUCTION:

What upset your parents the most as a kid? In life we learn that different things upset people to varying degrees. The story we are looking at today is a side of Jesus not often seen. His anger was the right response though because what was happening was not honoring to the Lord.

UNPACKING THE GOSPEL IN THE BIBLE:

Read John 2:13-17

What is Passover?

- For the Jewish nation, Passover was the equivalent of Easter for Christians. It represented a time of remembrance for when God delivered the Jews from slavery to Egypt. God had commanded the Egyptians to release the Israelites from slavery. When they refused, God began to pour out his wrath. Each time they refused to release the Israelites, his wrath grew more serious. Finally, God said he would take the life of every firstborn son if the Israelites were not released. God told the Israelites that their children would be safe from his wrath if they placed the blood of a lamb on their door. For those who obeyed, God spared them from his wrath. They were saved by the blood of the Lamb. After this, the Israelites were granted their freedom. Every year, the Israelites gathered to celebrate this deliverance.

What is the temple?

- The temple was where heaven met Earth. This was the only place where God's people could normally connect with God. So if the temple had been distorted, as it had been in this story, then God's people were basically unable to commune with God through prayer and sacrifice.

Why was Jesus so angry?

- The religious leaders were leading both Jews and Gentiles (non-Jewish people) astray. Parts of the temple were to be open to all people but with all those animals inside the temple grounds, it was more like a crowded market than a place of worship.
- The religious leaders were placing money over people. The sellers of the animals for sacrifice were price gouging the price of the animals. This was limiting the people's ability to worship God because they couldn't afford to buy the animals and often couldn't afford to bring their animal from a long distance to the temple.

Read John 2:18-25

The Jews wanted a sign in order to show that Jesus had the authority to do the things that he was doing. Jesus' response was, "When you kill me, I will raise from the dead 3 days later!" Not only does Jesus clear the temple, but he eventually replaces it. John 4:21-26 says this clearly enough. Those who worship God will worship in spirit (Holy Spirit, not tied to a location) and truth (Jesus, who is the way, the truth, and the life).

UNDERSTANDING HOW THE GOSPEL APPLIES TO MY LIFE:

How is Jesus the new and better temple?

- To know Jesus is to be in the presence of God. Jesus is our more perfect sacrifice for sin. In fact, Christians are declared perfect forever before God because of Jesus' sacrifice. That never happened with the old Temple. Rather, the priests had to continually offer sacrifices for the people and for themselves. Jesus is our great high priest who cares for us non-stop, whereas the other priests could only care for so many people at a time.

LIVING OUT THE GOSPEL IN MY EVERYDAY LIFE:

How does the knowledge of having Jesus as the 'newer and better' temple affect your daily life?

- The temple represents God's presence and forgiveness. Christians have that through Christ.
- The temple was where people met God so we should lift up the name of Jesus because through him people come to know God.