



Morningside Church

Sermon Discussion Guide

Title: Cleaning House

Date: March 9, 2025

Scripture Text: John 2:12-25

Series: Believe - The Study of the Book of John

Notes:

Today we pick back up on our study of the book of John. Beginning with chapter 2 Jesus is starting His public ministry. For the next 3 ½ years He'll be laying the groundwork for His redemptive work and preparing 12 ordinary men to carry on the work of sharing the gospel message to the world. In today's passage, Jesus is entering Jerusalem to celebrate Passover. While there He sees how the people's hearts have grown hard toward the desires of His heavenly Father. As we take a look at the people Jesus encounters in the temple, and how He responds to them, ask yourself if we have the same heart issues as the Jews. How would Jesus respond to you based on the condition of your heart? Let us look at how this scene unfolds...

I. Jesus Exposes the Sin (John 2:14-17)

When Jesus arrives at the temple, instead of a place of worship, it had been turned into a place of commerce. As Jews gathered in Jerusalem to celebrate Passover, they would travel from all over the known world. It was not practical for them to carry the required animal sacrifices, so the temple authorities allowed for the selling of animals for sacrifice, and the exchange of money, from Roman currency to Jewish currency. Initially, this provided an important service for the Jews to help them in their celebration of Passover. But over time, the practice grew and became corrupt. They set up in the Court of the Gentiles, leaving less room for them to gather. It is said their currency exchanges were not accurate. They had turned a service opportunity into a selfish practice. They became more concerned in making profit than helping others.

- How would you describe Jesus' response to those selling animals for sacrifice and the money changers?
- Based on His response, how important is it to maintain a pure heart?
- What are examples today of people who may start out serving God through ministry to others but then became selfish, seeking their own profit or recognition?
- How can we protect ourselves from falling into a similar situation?



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II. Jesus Expresses a Sign ([John 2:18-22](#))

In response to Jesus' cleansing of the temple, the temple authorities demanded a sign from Jesus to demonstrate His authority for overturning their temple marketplace. Jesus' response was misunderstood, as He was making a prophetic reference to His resurrection: "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up". So often people feel 'if only I was given a sign, I would believe'. Probably not! All that is needed for belief in Christ has already been provided through His word and in His creation. If that's not enough to convince the unbeliever, then an additional sign won't make a difference.

- How was it that the temple authorities were missing the point Jesus was making?
- Vs. 22 states that Jesus' disciples remembered Him saying this when He was resurrected. How can the condition of our heart contribute to our own understanding/misunderstanding of Jesus and His word?
- Why is God's word sufficient when it comes to demonstrating who Jesus is?
- What would you say to someone who is looking for a sign from God on who Jesus is?

III. Jesus Expects Sincerity ([John 2:23-25](#))

"In the New Testament the word believe does not always mean that a person has placed genuine faith in Jesus. The spectators in Jerusalem must have exercised only intellectual assent—perhaps agreeing that Jesus might be some significant prophet who has come among the people. But the Lord looked right into their hearts and saw their motives. Their faith had been placed in his works rather than in his person. Therefore, he would not entrust himself to them." (Gangel)

- What is the difference between how the people believed Jesus in vss. 23-25 compared to how He wants us to believe?
- How can Christians demonstrate they have sincere belief?

What does it mean for a person to 'clean house'?

Why is it important for Christians to pause from time to time to do personal reflection and determine if there are areas in their life that need cleaning up?

What are signs that a believer may be selfishly motivated?

Do you need to do some of you own house cleaning in your heart?