

Temple - continued

5:7; 2 Cor. 6:14 – 7:1). Denominational doctrines, fellowshiping sin, unauthorized practices, etc., need to be run out of the local church. Who will do it?

Jesus' Work of Cleansing

Jesus's cleansing of the temple was not the only cleansing he did while on earth. He came to cleanse mankind of their sin (Hebrews 1:3). Jesus' blood cleanses mankind from sin when each person applies that blood in baptism (Ephesians 5:26) and when an erring Christian confesses (1 John 1:7,9).

Only those who are cleansed enter into heaven's temple (Revelations 7:5) and we must never forget that we have been cleansed (2 Peter 1:9).

What Is Needed Today?

What is needed to cleanse the temple of God's people today. We need the same attitude and example of Jesus! We need his fervent zeal: "Zeal for thy house..." (John 2:17; Psalm 69:9). We need his spiritual focus: "A house of prayer..." (Matthew 21:13; Isaiah 56:7). And we need his honest sincerity: "A den of robbers (Matthew 21:13; Jeremiah 7:1-11).

- Chris Reeves -

- Thought of the Week -

Who is hurt when I sin? I want think about who is hurt so that I may not sin again. What pain am I inflicting on myself and others when I sin? Well, God is hurt when I sin because I violate his law. Jesus is hurt because it is like crucifying him afresh. The Holy Spirit is hurt because it is his word that is revealed to me. Others in my life, like family and friends around me, are hurt especially if my sin directly affects them. And, of course, I am hurt because I am now out of fellowship with God.

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For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh, for the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh, but divinely powerful for the destruction of fortresses.
- 2 Corinthians 10:3-4 -

Temple Cleansing

And he found in the temple those that sold oxen and sheep and doves, and the changers of money sitting: and he made a scourge of cords, and cast all out of the temple, both the sheep and the oxen; and he poured out the changers' money, and overthrew their tables; and to them that sold the doves he said, Take these things hence; make not my Father's house a house of merchandise.

- John 2:14-16 -

Jesus Cleansing the Temple

There were two times in the earthly ministry of Jesus that he “cleansed” the temple. The first time was during the first Passover of his ministry (John 2:13-17). And the second time was during the last Passover of his ministry (Matthew 21:12-13; Mark 11:15-17; Luke 19:45-46).

When we speak of Jesus “cleansing” the temple, we do not mean that he washed it with soap and water. We mean that he rebuked the Jews in the temple who were misusing the temple and he physically confronted and opposed their business.

There would have been a large number of Jews in Jerusalem at the

time of the Passover, which would explain the temple business practices and Jesus’ impact on the crowd.

Where did his “cleansing” take place? Somewhere in the temple complex (Gr. *hieron*), probably the court of the Gentiles.

What was the basic problem that Jesus was attacking? Jesus was not opposed to business practices per se. He was opposed



to the Jews turning a place of worship into a “house of merchandise” (Gr. *emporion*, emporium). The Jews had lost sight of the true purpose of the temple. Buying and selling lambs and oxen for the sacrifices and feasts had become a big business. And moneychangers were present to convert Roman currency into Jewish currency for the temple tax (Exodus 30:11-16; Matthew 17:24). Their minds were on their business and not on worshipping God.

But why did Jesus act the way he did? Why did he have to take such drastic actions. Well, blatant misconduct called for drastic measures. The “Father’s house” (Luke 2:49) was being desecrated and misused. There was worship with animals, but without reverence and holiness (Isaiah 1:11-17; Jeremiah 7:22; Hosea 5:6; 8:13).

God’s house was to be for “all nations,” but the court of Gentiles (nations) was filled with the noise of business, not worship.

Temple Cleansing Today

Jesus’ actions on these two occasions raises the question: Does there need to be temple cleansing today? For example, does the “temple” of our body need cleansing (1 Corinthians 6:19-20)? Individual Christians sometimes need cleansing from sin (Jas. 4:7-10). Their mind and body have been polluted with drugs, alcohol, smoking, pornography, profanity, etc. (Matthew 6:23; Philippians 4:8).

Does the “temple” of the local church need cleansing (Ephesians 2:21; 1 Corinthians 3:16-17; 6:16)? Local churches sometimes need cleansing from worldly influences (1 Corinthians