

SIGNS

in the Book of John



The Lord of the House

Key idea:

Jesus cleansed the Temple as a sign that He is the Lord of God's House, and the True Temple of God.

Key text:

John 2:13–25 NIV2011

When it was almost time for the Jewish Passover, Jesus went up to Jerusalem. ¹⁴ In the temple courts he found people selling cattle, sheep and doves, and others sitting at tables exchanging money. ¹⁵ So he made a whip of cords, and drove all from the temple courts, both sheep and cattle; he scattered the coins of the money changers and overturned their tables. ¹⁶ To those who sold doves he said, "Get these out of here! Stop turning my Father's house into a market!" ¹⁷ His disciples remembered that it is written: "Zeal for your house will consume me."

¹⁸ The Jews then responded to him, "What sign can you show us to prove your authority to do all this?" ¹⁹ Jesus answered them, "Destroy this temple, and I will raise it again in three days." ²⁰ They replied, "It has taken forty-six years to build this temple, and you are going to raise it in three days?" ²¹ But the temple he had spoken of was his body. ²² After he was raised from the dead, his disciples recalled what he had said. Then they believed the scripture and the words that Jesus had spoken.

²³ Now while he was in Jerusalem at the Passover Festival, many people saw the signs he was performing and believed in his name. ²⁴ But Jesus would not entrust himself to them, for he knew all people. ²⁵ He did not need any testimony about mankind, for he knew what was in each person.

Key points:

1. Jesus' second sign is the cleansing of the Temple in Jerusalem.
2. According to John's Gospel, the problem with the selling of animals and exchanging of money in the Court of the Gentiles is that it interfered with worship and prayer by turning the Temple into a market.

3. The disciples responded to this sign by remembering Psalm 69:9 “Zeal for Your house will consume Me.”
4. The Temple authorities challenged Jesus to give them a sign that He had the authority to cleanse the Temple. His response, which they misunderstood, was that if they destroyed the True Temple of His body He would raise it in three days.
5. The Scripture taught that the Messiah would purify the Temple and worship of God, and would establish the True and final Temple of God in the earth. Thus, this sign is an indication that Jesus is the Messiah, and the True Temple of God.
6. There were three responses to Jesus’ actions: the disciples believed Jesus and the Scripture; the authorities rejected Jesus, His actions, and His Word; many in the crowds liked what Jesus was doing, but their faith was not a true, full, enduring faith.

Questions for discussion/application:

1. What part of Sunday’s text and teaching stood out most to me? Why?
2. In what ways is this second sign different than the first one? What does this teach me about the nature of the signs and the Lord which they reveal?
3. How do I think the Temple authorities would justify selling sacrificial animals and exchanging money in the Temple? Why are there no reasons acceptable to Jesus to justify these practices?
4. Who determines what is acceptable in worship? How do I determine if something is acceptable in worship?
5. On Sunday Bret said “This is a warning that God does not place a premium on convenience but rather true worship. In fact, God sometimes requires that which is inconvenient as an antidote to us being formed and fashioned by the world around us.” How important is convenience in modern America? Can I think of areas where convenience might be eclipsing true worship and growth in my own life?
6. How does zeal for God’s house consume Jesus? Can I think of two levels of meaning in how this applies to Jesus? Can I say that zeal for God’s House and His worship consumes me?
7. Malachi 3 declares that the Lord would suddenly come to His people and His Temple as a cleansing and purifying fire. How do I think Jesus would respond if He came to local churches today? How do I think He would respond if He came to BRCC? Why?

8. What is the difference between the faith of the disciples and the “faith” of the crowds in Jerusalem? Why does Jesus not “put His faith/entrust” Himself to the crowds in Jerusalem? Which type of faith is evidenced in my life?
9. Whom can I pray for, share what I have learned, and invite to church this week?

Preview of next week: The Lord Who Heals You (John 4:46-54)