

The Year of Discipleship in 3-D

(Further Developing Devoted Followers of Christ)



Welcome! Growing into more fully-devoted followers of Christ, may this time help all: **Grow Upward** into a more mature personal relationship and commitment to Christ Jesus faithful to God's Word!

Grow Outward to neighbor and world around, learning how to love well and to lead in what matters to God - guided by God's Word, by Jesus Himself, and by the Holy Spirit!

And, **Grow Inward** to discover a more contemplative faith, enhanced by both silence and prayer!

The Scripture for Sunday, January 16, 2022
[STUDY LESSON 19]

THE GOOD NEWS READING:

John 2:13-25

{13} The Passover of the Jews was near, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem. {14} In the temple he found people selling cattle, sheep, and doves, and the money changers seated at their tables. {15} Making a whip of cords, he drove all of them out of the temple, both the sheep and the cattle. He also poured out the coins of the money changers and overturned their tables. {16} He told those who were selling the doves, "Take these things out of here! Stop making my Father's house a marketplace!" {17} His disciples remembered that it was written, "Zeal for your house will consume me." {18} The Jews then said to him, "What sign can you show us for doing this?" {19} Jesus answered them, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up." {20} The Jews then said, "This temple has been under construction for forty-six years, and will you raise it up in three days?" {21} But he was speaking of the temple of his body. {22} After he was raised from the dead, his disciples remembered that he had said this; and they believed the scripture and the word that Jesus had spoken.

{23} When he was in Jerusalem during the Passover festival, many believed in his name because they saw the signs that he was doing. {24} But Jesus on his part would not entrust himself to them, because he knew all people {25} and needed no one to testify about anyone; for he himself knew what was in everyone.

DISCUSSION GUIDANCE AND QUESTIONS:

For an overview of "The Temple" theme consider watching:

<https://bibleproject.com/explore/video/temple/>

1. Open *(or have someone in the group open)* with a prayer inviting the work of the Holy Spirit to open up the hearts and lives of any and all to shape believers into more fully devoted following of Christ.
2. Read *(or have one or more persons read)* the passage printed above *(or from a bible)*.
3. What words or phrases caught your attention as you heard this passage read? Put another way, were you to choose to memorize a verse and cherish it from this text, what verse might that be and why? Take note within yourself, what sort of feelings arise in that word, phrase, or verse?
4. BACKGROUND NOTES: This text is "sandwiched" between the account of the wedding at Cana in Galilee and the upcoming encounter of Jesus with Nicodemus, a Pharisee. The location shifts from the region of Galilee to that of Jerusalem. Jesus' first (of three in John) journey to Jerusalem takes place in anticipation of the Passover celebration. Important is the location of the temple cleansing in John as

- opposed to the synoptics where this event takes as He enters Jerusalem prior to the passion.
5. BACKGROUND NOTES (Cont.): (*See Matt 21:12-13; Mark 11:15-19; and Luke 19:45-48*) for comparison with John's accounting. All three reference Jesus calling out how the temple was being turned into a "den of robbers." A tipping point for Pharisees wanting to put Jesus to death occurs following the raising of Lazarus in John (*See John 11:53*) rather than the temple cleansing here.
 6. Do you perceive any possible "connective tissue" between the cleansing of the temple in Jerusalem and the Wedding of Cana in Galilee?
 7. Dissect the progression and acts of Jesus in the temple. What stands out for you?
 - a. Finding people selling animals and money changers seated at tables
 - b. Makes a whip of cords
 - c. Drives all of them, sheep and cattle, out of the temple.
 - d. Pours out the coins of money changers and overturns tables
 - e. Tells dove sellers to take them out
 - f. Charges them with making His Father's house a marketplace
 8. Notice the call for a "sign" (exclusive to John) from the Jews. A sign points. How does Jesus respond and what might be some of the implications of such a retort? (*Pay attention of John's clarification of Jesus' declaration in John 2:21.*) What does Jesus seem to be pointing the people to?
 9. How different is the experience of a relationship with a building or a location as compared to a relationship with another person or human being?
 10. Getting close to home, what is it among us (individually or collectively) that is in need of cleansing today?
 11. Could you see Jesus arriving in our place of worship today and "overturning" some of our behavior or activity therein? What might that be?
 12. Jesus will use the expression "my Father" (2:16) about 25 times in the Johannine Gospel. What might Jesus be wanting to communicate to us giving His "abiding" with His Father in this particular way?
 13. Are you able to rest in the assurance, as you follow Christ, that "The LORD will provide?" How has that happened for you and/or when was a notable time you sensed that assurance or God's provision?
 14. In John 1:14, we read that "the Word became flesh and lived among us," an expression literally translated as "pitched a tent." How might this shift of emphasis regarding the presence of God impact the hearer as "presence" is not found in a building but in a person?
 15. The text ends on a skeptical note regarding believing in Jesus' name based on sign witnessed (John 2:23-25). Do you ever wonder (or worry) about having a genuine faith?
 16. What is your main discipleship "takeaway" from this text?
 17. Can you identify any particular ways your Christian faith and following might be inspired to change in light of this text from John (and any discussion and/or reflection that may have taken place)?
 18. (*Optional*) Read the passage once more. Then, take some time to close (or have someone close) with a prayer.