

Sent: Wednesday, November 05, 2014 11:21 AM
Subject: Last Nite's MOB Session

Men--Last nite we got into Lesson #8 in our study of the Gospel of John! The text was John 2:13-25, and it describes Jesus's extreme anger--well, "righteous indignation"--about how "His Father's house," the temple in Jerusalem, had become "a place of business" and a "den of thieves." Religion had become "crass and materialistic"! True worship was nonexistent! "Spiritual cleansing" was needed! And major change with the entire system was pending!

Ironically, the great temple in Jerusalem, where the Passover of the Jews was again about to be celebrated, was "looking good"--on the outside! Herod, the Great--the same wicked king who earlier had tried to kill the baby Jesus, and anyone else who he thought might challenge his kingship--had been overseeing costly renovations of the temple complex. This included beautiful new colonnades and a spacious "outer court for Gentile worship." He was doing this to appease the Jews, who really didn't like him! Nothing like a little bit of religion to anesthetize and control the masses! With Herod involved, you just knew there must be something "fishy" going on--something really basically wrong with what was happening there!

Among other things, our lesson highlighted more about who Jesus was (and is!). He called the temple "His Father's house"--and then "made a scourge of cords and drove out the money changers" and even the animals, overturning the tables and causing a minor (well major!) disaster area! It obviously caused a whole lot of turmoil--and you can understand why the Jewish leaders, who condoned these activities, immediately wanted to find a way of getting rid of Jesus!

By what authority was He doing this, they wanted to know! Who does He think He is? And could He give a "sign" to support His actions? Jesus responded with: "Destroy this temple and in three days I will raise it up again!" Even His disciples must have been a bit confused by this answer! But John writes that, later, "...when He was raised from the dead, they would remember that He had said this; and they believed the Scripture and the word which Jesus had spoken" (our memory verse for this week!)

Jesus, through this incident, was actually referring to the "temple of His body," and, in some way, revealing His coming death and resurrection, which was all part of God's amazing plan of salvation "for the whole world"! But He was also giving a lesson about what true worship is really all about! He would later tell the Samaritan women, in John 4:23-24, that "...an hour is coming and now is, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth; for such people the Father seeks to be His worshipers. God is spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth."

And so, we as readers of John's gospel get a better glimpse of Jesus's purpose for coming into world--to suffer and die for the sin of the world. This will be further clarified in His upcoming encounter with Nicodemus--which we'll be looking at in next week's lesson--where He would say: "For God did not send His Son (that would be Him!) into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved!" But we also learn something about the

importance in God's eyes of true worship and conduct! As believers, we are the "temples of God"! The apostle Paul admonished the Corinthian believers in I Corinthians 7:19-20: "Know you not that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and that you are not your own? For you have been bought with a price; therefore glorify God in your body!" The implications for spiritual cleansing, a changed heart, and personal purity, our testimony to the world, is clear and unmistakable! This is an important take-away challenge for us from this lesson!

Well, I think we're ready now for Nicodemus, and Lesson #9! I can hardly wait!

Have a great week, men! Let's continue to uphold each other in daily prayers!

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