

Sunday, July 27, 2025: Matthew 21: 12-14

Matthew 21:12-14

12 Jesus entered the temple courts and drove out all who were buying and selling there. He overturned the tables of the money changers and the benches of those selling doves. **13** "It is written," he said to them, "'My house will be called a house of prayer,' but you are making it 'a den of robbers.'" **14** The blind and the lame came to him at the temple, and he healed them.

These scriptures speak of Jesus coming in and cleansing the temple. He is disgusted with what is going on and he starts cleaning the house. How does this correlate with what is going on in our life and hearts today- that we would let God take control and remove those things that should not be there.

Compare this passage with John 2:13-17 where Jesus also was in the temple:

John 13 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 out 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."

1. What was going on?

The people were coming and rather than doing the "work" ahead of time and bringing their own sacrifice to the temple, they came and relied on the merchants to give them the correct sacrifice that would cover their offenses. The temple and the money changers were benefiting monetarily by this practice; they were aiding and abetting the people to do "as little as possible" allowing them to come to the temple without intentionality.

If you continually invest the minimum- please do not expect the maximum in return.

2. Why are you cluttering up the temple with things that do not belong there?

Let God have the space so He can do all that he wants to do in your life. When God works through the issues in your life it is for preparation not for punishment. Stay focused on Jesus. What if we gave God everything every day? God did not do only the minimum for us, why do we give him the minimum?

Are we committed in our faith? Committed in our prayers? Do we expect God to answer? Do we remind God of His promises when we pray? Are you all in? Can you rely on the sacrifice of our God, and know that you have everything we need to live a prayer filled life? Do not believe only half-heartedly that God has, can, and will work in your life- that is a mockery of who God is. Dig deep into God's word.

He is both the lion and lamb in our life. Wherever you are in your walk with the Lord, challenge is to pray more, read more, engage in the things of the Lord more, and engage in the church more. He wants more from each of us. Give your maximum, not your minimum.

QUESTIONS:

1. Favorite leftovers? Did you grow up eating leftovers? Are you a left-over user or do you throw it away? Why or why not?
2. Have you ever had to deal with an unrelenting problem? What does it mean to "just get to Jesus"? What keeps us from going to Jesus? From stepping out in faith? In what ways are we fearful right now? And how can we trust Jesus in it? Where can Jesus bring peace to your life?
3. Where in your faith are you doing only the minimum, and where are you giving the maximum? Have you experienced consequences because of this? What causes us to ignore parts of our faith and go full-in on other parts?
4. What does it mean to "choose to listen"? And how can you do that well? What does it mean to "choose to shine"? And how can you do that well? What does it mean to "choose to receive"? And how can you do that well? What are some disciplines that you can add into your life that will help you focus on Jesus and walk with Him more closely? What does it look like to be "given more" by Jesus?