PASTOR'S SERMON NOTES · PULPIT COPY

Zeal for His House

The Gospel of John: Why Should I Believe? · Week 08 · November 1, 2026

Scripture:

John 2:13–25

Big idea: Jesus is the true temple, the place we meet God, and His resurrection proves it. The question isn't whether you're impressed with Him; it's whether you believe Him.

Memory verse (all ages): John 2:19 — "Jesus answered them, 'Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up.'"

MOTIVATION (WHY YOU NEED THIS)

Everybody has a picture of Jesus in their head, usually a gentle one holding a lamb. Or, something with His arms extended, children on His lap, and always smiling.

Today that picture will get shattered. He'll walk into the temple and find a market in His Father's house.

He doesn't walk past it but braids a whip, drives out people and animals, flips tables, and leaves coins rolling onto the floor.

And the religious leaders ask, "Who do You think You are?"

That's a valid question in this series.

We've been asking, "Why should I believe?" Today the religious leaders ask Jesus the same thing but ask Him to "Prove it."

And Jesus answers them with one sign, and it's the only sign that will matter.

INFORMATION (WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW)

Actions of Jesus in the Temple…

- **Jesus travels to Jerusalem for the Passover**

  John 2:13 (ESV) The Passover of the Jews was at hand, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem. **14** In the temple he found those who were selling oxen and sheep and pigeons, and the money-changers sitting there.

  ✓ Jesus travels, like every Jew, to Jerusalem to observe the Passover

  - *Passover* – a yearly spring feast (March/April) remembering Israel's exodus from Egypt, when Jewish men were required to travel to Jerusalem
  - *Jerusalem* – a 3-to-4-day uphill walk from Galilee, and at this time every street and rooftop was packed with people (city was several times its size)
  - *Temple* – Herod's temple (God's house on earth) built in circles of access; the outer Court of the Gentiles was the one place a non-Jew could come to pray, and where Jesus found the market operating

    "The temple is a sacred place or place of worship not in and of itself, but because of its relationship to the God of Israel as God's 'house', the place where God dwells." – New International Commentary New Testament

  ✓ He finds merchants and money-changers doing "business" in the temple

- *Merchants* (selling oxen and sheep and pigeons) – travelers needed animals to sacrifice, and sellers charged a premium for what was meant to be an act of worship
- *Money-changers* (exchanging money) – foreign coins would need to be exchanged to pay the temple tax and buy animals, and the money-changers took a cut, most likely in partnership with the merchants

- **Jesus is rightly angered by merchants/money-changers set up in the temple**

John 2:15 (ESV) And making a whip of cords, he drove them all out of the temple, with the sheep and oxen. And he poured out the coins of the money-changers and overturned their tables. **16** And he told those who sold the pigeons, "Take these things away; do not make my Father's house a house of trade." **17** His disciples remembered that it was written, "Zeal for your house will consume me."

✓ Jesus makes a whip of cords and drives them out of the temple

- Merchants were driven away with their sheep and oxen

The whip was probably made from the straps used to leash animals; the text isn't clear who He drove out with the whip (merchants, animals, or both)

- Money-changers were also driven away and Jesus poured out their coins, as well as overturned their tables

✓ The disciples recalled the Old Testament writings

"Quoted from Ps. 69:9 to indicate that Jesus would not tolerate irreverence toward God. When David wrote this psalm, he was being persecuted because of his zeal toward God's house and his defense of God's honor. The disciples were afraid that Jesus' actions would precipitate the same type of persecution." – MacArthur Study Bible

- **Jesus prophesied His resurrection**

✓ The religious Jews were angered by the actions of Jesus and wanted to know by what or whose authority He did this

John 2:18 (ESV) So the Jews said to him, "What sign do you show us for doing these things?"

✓ Jesus said He would give them a sign of His authority

John 2:19 (ESV) Jesus answered them, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up."

✓ The Jews scoffed at this sign, thinking Jesus was speaking of the literal temple

John 2:20 (ESV) The Jews then said, "It has taken forty-six years to build this temple, and will you raise it up in three days?"

✓ Jesus was referring to a much greater sign than they imagined

John 2:21 (ESV) But he was speaking about the temple of his body. **22** When therefore 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.

- **Jesus knows the condition of the heart of man**

John 2:23 (ESV) Now when he was in Jerusalem at the Passover Feast, many believed in his name when they saw the signs that he was doing. **24** But Jesus on his part did not entrust himself to them, because he knew all people **25** and needed no one to bear witness about man, for he himself knew what was in man.

We're not diving deep into these verses today because they serve as an introduction to John 3–4.

"Jesus had a thorough understanding of human nature. The principle stated here is basic to his dealing with all the personalities mentioned in the Gospel. He could read people more accurately than a

> doctor can read physical symptoms in diagnosing an illness. The prelude of these verses is introductory to the three interviews in chs. 3 and 4: Nicodemus the Pharisee, the Samaritan woman, and the royal official at Cana." – Expositor's Bible Commentary

APPLICATION (WHAT YOU NEED TO DO)

The religious leaders demanded a sign. Jesus promised them one – His own resurrection.

He was telling them the temple was no longer the place to meet God. He was.

Many were impressed by His miracles, but Jesus didn't trust their belief because He knew what was in their hearts.

His disciples didn't fully understand until He rose…then they believed His word.

The question isn't whether you're impressed with Jesus. It's whether you believe Him.