

The Word Made Flesh

Zeal for His House

John 2:13-17

1. The Setting and Context

- Jesus' ministry has begun: baptized, affirmed as the Lamb of God, and revealed through His first sign at Cana.
- With Passover approaching, Jesus travels to Jerusalem and enters the temple courts.
- Merchants selling sacrificial animals and money changers exchanging temple currency have turned worship into profit and devotion into business.

2. The Five Great Sins in the Temple

A. Taking Advantage of People

- Religious leaders exploited worshipers' devotion, charging inflated prices and preying on their need to honor God.
- This same temptation exists today in various Christian circles: prophetic manipulation, prosperity promises, leadership abuse, and cultural pressure to over-serve.
- The church should serve its people, not use them. Legacy seeks a culture that protects, supports, and honors its congregation.

B. Denying Their Sacrifice

- Worshipers journeyed long distances and raised spotless lambs for a year, only to be told their sacrifice "wasn't good enough."
- God cherishes offerings given in love, whether small or large.
- Churches must honor people's sacrifices, not dismiss or diminish them.

C. Nullifying Their Sacrifice

- The merchants made sacrifice "convenient," stripping it of its meaning.
- God designed sacrifice to cost something, shaping the heart through devotion.
- Churches often produce two groups: sacrificial Christians and convenient Christians. Legacy aims to cultivate sacrificial, not consumer, disciples.

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D. Shutting Off the Kingdom

- The temple system created barriers, keeping people from encountering God unless they met man-made requirements.
- Jesus warns against living in a way that blocks others from the kingdom—through hypocrisy, laziness, bitterness, or poor witness.
- Every believer must ask: *Am I opening doors to the kingdom, or closing them?*

E. Defiling the Temple

- By exploiting people, the leaders brought corruption into God's holy place.
- Under the New Covenant, believers become the temple of God through the indwelling Spirit.
- Christians must guard their lives with the same seriousness, honoring God with purity, reverence, and holiness.

3. God's Militant Response

- Jesus forms a whip, drives out animals, flips tables, and scatters money—His anger is righteous and protective.
- The same Jesus who forgave His executioners defends His people with fierce zeal.
- God opposes those who harm His children; He will bring justice in this life or the next.

4. The Disciples' Reflection

- The disciples remember Psalm 69:9: "Zeal for your house will consume me."
- Jesus embodies holy passion for the Father's honor and the purity of worship.