

John-5
“House Cleaning”
John 2:12-25 (NIV)

Hey Newsong!

I want to take a moment and welcome our first-time guests and those who are worshiping with us online!

We're walking through the Gospel of John together as a church family, and if you're just joining us...

John is one of Jesus' disciples, and he's also Jesus' closest friend...He's writing down his eyewitness testimony because he wants us all to know Who Jesus is!

He wants us to know that Jesus is the Son of God...He's the eternal Word that has become flesh...He's Creator, Sustainer, and Savior!

Series Verse

31 But these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name. Jn 20:30–31. (NIV)

That's our mission as a church...to tell everyone everywhere about Jesus so that they can trust in Him to be their Lord and Savior!

Now many scholars will refer to the first 12 chapters of John as “The Book of Signs.” Each sign points to Jesus being “Immanuel” God with us...

Last week we saw the first of Jesus’ signs, as He launched His public ministry...He turned water into wine at a wedding in Cana

John tells us that when he and the other disciples saw this miracle...they believed in Jesus...they put their faith in Him!

John 2:12-25 (NIV)

Pray

Have you ever seen the show “Undercover Boss”? The big idea is that an owner or a high-level executive of a company will go undercover as an entry-level employee so that they can see how well things are going...

It's a good show, and each episode kind of ends with the owner taking a look at how the company is doing certain things...making changes to improve...as well as bless employees that are doing their job...

Here in John chapter 2 we have season one episode one of Undercover Boss! Jesus walks into the outer courts of the Temple during Passover and doesn't like what He sees...

Jesus confronts corrupt WORSHIP

The Temple was the place where people would go to worship the One True God. It was originally built by King Solomon...

Destroyed by Babylon...Rebuilt by Zerubbabel around 520 B.C. when God's people returned from exile....

And then renovated and enlarged by Herod the Great...in fact, they were still building it here in our text...

It was in the Temple that God's presence dwelt...That's why it's referred to in Scripture as "The House of the Lord"

People would come and worship God...So the Temple was a busy place normally, but this was Passover...

Passover was a yearly holy day observing their exodus from Egypt...

It's remembering the last of the 10 plagues that God had poured out on Egypt...The death of the firstborn...God passed over the Israelites because they were covered by the blood of a spotless lamb...

During Passover if you lived within 15 miles of Jerusalem you were required to come to the Temple and worship...

Passover was a big deal...Think about how crowded NYC gets during Christmas & New Years...Traffic is crazy...parking is crazy...it's all crazy

Jerusalem would just overflow with people as they traveled sometimes long distances just to be there for Passover...

In fact if you lived in Jerusalem you were required to take people into your home without charging them rent...

So people would be coming with their families and their sacrifice...They're bringing the best of their Cattle, Sheep, & Doves to sacrifice to God...Why? Because worship requires sacrifice...God wants our first and our best...this is the system that God put in place for His people to worship Him...

Over time the system had become corrupt... People would get to the Temple with their sacrifice and an inspector would be like...yeah I see a little spot on the inside of this sheeps ear...

The dad would be like "I don't see anything"...The inspector would be like well I'm trained and you're not okay...So this is a no!

They were the original TSA so to speak... They were supposed to make sure you don't try to bring in something that you shouldn't...people would cheapen their worship...

They wouldn't bring their first and best...they would give God their last and worst...Try to sneak through a 3 legged lamb or something...

But the system had become so corrupt that they were rejecting everything...They just gave you a hard time and made you late for your plane...

The family would be required to buy another sacrifice...at double or triple the amount...It's like going to Yankee's Stadium...they make you dump out your perfectly good \$2 bottle of water, and then charge you \$10 for another one inside...

Not only that, but if you were from out of town and you brought money...they wouldn't accept your money...You had to use the Temple shekel

To exchange your money for the Temple Schekel...that will cost you big time...they would charge crazy fees...

You know, like going to the ATM and having to pay \$5 to get your own money...

The point is, people were being taken advantage of just so that they could worship God...

In addition, this was all going on in the outer courts...this is the only place where the Gentiles...the people who love God but weren't Jewish could come and worship...

They weren't allowed to go any further into the Temple...So they're trying to pray and seek God, and people are buying and selling animals...arguing about exchange rates...

“Praying in the Chapel of the Holy Cross”

People are trying to pray and this guy just keeps on talking and being distracting...

Now I'm pretty sure this isn't Jesus' first trip to Jerusalem during Passover...He was a devout Jew...He knew what the religious leaders were up to...how everyone was in on making money...

Now the difference is, He has launched His public ministry...The countdown to the cross has begun...

“Now He’s not just the Carpenter from Nazareth, He’s the Messiah that God had sent to Israel”-David Guzik

Jesus is looking around...He sees that none of the religious leaders are upset by what's taking place and He gets righteously angry...

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.”

-Jn 2:15–17 (NIV)

Now you've got to kind of picture this...Jesus doesn't just lose His temper...grab a whip and go all Indiana Jones on everyone...

Jesus is angry...but He's calm. He sees what's going on, and He starts making a whip...that takes time...

Then once He's got His whip the way He wants it...He's like let's goooo! Get these animals out of here...Get these tables out of here...this isn't a farmers market...this is My Father's House!

Now you may be thinking...Last week Jesus was much nicer...

He's helping out some friends...He's turning water into wine...everyone is happy...everyone is blessed

This week...different Jesus...what's going on?
No, no...Same Jesus!

Remember Who Jesus is...
He is the Lamb of God...But He's also the Lion of Judah...

Jesus is the LAMB of God

A lamb is tender, gentle, non-confrontational...they eat grass...This is why you can't find a football team named "the lambs"

Pastor & Author Mark Driscoll points out...
When we read the Gospels we can see Jesus as a Lamb...

13 One day some parents brought their children to Jesus so he could touch and bless them. But the disciples scolded the parents for bothering him. 14 When Jesus saw what was happening, he was angry with his disciples. He said to them, “Let the children come to me. Don’t stop them! For the Kingdom of God belongs to those who are like these children.-Mk 10:13–14 (NLT)

28 Then Jesus said, “Come to me, all of you who are weary and carry heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. 29 Take my yoke upon you. Let me teach you, because I am humble and gentle at heart, and you will find rest for your souls. 30 For my yoke is easy to bear, and the burden I give you is light.”
Mt 11:28–30 (NLT)

Isaiah prophesied about Jesus' death on the cross...

7 He was oppressed and treated harshly, yet he never said a word. He was led like a lamb to the slaughter. And as a sheep is silent before the shearers, he did not open his mouth.-Is 53:7 (NLT)

We see times when Jesus is like a lamb...and let's be honest...there's times where He is so tender and gentle with us...

We're going through something and He's with us comforting us...ministering to us...He's like a lamb...He's meek...but meek doesn't mean weak...

Meekness isn't weakness...It's power that's under control...not out of control

Jesus is the LION of Judah

There's times when we see Jesus as a Lion...

5 But one of the twenty-four elders said to me, “Stop weeping! Look, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the heir to David’s throne, has won the victory. He is worthy to open the scroll and its seven seals.”-Re 5:5 (NLT)

A lion is powerful, fierce, hungry...King of the jungle...

Does Jesus act like a lion or a lamb when He's rebuking the devil?

10 “Get out of here, Satan,” Jesus told him. “For the Scriptures say, ‘You must worship the Lord your God and serve only him.’” 11 Then the devil went away, and angels came and took care of Jesus.-Mt 4:10–12 (NLT)

Casting out demons...

35 But Jesus reprimanded him. “Be quiet! Come out of the man,” he ordered.

At that, the demon threw the man to the floor as the crowd watched; then it came out of him without hurting him further.-Lk 4:35 (NLT)

39 When Jesus woke up, he rebuked the wind and said to the waves, “Silence! Be still!” Suddenly the wind stopped, and there was a great calm.-Mk 4:39 (NLT)

Throughout the Gospels we see Jesus acting like a lion especially with the religious leaders...He calls them fools, hypocrites, blind guides, whitewashed tombs...That's a lion! Think about the return of Jesus...

11 Then I saw heaven opened, and a white horse was standing there. Its rider was named Faithful and True, for he judges fairly and wages a righteous war. 12 His eyes were like flames of fire, and on his head were many crowns.

A name was written on him that no one understood except himself. 13 He wore a robe dipped in blood, and his title was the Word of God. 14 The armies of heaven, dressed in the finest of pure white linen, followed him on white horses. 15 From his mouth came a sharp sword to strike down the nations. He will rule them with an iron rod. He will release the fierce wrath of God, the Almighty, like juice flowing from a winepress. 16 On his robe at his thigh was written this title: King of all kings and Lord of all lords.-Re 19:11–16 (NLT)

“When Jesus comes back...He’s going to defeat satan and his demons...He will put down all injustice...He will bring justice to the nations...He will set the captives free...He will bind up the broken hearted...and Jesus will be a Lamb with us and a Lion for us forever! -Mark Driscoll

Jesus knew when it was time to be a Lion and when it was time to be a Lamb...and He was always in control...

The problem is that so many of us are fine with the Lamb...Jesus gives us free hugs and makes wine for us...He loves us and never tells us that we're wrong...In fact He will bless you in everything and never correct you in anything...

Other people are all about the Lion Jesus...They Bible beat people...look down on sinners instead of loving them like Jesus... They've got a whip and they're not afraid to use it...it's all about cleansing and holiness...no joy, no grace, no love...That's not Jesus!

The problem with these versions of Jesus is that He doesn't exist...He's not Lion or Lamb...He is Lion and Lamb...you can't pick and choose!

Jesus is the Lion of Judah in our text...He was never afraid to confront sin...and yet He never sinned in His confrontation...

Now let's ask ourselves the question...Is there anything distracting us from our worship of God?

Is it possible that a person, a job, a prideful heart, an unforgiving heart, a selfish heart, is keeping you from experiencing intimacy with God?

Is Jesus wanting to do a little house cleaning in our hearts?

So Jesus is in Lion of Judah mode...and in **vs 17** His disciples see this and they're reminded of **Psalm 69** where David inspired by the Holy Spirit prophesies about the coming Messiah "Zeal (or passion) for your house will consume me"

Jesus claims authority over God's **HOUSE**

18 The Jews then responded to him, "What sign can you show us to prove your authority to do all this?" 19 Jesus answered them, "Destroy this temple, and I will raise it again in three days." 20 They replied, "It has taken forty-six years to build this temple, and you are going to raise it in three days?" 21 But the temple he had spoken of was his body. 22 After he was raised from the dead, his disciples recalled what he had said. Then they believed the scripture and the words that Jesus had spoken-Jn 2:18–22 (NIV)

Now Jesus has the attention of the religious leaders and they start asking Him for a sign to prove that He has the authority to do this...

Jesus just interfered with their religious system...Everything just came to a standstill...

And now they're challenging His authority because He just sidestepped their authority...

He didn't go to them first and ask for permission. He just walked right into the temple courts and started cleaning the house...

What's interesting is that the religious leaders wanted a sign...but they had one from the Prophet Malachi...He prophesied this about the coming Messiah...

“Look! I am sending my messenger, and he will prepare the way before me. Then the Lord you are seeking will suddenly come to his Temple. The messenger of the covenant, whom you look for so eagerly, is surely coming,” says the Lord of Heaven’s Armies.

2 “But who will be able to endure it when he comes? Who will be able to stand and face him when he appears?

For he will be like a blazing fire that refines metal, or like a strong soap that bleaches clothes. 3 He will sit like a refiner of silver, burning away the dross. He will purify the Levites, refining them like gold and silver, so that they may once again offer acceptable sacrifices to the Lord.-Mal 3:1–3 (NLT)

That's a sign...Here's another one...Notice that Jesus refers to the Temple as My Father's House...

Now it's Passover...One of the things that Jewish children would do to prepare their home for Passover is remove any yeast (bread) from the home...

Yeast is a symbol for sin...

Oftentimes this would become a fun game for the family to play...

The Mom would hide some bread around the house and the kids would have to find it...and remove it

Jesus is saying this is my Father's House...I have authority as His One and Only Son and I'm removing the yeast out of the house!

I'm the One who is zealous for this House...
I'm the One who cares about what's going on here...that should be a sign for you...

But here's a sign...

Destroy this Temple and I'll raise it up in 3 days...Now you can just imagine the look on the religious leaders faces...You're going to destroy the Temple?

You see, they cared more about the place of God than the Person and Presence of God...

Jesus is speaking in a parable here...John tells us that He's talking about His body...not the actual temple...

He knows that these religious leaders are eventually going to put Him on trial and accuse Him of wanting to destroy the actual Temple...

During that trial...He will be condemned to death...and He will die on the cross...but three days later...He will be back!

They don't get it...

They're stuck on the place and miss the Person...Jesus is the greater Temple!

The center of our faith isn't a place that we have to travel to...It's a Person we have to surrender to...

Think about this...

Jesus meets us right where we are...He meets us in our sin and in our mess...and He saves us! The Holy Spirit comes in and lives in us...and begins to make us more like Jesus...

We become the temple of God

16 Don't you realize that all of you together are the temple of God and that the Spirit of God lives in you? 17 God will destroy anyone who destroys this temple. For God's temple is holy, and you are that temple- 1 Cor 3:16–17 (NLT)

The saving comes before the cleaning...
Some people think that they have to be cleaned up to be saved...can't do it! He saves us then starts cleaning us up from the inside out!

We need to recognize that Jesus has all authority over this Temple...

This body...this mind...This mouth... And there's areas of my life that need to be made holy...

Jesus is just as zealous for the condition of this Temple as He was for the actual Temple...

Is it possible that there's something going on in our life ethically or morally that is the equivalent of what was going on in the actual Temple and just like those religious leaders we're like I'm good!

Are we questioning Jesus' authority when the Holy Spirit checks our hearts?

Jesus knows our **HEART**

23 Now while he was in Jerusalem at the Passover Festival, many people saw the signs he was performing and believed in his name. 24 But Jesus would not entrust himself to them, for he knew all people.

25 He did not need any testimony about mankind, for he knew what was in each person-Jn 2:23–25 (NIV)

These verses show us that a person can have a spiritual experience and believe in Jesus without ever really knowing Jesus...

John tells us that many people saw the signs that Jesus was performing and they believed but Jesus Who sees their heart didn't entrust Himself to them...

Pastor and Bible Teacher Skip Heitzig writes *John is using a play on words...He's saying that many believed in Him but He did not believe in them"*

Have you ever met someone who says they believe in God...or they may even say that they believe in Jesus...but they only mention Jesus when they're cursing?

Their faith is surface...it's in the head but not the heart...There is no transformation...No change...No outer sign of an inward change...

Listen to what James says...

19 You say you have faith, for you believe that there is one God. Good for you! Even the demons believe this, and they tremble in terror. 20 How foolish! Can't you see that faith without good deeds is useless?-Jas 2:19–20 (NLT)

Warren Wiersbe calls these believers “Unsaved Believers”

Jesus can see right through them...He knows what's in their heart, He knows they want a free meal, He knows they want a miracle...He knows that they're not really fully committed to Him...Skip Heitzig

Jesus knows our heart...

13 Nothing in all creation is hidden from God. Everything is naked and exposed before his eyes, and he is the one to whom we are accountable-Heb 4:13 (NLT)

Now, a couple of weeks ago I talked about how Jesus invites us to come and see...and that it's okay for us to investigate Who He is...

But I said that eventually Jesus will ask us to follow Him...to become His disciple...
That's when we surrender everything to Him...Make Him our Lord and our Savior...

I want to close with this idea...
Jesus knows everything about me...He knows what's in my heart because He is omniscient...He's God...

Nothing is hidden from Him...He knows everything about you...He saw it, He heard it, He knows...

And the most amazing thing is, He STILL loves you...and He STILL loves me...How do I know? The cross!

People think that if Jesus really knew me He would reject me...no He knows you and He chooses you...He knows and He invites you...He knows and He saves you...He knows and He adopts you...calls you His child!

He loves you...He cares about you...He wants you to make Him the center of your life!

**What's the Holy Spirit Saying To You?
Altar Time**