

Title: The Big Clean Up
Text: John 2:12-22

Take your Bibles and open them to John chapter 2. There are notes in your bulletin. And I invite you to follow along as we study God's Word together.

We have been studying the public ministry of Jesus, Especially how Jesus ~~has been revealed~~ ^{is being} or manifested to the world.

We noticed, first of all, in the ministry of John the Baptist in the first chapter, in which John publically, in front of a lot of people, said, "Behold, the lamb of God which takes away the sin of the world."

We, also, saw Jesus being manifested in the manner in which He chose to reveal himself to His disciples. Some of them recognized that He was the Lamb of God. Some saw that He was the Messiah. Nathanael called him "The King of Israel, The Son of God."

Last week, we saw the power of Jesus demonstrated at the marriage in Cana. He changed the water into wine. And this was the first miracle that Jesus performed. And when He performed this miracle Vs 11 says, "that he manifested His glory and His disciples believed in Him."

(4B) Now, today, we want to take this one step further as we look at the manner in which He cleansed the Temple. Because when He cleansed the Temple it wasn't simply because He was ^{angry} angry or mad. It was because He was fulfilling the Word of God. He was giving another proof that He is the Messiah, the Son of God. SO, LET'S READ ABOUT THE BIG CLEAN-UP. John chapter 2 verse 12

(Read John 2:12-22)

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PRAYER

(1C) This is a tremendous passage in God's Word. I want you to notice, first of all, the prophecy that was fulfilled. The prophecy being fulfilled in Vs 12 to 17..And there are several things here that I want you to see.

(1D) Number one, the occasion that brought Jesus to Jerusalem. Vs 13 tells us that it was the PASOVER.

Now, there are three feast out off the 7 feast of Jehovah ^{God} listed in Lev. 23 in which every Jew 20 years of age and older was required to attend. PASSOVER...PENTECOST....AND TRIBERNACLES...

As a matter of fact, the impact of those three feasts on the Jews and what Jesus did during those feasts is spectacular...Because Jesus at each one of those feasts took what was normally done and applied it to himself.

So, this is the ^{Fest of} Passover. And of course there is a great crowd in Jerusalem. People from all over the empire. A huge crowd.

Now, the temple that ^{Jesus cleaned up} ~~he came to~~ was not the Holy Place. It is referring to the Temple area. It is an enormous place that could hold hundreds of people all doing different things. That is the area under discussion.

mt The Temple area is very sacred. ~~In fact, even today it is still considered very sacred.~~ They require you to wear certain attire to even walk in the Temple area. They require you to be respectful and reverent and be quiet. So they still hold that area to be very, very sacred, and important.

So, the occasion is the Passover. The Passover means that there are animal sacrifices being performed. And that is why we have these men seating at these money tables. They were selling sacrifices. Not everyone came from a farm where they had animals. Many came to Jerusalem and ~~they~~ purchased their sacrifice there in the city. *market place*

The problem is that they should have been selling them in the city and not in the Temple area.

(20) So, that causes us to notice in Vs 14 and 15 the opposition that Jesus had to those who were selling in the Temple area.

Now, there are those who argue, today, that nothing should be sold in the church building because of this verse. That is a false application and misinterpretation. The Temple of God is not a building in this day and age. The Temple of God is a body of believers. Also, ~~that~~ is not the point. There was nothing wrong with the selling. It was where they were selling in terms of what the O.T. said *that was wrong*

The O.T. Temple was as sacred as the Temple of your Body. ^{This} ~~The~~ building in which ^{we} ~~christians~~ meet, today, is not that Temple. And I want to emphasize that point. THIS BUILDING IS NOT A SACRED BUILDING.

Now, we believe that it ^{is to} ~~can~~ be dedicated to important sacred uses. But, it is not sacred in and of itself.

God's church is not made of brick and stone. God's church is people who have come to know Jesus. Your body is the Temple of the Holy Spirit, today.

^{And} likewise that was true when Jesus was here. His body was the Temple of Almighty God. And that is one of the points that he makes in this portion of God's Word.

So, let's look at his opposition. Why was Jesus so mad? Well, the problem was polluting the Temple and treating lightly the sacred things of God. We find this condemned in 2 Chronicles 36 verse 14. In fact the Bible says it is one of the reasons the Jews went into captivity in Babylon. Because they had polluted and corrupted the Temple sacrificial system.

But the passage that I believe is the prophetic fulfillment ^{is found in} Malachi chapter 3. And I would like you to turn there, please. The last book of the O.T. Malachi chapter 3.

^{you see} What Jesus was doing is ^{not just} something ~~is~~ caused by anger, but he is doing something that the Bible predicted would happen. Malachi chapter 3 verse 1 we read this prophecy..."

"Behold, I am going to send my messenger, and he will clear the way before me." That ^{is Jesus to} is John the Baptist.....

"And the Lord, whom you seek, will suddenly come to His temple; and the messenger of the covenant, (The covenant that God established with the Jews, to have a Messiah come and rule over them), "in whom you delight, behold, He is coming, says the Lord of hosts."

(READ Vs 2-4)

Now, what we have here is an interesting type of prophecy that appears often in the O.T. that has a near application, as well as a far application.

^{when} Jesus came the first time ^{He} ~~had~~ fulfilled part of many of the prophecies about the Messiah. ~~is~~ But he did not complete them all.

That is the prophecy Jesus fulfilled!

am Here is an example. Jesus came suddenly to that temple. He publically declared his credentials by what he did in clearing it out and trying to make it clean. But he isn't finished yet. That event was only a touch of what he is going to do in the future.

am The Bible teaches that when Jesus comes in power and great glory to this earth, that he is going to have to clean up Israel. The nation of Israel will still be in existence even though all nations of the world will have a final battle in the Middle East. And it will appear that Israel will be wiped out in that battle. But Jesus will return at that time. And he will deliver Israel from destruction. But he is also going to have to clean up Israel. He is going to purge it..cleanes it.

There, also, will be a Temple. He will come suddenly to that Temple. And Jesus will set up his kingdom. Ezekiel chapter 20 says that He will purge out the rebels of Israel.

There will be *great* corruption then...as there was in the time of Jesus. So, it is a near application...meaning Jesus first coming. And it has a far application..meaning His second coming.

Both will be done. There will be a Temple in Jersulem according to the book of Revelation chapter 11 that the Jews will build during the period know as the TRIBULATION.

Now, in the days of Jesus there was a Temple. It was built by Herod. It was a beautiful building. It took 46 years to build. It was a huge structure. You could see ~~it~~ for many, many miles. And Jesus was coming as the Messiah when he came to that Temple to clean up the corruption of the Levitical Priest hood. The commericalized and poluted the Temple. They could have sold the Sacrifices outside of the Temple area. They choose to move right in and desecrate God's Holy place. That is what we have in John chapter 2.

am Turn back there please.... *John chapter 2*

So, ~~this~~ *what he did* is a fulfillment of a prophecy in Malichi chapter 3. Jesus is coming and ~~is~~ *He isn't just angry. He is fulfilling prophecies* apposing what is going on.

(3D) Now, the third thing that I would like you to notice, here, in Vs 16 is the order ~~that~~ *He* gave to these sellers.

Very strong orders that certainly got their attention. He said to them in Vs 16, "Take these things away; and stop making My Father's house a house of merchandise."

Now, there are two things indicated here by this order from Jesus. (1) The first is that his authority is now being publical declared. This is apparant in his order: TAKE THESE THINGS AWAY." He makes an authorative command.

And this is what triggers the question in Vs 18, "What sign do you show to us, seeing that You do these things?"

They were well aware that they were doing the wrong thing. Don't make any mistake about that. If they thought they were doing the right thing, then they could have easily all got together and confronted Jesus. But there is no opposition to Jesus from these sellers. They knew they were doing the wrong thing in poluting the Temple.

It was a terrible day for the Priesthood in the days of our Lord. It was really corrupt. ~~Many had sold out to Rome.~~

So, Jesus here orders them. And indicates his authority. (2) The second thing that He indicates, which was the most powerful, was His association with the Heavenly Father. He says, Vs 16, STOP MAKING MY FATHER'S HOUSE A HOUSE OF MERCHANDISE."

Now, His Father's house indicates, of course, that he is the Son of God. And that was the one thing the Jews resented the most. They resented the fact that ~~he~~ was making himself equal with God. He was the manifestation of the Heveanly Father as His son. And here he says that this whole place is MY FATHER'S HOUSE.

40 Now, in Vs 17, ~~one other thing before we look the question the jews gave to him in Vs 18,~~ IN VS 17 WE SEE THE ORIGIN OF THIS PROPHETIC ACT AS FAR AS THE DISCIPLES ARE CONCERNED, CAME FROM THE BOOK OF PSALM. Its origin was found in Psalms chapter 69 verse 9, which was one of the Messanic Psalms. And the quote that they took out off that Psalms was "THE ZEAL FOR THEY HOUSE WILL CONSUME ME."

WHAT DOES THAT MEAN? That means that the reason Jesus did what he did was because he was here to do the will of the Father and he was zealous. He was totally wiped up in the Father's will. And the zeal for the Father's Temple ate him up, literally, with passion and desire to do something about it. So, the Disciples recognized that this was a fulfillment of Psalms 69.

Now, the question is...since they did not carry around Bibles and since there were no printing presses to distribute the scriptures, HOW IN THE WORLD DID THOSE MEN REMEMBER THAT SCRIPTURE?

The answer is that the Psalms were a praise and Prayer book of Israel. Both read and song. Thus they had committed much to memory. And they remembered this passage.

Can you imagine the thrill that came over those disciples as they saw Jesus literally doing what they had read about in the Psalms.

That must have been exciting. I wish I could have been there. ~~And I know that you do to.~~ To see it happen right before your eyes.

(20) Now, secondly, let's look at the promise that he gave to the Jews beginning at Vs 18 .

(10) The first thing we notice in Vs 18 is ^{Their} ~~THEIR~~ REQUEST FOR A SIGN. "What sign do you show to us, seeing that you do these things?"

And so they are making a request for a sign. Was it right to ask for that sign? I think we have to argue YES and No...

Yes...because Jesus had done something that indicated that He might be the Messiah. Therefore the question is: O.K. PROVE IT TO US. What sign will you show? So, YES, it was proper to ask for the sign or the credentials of the Messiah.

However, the answer to the question is really NO..if you understand that asking for signs in order to prove something to you, when your heart will not believe anyway, is always wrong and treated as being an evil thing by God.

Let me show you what I mean. Two passages...

(1) First of all, John chapter 6 verse 30. John 6 verse 30....People were always asking for a sign or a demonstration so that I may believe. Give me some evidence. Give me ~~some~~ some proof. Maybe they are from MO. *Show me and I Will Believe*

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But after people are shown, we find that they still do not believe. WHY IS THAT? John 6 verse 30..."They said therefore to Him, What then do you do for a sign, that we may see, and believe you? What work do you perform?"

Then they pointed out a sign in the O.T. concerning the manna that God brought in the wilderness for them. So, they ask for a sign so that they could see and believe.

Now, when people got the sign, did they believe?.....

Let me show you another passage. Matthew chapter 12. Matthew chapter 12. This is one of those amazing parallel passages to John 2. Not simply on the point of the signs, but on the point of what Jesus said about the temple of his body.

Matthew 12 verse 38....."Then some of the scribes and Pharisees answered Him, saying, 'Teacher, we want to see a sign from you.'

It is interesting...1 Corinthians 1:22 Paul wrote, that the Jews require a sign,..They were always looking for them.

Vs 39..."But He answered and said to them, 'An evil and adulterous generation craves for a sign.'

Something wrong in your heart and that is why you want signs and proofs. You are not going to believe anyway.

"And yet no sign shall be given to it but the sign of Jonah the prophet; for just as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the sea monster, so shall the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth."

The burial and resurrection of Jesus was the sign. It was the same sign the Prophet Jonah gave to the generation of Nineveh. WHAT IS THE POINT?

In John 2, the sign that Jesus gives them is destroying ~~at~~ the Temple and he will raise it again in three days. And he spoke of his body. The resurrection was the only sign that he was going to give. The main sign to prove to you and to me that Christianity is everything that it claims. The bodily resurrection of Jesus is the main sign.

Now, notice, please, Vs 41..."The men of Nineveh shall stand up with this generation at the judgment and shall condemn it, because they repented at the preaching of Jonah; and behold, something greater than Johannah is here."

Namely, himself...Do you think Jonah's sign was something. WHAT ABOUT THE SIGN OF THE RESURRECTION?

Now, let's put this together....

What does it mean "THE SIGN OF JONAH?" Well, we know it is sybmolic of the resurrection because of the three days and three nights.

But let's start putting that story together a little bit. Do you remember that Jonah, according tothe Bible, went down to Joppa. And that is where he got on that boat.

Now, Jappa is on the western coast of Palestine. And accoording to the story that whale dumped him out at Nineveh, which is on the Tigras river, over 600 miles away.

Now, he was in the belly of that fish three days and three nights. Which means that that fish traveled over 600 miles that short period of time.

Now, that is something. But can you imigine walking into Nineveh. And the people say: "Hi, how are you?" "I'm fine." "I'm Jonah and I want the city to repent."

"Well, what sign do you give that we should repent?"

"O.K. you guys are never going to believe this. But, guess where I was three days ago?"....."IN PALESTINE!!!!"

"You where in Palestine three days ago? That is impossible. You can't get here in three days."

"Oh, say I could." "How did you get here?"

"Well, I was in the belly of a fish. And the fish brought me here."

Now, the question is, WHY DID THAT WHOLE CITY REPENT AT THE SIGN OF THE PROPHET JONAH? The sign that he was in that great fish.

You say, "Well, couldn't they disbelieve that he was in the belly of the fish?....I don't think so.

We do have a record of at least two events in history of a man being sollowed by a great fish or a whale. One was back in the 1880's recorded in England. And he was only in there a few hours. And when they cut him out he was still alive. But his whole body was covered with white stuff. It was evident that he had been in the belly of a fish.

Now, Jonah was in there three days and three nights. And I don't know what he looked like. But I have a feeling that the moment they saw Jonah it scared the daylight out of them.

"Where have you been?" "Well, I have been in the belly of a fish for three days and three nights."

That whole city repented at the miracle of man being that long in a fish. And having gone from the Mediterane sea to Nineveh on the Tigris River. Tremendous thing.

Jesus said that that whole city repented. Those Godless Assyrians, the entire city, which some estimate at over 1 million people, they repented and turned to God, over the sign of the Prophet Jonah.

And Jesus said, "A greater than Jonah is here. I am here. And my sign to you is 'I will be three days and three nights in the belly of the earth just like Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the fish.'"

And just like people saw Jonah when he came out off the belly of the fish, and knew that he had been there, so when Jesus arose from the dead people will see him in his resurrected body. Luke 24 says that "he had flesh and bones. They saw him. They could handle him. He ate fish and honey. It was a real body. And he still has it. And he is alive right now. THAT IS THE ISSUE OF CHRISTIANITY...."

Now, let's come back to John chapter 2...They requested a sign.

(30) Now, let's look at the reply of Jesus in verses 19 to 21. Just three things

I would like you to see here. The reply of Jesus.

(1E) First, in Vs 19 the prediction he made. He said, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up."

Now, you know, even though he was referring to his body as we learned here, ^{dear} Friends, he could have done that with Herod's Temple. You could have destroyed Herod's temple, and in less than three days Jesus could have raise it up. Why He is the one who created the world. The Bible says that "all things were made by him, and without him nothing was made." He could have done that.

Jesus made a prediction indicating His tremendous power.

(2) The second thing that I notice is the problem the Jews had with it, in Vs 20, when they questioned that power. Because they said, "It took 46 years to build this temple, and will you raise it up in three days?"

"After all, look at what man has done in 46 years, then how in the world can you do the same thing in three days?"

People are still saying the same thing. "Look at what men do. How can Jesus do more than what men do?"

The answer is..because He is God in human flesh. Almighty God.

They were questioning his power, just as much as we question today.

Now, in Vs 21, we find the point that He was making. And that is that the temple was not Herod's temple. He was making an application to Herod's Temple

But The Temple he spoke of was his own body. He spoke of the resurrection. That was the sign. And it is still the sign to us today.

(3) Then I notice in Vs 22, the third thing about this promise he gave to them was the remembrance of His disciples. It says, "When He was raised from the dead, His disciples remembered that He said this; and they believed the Scripture, and the word which Jesus had spoken."

There ~~That~~ ^{The application} is it! Right there! BELIEVING THE WORD... Oh, dear friends, all of christianity is built upon that one statement. BELIEVING THE WORD. Everything we believe ^{is} in this book, called the Bible.

You see, dear friends, I am a christain today. And I know that Jesus lives within me. Not because of my personal experience, Even though I have that. But you see, that is ground upon ~~one~~ thing. That there is a written record about Jesus that I have come to trust and believe and ~~except~~ ^{accept}. I accept this Bible as the truth. ~~I do not always understand everything.~~ ~~But~~ I accept it as the Word of God. And it has proven itself to me time after time after time.

You see, the Bible says that when the Disciples remembered it, they believed the Scriptures. And the word which He had spoken. AND THAT IS WHAT EVERYONE OF US HAS TO DO, *if we really want to experience God's power in our life*

mean Left Church -
In the final analysis I could never prove to you that Jesus arose from the dead.

In fact I will go so far as to say to you that if Jesus, right now, came back in bodily form and stood before ^{people of the world} ~~this audience~~, there will be many ^{of} ~~of~~ ^{them} you who would still not believe. The Bible teaches that. He was here before. And they did not believe.

In that story in Luke 16 of the rich man who went to Hell. He prayed and his heart broken and he ask God to send someone back from the dead so that his brothers would believe. But Jesus said, "even though some one might come back from the dead, if they don't believe the Word of God, if they don't believe Moses and the prophets, they will not believe even though someone comes back from the dead."

The Bible is asking you to believe that its record is true and it is from God. It is asking you to accept that. And the only way you will ever know, is by ~~reading it~~. Putting your faith and trust in the facts of the Scripture. Committing yourself to it as the Word of God. ^{And that means you must study}

^{And read the Bible} You may not understand everything. But you just watch your understanding grow as you are changed daily by God. ^{And this change happens as}

^{you} grow in the grace and knowledge of His Word.

You see, I ~~lot~~ of people say, "I don't understand the Bible." It is because the Holy Spirit of God leads us into the truth of God. And the Holy Spirit of God does not come into your life until you place your faith and trust in Jesus Christ. The moment you do that, then you will begin to have a capacity to understand God's Word. ^{if you take the time to read and study}

And I warn you about this. You cannot argue and reason yourself into Christainity. YOU MUST ACCEPT THE FACTS OF GOD'S WORD. And when you do, then you will know that these "things have been written to you who believe in the Son of God, in order that you may know that you have eternal life.

PRAYER

() The problem of belief. You know, many times our problem in believing the scriptures is that our belief is not adiquate. Some people say they believe but obviousely they are not christians. Some people often give a testimony and say "Well, I might have believed years ago, but it sure didn't do anything for me."

WHAT IS THIS PROBLEM OF BELIEF? Well these verse that we have just read give to us some insight.

(1) First of all in Vs 23, we see the reason for their belief. Vs 23 says, "Now when He was in Jerusalem at the Passover, during the feast, many believed in His name."

Now, if I were to cut it off right there, non of us would have any reason to question that. It says that"they believed." Isn't that what is necessary? The Bible says so. But, as we finish reading Vs 23 we see the reason for their believe. There was a reason/ It was a weak reason. But nevertheless there was a reason. Vs 23 says, "Many believed in His name, because of the signs which He was doing."

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Notice the word "signs" is in the plural. It wasn't one sign. John records that there were many signs that Jesus was doing while He was in Jersuelam. This was great news. There was someone over there claiming to be Messiah and doing a number of the O.T. signs.

Now, many believe that because they saw the signs, did that produce salivation for them? The answer is NO because of what Jesus said in Verse 24 and 25.

(2) So, secondly let's look at the respones of Jesus. Vs 24..."Jesus, on His part, was not entrusting Himself to them, for He knew all men, and because He did not need anyone to bear witness concerning man for He himself knew what was in man."

Now, it is interesting that the word "believe" in Vs 23 is the very same word translated "entrusting" in Vs 24. IT IS THE SAME WORD. It is the most common word in the Greek language for "believing".

And so I learn something here. It says that "Jesus was not believing himself to them." He didn't entrust Himself to them. This thing never got settled. It never did.

Now, did they believe? Sure, they believed something. They saw the miracles.

And, Oh, what truth this wholes for us today. You may believe something about Jesus. But, that does not mean that Jesus has entrusted himself to you.

He said, if a man would open the door of his heart I will come into him." Jesus gave that invitation to the church of Laodicea. If anyone was in that church willing to open the door, he would come into them. I BELIEVE THAT. I believe that if you receive Christ, if you believe in his name, you are going to be a child of God.

But, there is a warning here in John 2 that much of what we call "belief" is because of signs or evidence or things that have happened to us. And we say that God lead us to believe in Him because of something that ~~happene~~ happened. And we don't see the issues of Christ.

Now, let me give you an example.

There was this man who said that "God had now made him a believer." He said "I am a believer." And he was ask if he believed in Jesus Christ.

"Oh, Yes, God has really made me a believer." And then he was ask to tell about it. And he gave a testimony of how God had healed him of a very serious illness. God had healed him.

And he said, "Brother, that is all the evidence I needed. I am a believer now."

And so assuming that he was telling the truth, some facts of Scripture was shared with him. And all of a sudden there was resistance.

The first thing he could not believe was that Jesus was God. "He said, "No way, am I going to believe that"

The second thing that He could not believe was that Jesus literally, bodily, arose from the dead. He said, "I am not going to believe that. You ~~can't~~ can't tell me that this man, Jesus, came back from the dead."

And the third thing he wouldn't believe was that all sin, even future sin, has been paid for by Jesus. "That couldn't possibly be true." ~~I/never~~

Now, three basic doctrines, taught in the Bible, about Jesus, the man denied. Even though he said he ~~was/~~ ~~he~~ was a believer because of a miracle that God had done in his life.

You see, dear friends, many people today say they believe in God and they say they believe in Christ. ~~Paul said~~

I am always amused at Military receptions that my wife and I attend. You stand around talking with certain people. And they are usually very curious because of my rank and the fact that I am a chaplain. And they often tell me how religious they are. In ~~the~~ one breath swearing and in the next breath telling me how much they like God and all.

And when this happens I am always amazed at how people assume they are believers in God and Jesus Christ because they say so, or, they belong to some church, or they were baptized as a baby.

This is a passage that everyone us ought to think deeply about. Why are you believing in Jesus? Are you believing in Him because of the facts of the Scripture? That He is God incarnate in human flesh. That he is the saviour who ~~he~~ died for all sin. That there is no hope for me unless my sins are paid for. What I have done in the past. And what I will do in the future. And all of them ~~are~~ were paid for by Jesus on the cross.

And the moment I believe that and accept those facts, I have salvation. Do, I believe that Jesus is literally alive today?

The Bible says in Roman 10:9 that "if you confess with you mouth that Jesus is Lord, and you believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be ~~say~~ saved.

You must believe that Jesus arose from the dead. You must believe the Scriptures. And I have never found that the Scriptures will lead me astray or misguide my direction. The ^Scriptures will always lead you to God... to new life in Christ Jesus....to confidence and hope.....to salvation and eternal life.....BUT YOU MUST BELIEVE THE SCRIPTURES ABOUT JESUS..