

Clean Worship  
John 2:12-25  
Bethany Assembly of God  
10/1/2023

**Central Proposition: You should be consumed with zeal for God's house.**

**Introduction**

Jesus has come to replace the old, empty ways of trying to please God with His presence as the Groom come to bring His bride, His people, into the joyful, merciful Kingdom of God. We have a tremendous hope that the best is yet to come with Jesus because He reveals the character of God who never runs out of goodness. In today's passage, we see Jesus confronting another empty way of trying to be right with God: we find Him cleansing the Temple in Jerusalem. See John 2:23–25. After reading this passage, maybe we ought to ask, "How does Jesus want to cleanse me? If He walked into my house or our church, are there things He would drive out? Has the same passion for God's house consumed me?"

**1. You can offer pure worship.**

Being zealous for God's house starts with pure worship.

- Jesus wasn't opposed to the sacrifices or to paying the Temple tax. He was upset about the location of where these exchanges were taking place. They were happening in the Temple and, rather than a place of humble worship and prayer, perhaps people began to think of it as a place of transaction. See Psalm 51:16-17.

**2. You can cleanse your hands.**

Pure worship extends to clean hands. Transactional, ritualistic religion prevents us from experiencing the depths of God's grace. See Ephesians 2:8.

- When we neglect God's grace, we miss His love. We think we've earned something, but love that you've earned is not nearly as sweet as love freely given.
- We do not pay off our debt to God; God paid our debt for us when He sent the Lamb of God to take away our sin. How might we think differently about salvation, worship, and relationship with God if we remembered that it comes by God's love and grace and not through a transaction? See James 1:26-27.

**3. You can help remove hindrances to the mission.**

Zeal for God's house means removing hindrances to the mission. The buying and selling was likely happening in the court of the Gentiles, the outermost court in the Temple and it was as far as Gentiles could go into the Temple. It was designated for worship and prayer. See Mark 11:17.

- God's intention for His people, the Jews, was that they were to be a blessing and a light to the nations. But they had so divided themselves from Gentiles and so hindered Gentile worship that they compromised that mission. Do our ritualistic religious preferences keep people from worshipping God and coming to know Jesus?

**Conclusion: Don't have a fickle heart.**

Pure worship, clean hands, and removing obstacles to people drawing near to God are ways that we can be consumed with zeal for God's house.