

(John - Part 11): Jesus and the Money Changers

by A.W. Tozer

A.W. Tozer explores Jesus' confrontation with the money changers in the temple, emphasizing the need for genuine worship and the dangers of commercializing faith.

Duration: 51:49

Scripture: John 2:12

Topics: "Expositional"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker discusses the story of Jesus driving out the merchants from the temple. He emphasizes that these merchants were making a profit from holy things and Jesus did not argue with them but took action. The speaker then draws a parallel to the present day, questioning if the church has become too focused on financial profit and personal glory. He also mentions the importance of missions and how the Christian Missionary Alliance taught that giving to missions would bring prosperity to the church. The speaker concludes by highlighting the need to confront and overcome such issues, just as Jesus did in the temple.

Transcript

In the second chapter of the book of John, the gospel according to John, beginning with verse 12 and reading to and including verse 17, after this, he, Jesus, went down to Capernaum, he and his mother and his brethren and his disciples. And they continued there not many days. And the Jews, Passover was at hand, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem and found in the temple those that sold oxen and sheep and doves, and the changers of money, sitting.

And when he had made a scourge of small cords, he drove them all out of the temple, and the sheep and the oxen, and poured out the changers' money, and overthrew the tables. And he said unto them that sold doves, Take these things hence. Make not my father's house an house of merchandise.

And his disciples remembered that it was written, The zeal of thine house hath eaten me up. They remembered this verse and applied it to Jesus somehow. The zeal of thine house hath eaten me up.

Now, Jesus was born in Bethlehem in the days of Herod the king. And shortly after that, to escape the fury of the jealous Herod, he with his parents fled into Egypt. They were there only a short while, until it was

safe to return, and then they came back, but not to Bethlehem.

They came and went seventy miles north through Samaria and into the province of Galilee, and established their residence in the city of Nazareth, so that Jesus was known as a Nazarene. And then when our Lord had had his first miracle and had entered into his ministry, his father, his supposed father, Joseph, having died, he went with his mother and his brethren. And a few disciples tagged along, and they went way north of Nazareth to the city of Capernaum on the shore of the Galilean lake.

And there they tarried not many days, but they established residence there, and from that time on till he died, our Lord was a resident of Capernaum, though he was certainly not there very often. And after they had established their residence there, and I suppose had gotten moved in, it was Passover time, and our Lord went for his first Passover since his baptism and since his public ministry. He went up to Jerusalem, up being up into the mountains, because Capernaum was at sea level on the northern shore of Galilee.

And so he made the journey up to Jerusalem. And when he got to Jerusalem, the story occurred, or the events occurred, which are told in the story which I have read in your hearing. Now, our Lord Jesus Christ was and is a prophet.

But he is a prophet not only in word, but in deed. His deeds are prophetic, as well as his words. And his deeds carry, as they still carry, tremendous prophetic meaning.

By prophetic, I do not mean predictive. The truth is that the word prophetic, and prophet, and prophesy, and so on in the Bible, only incidentally is a predictive word. Its connotation is predictive, but it means more than predictive.

It means spiritually significant and divinely ordered. And our Lord was a prophet, and his deeds carried tremendous significance. And here, in dealing with these moneychangers, we find his deed and his deeds very heavily charged with moral teaching.

Now, it will be necessary that I give you a little background. Backgrounds are never desired in our day. We want whoever it is to jump right into the middle of it.

But I want to lay a little background here for you, and point out that the temple worship was still continuing in the days of our Lord Jesus, full swing. I even understand that it had been ordered and had received a certain revival. And the temple worship was attended better and was getting on better than it had been even before that time.

And when they went up to the temple, they went for several reasons. There were three great feasts during the year. This one was, of course, the Passover feast.

And there, there was the offering of animal sacrifices by the priests. And animals were brought by the worshipers. And then, in addition to the animals that were presented by the worshipers, there was the payment of the half-shekel.

And we use the word shekel now almost entirely in a comical sense. We give it a humorous meaning. But it was far from being humorous, because every Jew had to bring the half-shekel when he came up to the temple, and it had to be in temple currency.

When a worshiper went in, he had to bring money, and it could be only in temple currency, no other kind. And then there was the great feast day such as this Passover, when pilgrims came from all over Palestine and from all over the world for the Jews since the dispersion. Way before Christ's time, there had been travelers, and they were all over Asia Minor, and Asia Proper, and Arabia, and Egypt, and the islands, and into Europe.

And they went to the Catholics now sometimes will go from all over to Rome. They came, the Jews, from all over the world to Palestine and, of course, up to the temple in Jerusalem. They say that there would be as many as one million attending the great week's Passover feast there in Jerusalem, at least at Pentecost when the Holy Ghost fell.

The historians say that the city had been bursting at its seams, that the city normally around a hundred thousand or so had been pushed up until there were about a million people present in Jerusalem and in Byron's. Now, if that's true, then we may say that there were around a million during this Passover time, and they'd come from everywhere. It's possible that they came and went, and came and went, and were not all present at the same time, but at least during that period there were that many that were supposed to have been in attendance.

Now, the sacrificial animals. Let's look at that for a minute. These were the gifts brought by the people.

They tithed their herds, and they brought the animals, or the equivalent of it, and these sacrificial animals had to be ceremonially approved. We call it kosher now. That is, somebody had to examine these beasts and know that they were all right.

Now, the point is, a man lived way north here, if you turn to your maps you'll see, way north here someplace, say, up in Serapta or Tyre or somewhere, or he lived way down south here by the Dead Sea, and it was a matter of, say, a hundred miles or maybe longer, further, and if he came from the east, or from way south, or from across the Mediterranean, of course he had to come vast distances, and they traveled very slowly. They couldn't get in a jet plane and be shot there out of a gun. They had to travel on a little beast or walk that there the best they could.

So it took a long journey. Now the point was, how was a man going to take a sacrificial animal, say, from Decapolis or the city somewhere in Asia Minor, or even in Palestine, and drive it all that distance? Literally it would take him weeks and months to do it, and when the poor thing arrived it wouldn't be in shape for sacrifice. How were they going to do it? And then this half shekel that everybody had to pay, and had to pay in temple currency, no other was accepted.

Now consider the countries from which all the people came. At Pentecost you'll remember they were there from 17 different countries. I've been fishing around here in my head for places where they might come from, and I didn't want to seem to be reckless in my statements, so I was careful, but I happen to remember here that the Holy Ghost, when he told where they came from just a little bit later, said they came, there were Parthians, and Medes, and Elamites, and those from Mesopotamia, and Cappadocia, and Pontus, and Asia, and Phrygia, and Pamphylia, and Cyrene, and Rome, and Jews, and Proselytes, and Cretes, and Arabians.

Now that's the list they had here at Pentecost, and of course they had that same diversified crowd at the Passover feast. And they all came, of course, bringing their own money. They had money, what money they had was in the currency of the country from which they came.

And they say that actually there was legal in Palestine this many monies, just as we have one in this country, and you can't pass a Mexican, well, Canadian penny here. I don't know what the Mexican money is, but you can't pass anything but American money. It has to say, in God we trust, and they have Lincoln, or Roosevelt, or somebody on it, in order to make it American money.

You can't pass anything else, but in Palestine they had Persian, Tyrian, Syrian, Egyptian, Grecian, and Roman money, and all of it was good. But when you came to the temple, none of it was good. When you got to the temple, you had to have a half shekel, and they wouldn't make change, and it had to be a half shekel.

The sons of Annas, the priests, would not receive anything but the half shekel. It had to be a half shekel. And Persians, and Tyrians, and Egyptians, and Syrians, and Grecians, and Romans, and all the rest didn't have half shekels.

So what were they going to do? Now the point is, how was a man going to bring a beast 500 miles, maybe across the water, and sacrifice it, offer it at the temple? How was he going to have a half shekel ready to give to the priest when he got there? Well, the answer would suggest itself. Being Jews, they figured it out very neatly. The Jews established a market.

They had sacrificial animals all prepared. The priests had already examined them and stamped them with the temple seal. They were kosher.

And the fellow who lived, say, over in, now I'll have to go back to that list again, Parthia or Metia or somewhere, he came hundreds of miles, he had a cow there he wanted to offer to God. So he just sold the cow and put the money in his pocket. And when he got to the temple, he went to those that sold beasts, and with the money that he had got for the cow and sold up in the north or the south or west, he bought a beast there in the temple, offered that.

Now that was the neatest thing that you could possibly think of. Who could speak against that? And then about the money. The fellow now comes and all he has is Persian money, or Syrian money, or Grecian money.

But he's a Jew, and he wants to make his offering in the temple, he wants to give that half shekel. So what does he do? He won't take his Persian money, his Grecian money, so he hunts up the money changers. The Jews had fixed that up too.

Notice the Bible says here that those that sold beasts, it didn't say they were sitting, but it said the money changers were sitting. That is, they were sitting by tables, and they had various little pots of money, Persian money, Syrian money, various monies, and then they had their shekel money here. And when a strange looking fellow with a foreign accent would appear, and by the use of his hands, which the Jews are still good at, by the use of his hands and a few words he had, and perhaps the Hebrew that he remembered from his old home, he would get some shekels.

And the money changer would change his money and then take a little cut out of it. For a price, he would change the money into temple currency. And the man who sold the beast, brother, are you so naïve as to think that he didn't make himself a prophet? And not only a prophet, but all the traffic would bear? Don't be like that.

Of course. First he was a Jew, and whoever heard of a Jew that wasn't interested in the prophet? And then there were sinners, and whoever heard of a sinner that wasn't interested in the prophet? Prophet, not prophet. Now, that's the way it was.

That's the historical background, and that sets up this whole business to me very clear. The Jewish, the sons of Annas, they say, established this so that it was a very great convenience, and everybody could worship God at the minimum of inconvenience. And they could come from anywhere and get a cow or a beast and offer that beast or that dove.

And I understand also that they pushed the price of a pair of doves up to a fare of four dollars. And if you go back that far, you would find out maybe that that would amount to sixteen dollars, a pair of doves. The Lord said, if you're so poor you can't offer a beast, get a pair of turtledoves and offer them.

Turtledoves, of course, were under the Old Testament very, very cheap. But these sellers of beasts and doves, they saw to it that they pushed up all they could. They could raise them for practically nothing and sell them for four dollars a pair because of the pressure and crisis it was on when the pilgrim had to have the sacrifice and didn't know where to look.

He couldn't carry a pair of doves under his arm and travel several hundred miles on a donkey. So he bought himself a pair and was willing to take the chiseling and get the nick just in order to have the convenience. Now that's what Jesus walked into.

And here were doves. And there was the cooing of the doves and the lowing of the kind and the bellowing of the oxen, or bulls, and the sound of the bleating of the sheep. And you don't have to use your imagination to know what kind of a mess there was around the temple.

They had actually brought the thing into the area of the temple, not into the Holy of Holies and not even into the holy place, but into the environs so it was all part of the temple. This had been going on for years. Now what was wrong with that, I want to ask you, brother? Let's look at it first.

Let's look at what was in favor of it, or what it had in its favor, rather. First place, it encouraged people to go up to the temple. And so it had a crowd argument.

They sold cattle and the crowd would come. They said anything that will bring in more people must be all right. And that was a good, strong argument.

And it is an argument. If you can get people out, I suppose it's better than not getting them out. And so that is in its favor.

Let's say check. Now that's in its favor. And then it aided the Jews to obey the Old Testament scripture.

And I can hear a silky-voiced priest arguing very unctuously that this system enabled the Jew to worship after the Old Testament pattern. And then this business also represented what we call now consecrated business talent. And I can hear some oily priest say, well, God needs Christian businessmen.

And if you can't sing, you can't preach, you can't win souls, you can't expound, you can at least sell doves and beasts and change money. And that's just as necessary as anything else. Now that was done for the glory of God.

And they said, now if we were doing this somewhere else, it would be different. But we're consecrating this to God. This is all done for the glory of God.

Then another thing, it had ecclesiastical approval. I don't want to be sour, I want to be just as sweet as I can be. But brother, it's awfully hard to stay real sweet-sweet when you look out on the ecclesiastical world.

I wonder if there is anything short of mayhem and murder that doesn't have ecclesiastical approval somewhere. If there is, I don't know where or what it is. Well, the objector, anybody that objected to this system, of course, was in a position of fighting against the temple and the temple priests and the orders because it had ecclesiastical approval.

And then the clincher was that everybody was doing it and nobody stopped to question it. They all accepted it because everybody was doing it. And, of course, the objector then would be considered unsocial and radical.

And they would say, oh, he's against it. He's against it. What's he for? He's against it.

I've had that said about me. And all I'm against is sin and the devil, that's all. And all the truck that sin and the devil wants to drag in.

Now, you see, brother, there's so much to be said in favor of this system, and I can just hear a fellow standing up on a conference floor, lowering his voice two octaves, and speaking in a gentle, persuasive, throaty tone, perhaps blowing his nose loudly, and saying, these poor, dear brethren of ours in faraway countries, they want to worship too. And unless we have these money changers to make it possible, they'll be deprived of this most precious privilege. I can just hear that boy.

I could make a speech on that myself. But then, now, what was wrong with it? Why did our Lord walk in there and upset the money tables, and drive the cattle out of the temple, and burn them with his terrible, castigating remarks? I only gave you two or three reasons, but, brother, there are plenty. The first place, this selling cattle and beasts and doves in the temple, this money changer tables in the temple, was something added to the pattern which God gave them in the mount.

Whenever an extraneous thing is brought in through the worship of God, it assumes that God hadn't sense enough to know what he was talking about, or else that the Bible can be improved upon. Just as soon as I introduce something that does not have biblical sanction, I am at least tacitly telling God to excuse me while I edit his Bible for him, that I don't want to seem to be nosy, but did he overlook such and such a thing? So I add something to the pattern shown in the mount. Though God had said to Moses, Be careful that thou follow closely the pattern shown thee in the mount.

So that this was apparently harmless and even useful, this system of changing money and making available sacrificial animals, but it was strange fire nevertheless. You know, friends, sometimes all you can do is just stand still and suffer. Just stand still in the middle of it.

They'll argue you down, they'll stare you down, they'll talk you down, they'll reason you down, and they're dead wrong, but their reasons are all on the side of wrong. All you can do is stand in the middle of it and say, I know what I know. I know where I've been, and I know what I've seen, and I know what I've heard, and you can't change me any.

But they'll reason you out and show that you don't know what you're talking about, and of course they would anybody that would have talked against the temple market there, the Maxwell Street, all of the holy place. Now here, that was one thing, that they added to the to the temple worship and thus introduced strange fire upon the altar of God, but that wasn't the worst. The worst was that they intruded the secular into the sacred.

Now if you have done me the honor reading the book, *The Pursuit of God*, you'll remember that one chapter, I think it may be the last one, is called *The Sacrament of Living*. And in that chapter I say, and I am prepared to continue to say it tonight, that there properly is no dividing line between the sacred and the secular for a true Christian. A holy man makes everything holy, and to a holy man all ground is holy ground, and every place is a holy place, and every day is a holy day.

That is why we in this church, and I, do not don't blow a fuse at Easter nor at Christmas, get all excited and have to have two policemen and extra ushers to take care of the mobs on Christmas and Easter, and then have nobody around for the rest of the year, because we don't believe that any day is any holier than any other day to a man in whom the Holy Ghost dwells. That is why we wouldn't hesitate to eat a biscuit over here in Mimacathy Annex next door, because we believe that any place is holy if you are doing a holy thing in it, and you can eat to the glory of God. And the Bible says, whatever you do, whether you eat or drink, let it be to the glory of God, so that there ought not to be, and there need not be, any division between the sacred and the secular.

You do not need to go on Sunday to the church and sit among the boys and humbly bow our heads and hold our breath and think we're holy on the Lord's day, and then wrongfully get up and walk out in the Monday and say, God, you'll have to help me now, I'm in an unholy day, and I'm going to have to go out and do secular things. No, my brother, your job can be an offering to God, and the thing you do can be a sacrifice to the Most High. And you can make tomorrow as holy as today, and you can make the cab where you sit to drive your truck, or the stenographer's chair where you sit to type, as holy as the church seat where you are tonight.

I still believe that. I believe that it's a beautiful, liberating, and expanding truth, that everything can be holy to what the man is holy, and nothing can be holy if the man is not holy. Now, that is true.

But over against that, there is this other truth, that anything that is done selfishly, that is not done in faith and love, is profane. It is a secular thing, and there's a whole secular world, a world of secularity, a world of profaneness, an earthy, unregenerate world, and everything they do is secular. They're unable to do a sacred act.

There is not a single holy thing that the world, the unregenerate world, can possibly do. Therefore, when we bring the unholy, selfish, unsanctified methods of the world and deeds of the world into the holy place, then we're guilty not of sanctifying the secular, we're guilty of profaning the holy. And instead of the holy man selflessly making everything holy, we have the unholy man selfishly making everything secular.

And we have not sacredness at all, we have profaneness. And these Jews were guilty of bringing the selfish, money-grabbing aggrandizement and love of wealth and covetousness into the very sacred precincts of the temple, and setting it up boldly there, as vastly as the sow that was offered on the temple in Jerusalem. Now, these money-changers operated for profit, and that was their curse.

Could be said they aided people to come to the temple worship and increase the crowd, yes, but they operated for profit, and that was their curse. Could be said they were a convenience to the worshipers, but they operated for a profit, and that was the blight that was upon them. It could be said that they aided the dispersed Jew to return and worship according to the Old Testament pattern, and that was true, but they did it for a profit, and that was the disease that was upon their souls.

They operated for a profit. They didn't desire to promote the honor of God, they desired to fill their own coffers and realize personal gain. And what they were doing was, they were serving God for a profit.

Some years ago I read a sermon by an old fellow by the name of Johannes Eckert, they called him Meister Eckert. About 700 years ago he lived, and he wrote a little sermon called, Jesus Went Up to the Temple. Well, I have read that in English, and it's almost funny, it's so terrible.

He said that these money-changers and sellers of the beasts were merchants. He said they did it for a percentage, and whatever they did, they did for a percentage. Then he turned around and rammed that down the necks of his ears, and he said, anybody that serves God for any other reason than his own glory is a merchant of holy things.

And if we go to God and say, now God will give you 75 percent of the praise, but I'd like to see my name in print, we're asking God for a percentage. If we go to God and say, God, I'm willing to give you 90 percent, but I'd like to have something out of this, too. My name is not in as large lines.

I remember one evangelist a long time ago, and he was mad because his name wasn't in as large print as some other names that were on the billboard, on the Dodgers they had around. Well, that fellow wanted a cut on that thing. And old Eckhart said, you are your merchants.

He said, you are making merchandise out of the things of God. I believe it with all my heart. But to go on, let us notice how Christ handled this whole business.

The way we are supposed to handle things now is to offend nobody and to be very, very gentle and try to be as much as possible like the pastor in the deserted village. Ever read the deserted village? Everybody's been to high school, of course, didn't that all of you, except the younger ones? You've been there, and everybody reads the deserted village. And the preacher in that deserted village is certainly a darling old man.

He had much hair, but the sun shined on it, and it reflects, and it's like a mountain peak kissed by the sun. As he walks down the street, the children run and grab around his legs. I never knew how he could get any place, because they'd just grab him and hold on.

But he's such a darling old fellow, and he never hurt anybody. And he'd have done something here if he'd gone into the temple, he'd have looked at it, shaken his head, sighed deeply, and gone away in meditation. Not hurting anybody.

Don't offend anybody, they say. Never draw blood. Well, our Lord Jesus Christ is a good example of how to deal with money changers and merchants inside the temple of God, and those that have brought in unauthorized and unwarranted additions to the holy place.

Jesus handled it not by argument, not by gentle argument, but there are some things you can never do anything by gentle argument. You can stand up and know you're right by the word of God and the witness

of the Holy Ghost and the voice of history, and still like a thousand angry chickens they'll cackle and peck at you until you have to run for safety just to get them off your neck. And you can't argue some people out there, they just will go on.

They will have their way, and they will because they can give reasons why there ought to be a cow in the holy place. They can give reasons why there should be a man there with pots of metal to change money into the half shekels. You know how much money they brought up in the course of a feast? Seventy-five thousand English pounds when the pound was five dollars, Brother McAfee.

I don't know myself, but it's up there, and that had that many hundred thousand dollars present. That is, they actually brought that in, and they say that it was common in a week's time, one week's time, for those Jews to make five times eight, it would be forty thousand dollars off of their worshipers. Forty thousand dollars! I know how much five times eight is.

And they'd make forty thousand dollars out of these worshipers, and then go pulling their beard and say, We're doing it to the glory of God, and we're consecrated Christian businessmen, and our talents belong to the Lord. But the simple fact, they were merchants making merchandise out of holy things. And Jesus Christ never argued with them.

When a fellow goes so far, Brother, don't break your teeth on him. Don't bother arguing with him. When thou seest not, when thou discoverest not the lips of wisdom in a foolish man, go from these peasants.

And Jesus, oh, I love this. You know, the deistic and rationalistic Frenchman Renan said in his Life of Jesus that this showed an outburst of bad temper on the part of Jesus. I can't see that at all.

This was God. And God is capable of holy wrath. And this was the Eternal Son acting like the Eternal Son in the midst of human profanity, in the midst of babies and children and penitent publicans and street women.

He was as tender as a nurse bending over her patient. He was as sweet as a fresh fragrance of the spring breeze. But in the presence of these incurable lovers of themselves, he grabbed their tables and overturned them.

And I can see the look of consternation when Syrian money went with Persian money and Persian money mixed with Grecian money and Grecian money mixed with the holy shekel of the temple. How would they ever audit their books and what would they tell the income tax collector? What did the Lord care, brother? What did he care? He overturned the whole thing. And then he picked up a rope.

Somebody said he was terribly brutal. Take a little rope. If anybody has ever driven cattle, know that if you are going to make a cow even stop and look around, you are going to have to use something bigger than a rope.

You couldn't hurt a cow with a rope. They are built for that kind of business. They are tough-hearted and thick, and their nerves are way down deep.

And they can go through briars and lie down on stubble. What could a little whip made out of rope do? He just used it to encourage them out of the temple, and he did it himself. And out they went, glowing and bawling, but not bawling nor shedding as many tears as their covetous owners did.

Brother, there is only one way to get rid of some things, and that is simply to grit your teeth, lean into the wind and grab it. And Jesus, our Lord, knew how to do that. I'm glad he did it like that.

I'm very, very glad. For over against it was all the sweet tenderness that later died on the cross. But in the midst of profaneness, in the midst of these deep-dyed hypocrites who served themselves in the guise of serving God, Jesus never stopped to reason or to argue.

He tore into it. Luther had to do that when he came to Rome. In the Roman Church, the sophistry, the casuistry of the false teachers is very difficult to get around.

They have fought their way through all of the pores of the human brain, and you can't take time chasing them through all the fine arteries of the mind. There is only one thing to do, and that is to overturn them by the grace of God. Jesus did it, and he drove them out of that temple.

I'd love to have been there. I think I'd have ventured a wee bit of applause when they were on their way out. Now, I want to make an application of this.

What about the strange situation today? Have we become too lost in profit-making, financial profit, profit of private glory, profit of shining and publicity and all that? Has fundamentalism become so bogged down in this same thing? Perhaps in a different degree, but this same thing. Have we become so lost in it that God can't help us, that he may have to throw the whole thing out and start over? Take such a thing as missions. The Christian Missionary Alliance taught the religious world that if people were given a missionary motive, they would give to missions, and the Church would prosper more than if they didn't give to missions.

And men picked that idea up. Now, certainly not all, but there were men and there are men who picked that idea up, and because they know that God's people are very tender when it comes to missions and the need of the heathen, they're exploiting the cause of foreign missions and are making gobs of money in the name of a broken heart and a world vision. Take such a thing as divine healing.

If someone very dear to you lay ill, perhaps hovering on the border, oh, it would mean so much to you. If your faith could rise and take hold of the Great Physician, and you could believe and have somebody encourage you to believe that the Lord's interested in our human body, anyone who would speak against the tender, beautiful thing of kneeling in reverent prayer and offering prayer for the sick, anybody who would speak against it certainly is not much of a Christian, and I would not. But when it comes to men incorporating the healing touch of Jesus and calling it healing incorporated, and we have such a grotesque and fantastic incorporation in the United States of America, the beautiful virtue that went out of Jesus to the woman twelve years bleeding and healed her instantly, that beautiful virtue has now been incorporated under the laws of the state so that givers and donors can take it off their income tax.

That's the reason for all that. It's financial. The auditors and tax collectors know why it is, but the poor dumb sheep of God don't, and I do not hesitate to say that while there are tender men who believe in healing, who believe that God hears, as my good Irish brother Tom says, if God ever pours the Holy Ghost out, there will be marked cases of physical healing.

It's part of the pattern, he says. Of course it's part of the pattern, and I believe it, and you believe it, and we believe it, but I do not hesitate to say that in the name of the holy virtue that went out of his seamless robe, men are driving long cars and living in ranch-type houses and riding high. Profit, profit, profit.

So missions, nothing sacred, nothing sacred. Missions, healing, prophecy. I was going to bring it down, and then I groaned and didn't.

Magazine came yesterday, and I saw it this morning. In it was a big ad, widely known, widely circulated magazine. Big ad.

Fellow's name I'll try not to pronounce for decency's sake, but he had incorporated himself. He was Jones Incorporated. Well, I'm glad he's incorporated.

He's that in his favor, but he incorporated himself, and he allowed this thing to be said about him, with all prophecy. He's written ninety books, and he can tell you the very color of the Antichrist I thought. He knows all about it, but he allows this degraded thing to be said about him.

The greatest preacher since Henry Ward Beecher, and it rhymes, and it's a lie, but the beautiful father of Jesus coming back again. Don't we all believe it, and don't some of us hope that it might be soon, and do we not read with tender affection those passages that tell us to let not our heart be troubled. He goes to prepare a place, and he's coming back to receive us unto himself.

Did not Paul say in great detail how it would be when he comes, the dead in Christ shall rise first, and how many sweet saints lie sleeping quietly after the passing of the centuries, and how could we be believers in the church of Jesus that Brother McAfee talked to the young folks about tonight, the universal church of Christ on heaven and in earth? In heaven and earth, how could we be believers in it all, and not look forward to the time when those believers shall rise from their dusty bed and be made in the image of Jesus Christ, rid of all disease and all weakness and all sickness and all limitations, and shall rise to be with him forever? That's the coming of Jesus. That's prophecy. That's a light in the tunnel, a star on the horizon that tells the traveler that it's all right and the morning is coming.

Now, to incorporate that and to use that as a gimmick, how rotten can we get? Two things, and I'm finished. The true temple says that a great man is the soul of man. The true temple is the soul of man.

And you know that just as Jesus, when he went into that temple, said, This is my Father's house. I should be Lord here. I am the Father's Son.

This is my temple, a house of God for all, prayer for all people. Look, they have filled it with beasts and money and sharp-eyed tellers and money changers and collectors. And he drove them out.

In the soul of every one of us, there is a sanctuary, and it belongs to Jesus alone, and he wants to occupy it alone. And he doesn't want any rivals, no beasts, no doves, no bleeding sheep, no pile stacks of money, no busy merchants, no hagglers over prices. He wants it all by himself, and he wants it clean.

I wonder if maybe our getting indignant over that scene that happened two thousand years ago might not be just a wee bit serial comic, when we forget that we have a temple and that Jesus Christ made it for himself, and he wants to occupy it without a rival. Rain says the song without a rival there. Break down every idol, cast out every foe, now wash me and I shall be whiter than snow.

I wonder if that isn't the secondary teaching of this. The primary teaching is what I've given you. But I wonder if there isn't a secondary teaching that the expositors tell us is by extension.

I wonder if it isn't fair to say that we too are temples, not only this church, but we individuals, and that we are his temples, purchased at a price that they never paid for the temple in Jerusalem. It ran into the millions, that temple, and it took thirty years to build. But it never cost what your soul costs.

That temple costs the blood of God's Son. I wonder if it might be that unknown to you there are merchants and money changers inside your soul, asking a cut, wanting a percentage, defiling it with profanities and secular things, selfish things, profaning it with foreign presences in your soul. And he visits it and expects to find it clean, and he finds it filled with cattle.

Well, there are some who will never see the smile of Jesus. I'm sure Jesus didn't smile the day he drove out the cattle. I'm sure his face was set in a stern look of disapproval, no smile on his face.

But do you suppose if they had taken that, now they didn't, but if they had taken that lesson and repented and sent for him, and said, Young Prophet, we don't know who you are, but you sure hit us where we live. And we're not going to get mad and try to kill you, you're right. And we're going to stop this business.

The cattle will never come back in the temple. We're scrubbing. We're cleaning up this mess.

And there will never be a sharp-chinned money changer with his beady eyes making profits in this temple again. Thank you, Jesus of Nazareth, for telling us this. We admit we were all wrong.

You know what, I'm sure there would have been a smile on that face of his. I know it. He'd have smiled with sheer delight and maybe said, Let's sing a hymn, for he loved to sing the songs.

But they didn't do it. But you could. And there are those of you that will never know the smile of Jesus until you say to him, Lord Jesus, my poor temple is all full of stuff.

All full of stuff. And you hear him say, All right, get rid of it. Get it out of there.

And then he'll smile.

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