

John 2

by Damian Kyle

Jesus' first miracle, turning water into wine, represents his endorsement of marriage as an institution of God.

Duration: 57:06

Scripture: Psalm 69:9, Matthew 6:33, John 2:1-11, John 2:13-17, John 2:23-25, Acts 2:1-4

Topics: "John"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker reflects on the cultural context of weddings in biblical times, highlighting the significance of such celebrations in a community. He emphasizes the scarcity of resources and the importance of hospitality during these events. The speaker then discusses the decline of traditional family structures in the present day, noting the prevalence of single-parent households. He also mentions the shift in language and societal norms, where the term 'partner' is used instead of 'husband' or 'wife.' The sermon then transitions to the story of Jesus turning water into wine at the wedding in Cana, highlighting Jesus' response to his mother's concern about the lack of wine. The speaker emphasizes Jesus' servant model and his disapproval of a profit-driven business mindset. He concludes by mentioning Jesus' actions in the temple, where he drove out the money changers and expressed his concern for the poor.

Transcript

John's Gospel, chapter 2. On the third day there was a wedding in Cana of Galilee. Cana, as the verse describes, is in the region of Israel known as the Galilee, which is the northern region. It's interesting that John identifies the city for us because it helps us to understand a little bit about why Jesus and his disciples, Jesus' mother Mary, are at this wedding in Cana of Galilee.

Cana is a city that is a very short distance from the city of Nazareth where Jesus was raised by Joseph and by Mary. And when we take our trips to Israel, we always visit Nazareth and Cana on the same day because of the closeness of the proximity. And in those days, I mean, Cana today, there's two Canas.

They don't even know which one it was that Jesus was at as it relates to this miracle. But in those days, Cana would have been a very, very small town. And so you've got a wedding going on in those days, and a wedding in those days was a real celebration, especially in small towns.

It was a real reason to gather together and to enjoy one another's company. When you lived in a small town like that, you knew everybody else in town. You watched all the kids grow up.

And here to watch them, Tevye's daughter Mary, the tailor. I mean, everybody knows each other. Everybody knows everybody's business, this kind of thing.

And you watch them, and here they are. I mean, where does the time go? They're getting married. How can you believe it? And the excitement of going to a wedding, the excitement that a wedding was in the Hebrew culture.

Now, we live in a country where you can get a wedding invitation and go, another wedding? I can't afford this. But in those days, they didn't pick up the San Francisco Chronicle or the Modesto B, and on the Friday or the Saturday, look in it and find listed literally 100 things to do on that weekend with your time. You didn't necessarily have two days off on the week.

You didn't have four weeks of vacation. You couldn't vacation all over the place. That wasn't the way that things were.

There wasn't the kind of discretionary money that we have in this culture, which is astonishing in man's history. So to have a wedding was a time to come together to celebrate a special occasion, maybe the only one in the whole town this year. And they went on for seven days.

And the families fed you for those seven days. That's pretty good. Again, in a day when to go to bed not being hungry, to have your stomach full around the year, that was a big deal.

I think I'm starving when I'm not stuffed. It's a satisfying thing to be able to eat, to be able to eat in this kind of company, to be able to celebrate an institution of God from the earliest section of the Law and the Prophets. The honor of God in doing it, so they'd really get into it.

The mother of Jesus was there, Mary. Now, both Jesus and his disciples were invited to the wedding. Now, you look at it and you wonder, why in the world was Jesus and his disciples invited to this wedding? And from the context of it, it seems to be that this was a family wedding or a wedding involving someone very close to their family.

Mary is very involved in this wedding, as we're going to see in just a moment. When they run out of wine, she feels somehow in her involvement, she feels constrained to rectify the situation. It would seem that someone, either a family member or someone very close friend of the family, is being married here, and thus all of them are present there.

And then the catastrophe happens in verse 3, and when they ran out of wine, the mother of Jesus said to him, they have no wine. Now, here's a culture in which hospitality is like the biggest thing, and it would have been a great embarrassment to the bride, to the groom, to the family that was responsible for supplying the wedding to run out of the food and drink that was necessary for the wedding, because hospitality was so highly prized. And nobody wanted everyone for the rest, again a small town, to people to 20 years, 40 years later say, now whose wedding was that where they ran out of the wine? Don't tell me, it's at the tip of my tongue.

Nobody wanted that. And yet they run out of wine, for one reason or another, we don't know why, but they ran out of wine. Now, you run out of anything today, wine or dip or chips or anything today, it's like no sweat, I think Rayleigh's is still open or Safe Mart or we could go to Safeway or we could go to this or then you got 20 stores you can go to.

In those days, Cana was so small, they didn't even have a Safe Mart. I'm talking about small, it was pre-McDonald's for there, kosher McDonald's, no cheeseburgers. And so it's a catastrophe.

There is no wine to express hospitality through for this group of people. And Mary comes to Jesus and informs him of the catastrophe. And Jesus's response to her is an interesting one.

I'm going to get a little bit ahead of myself here. Jesus said in verse four to her, woman, what does your concern have to do with me? And then here's the key. My hour has not yet come.

An odd thing, when you read it, she comes and says they're out of wine. I understand everything. Woman, what does your concern have to do with me? I'm tracking okay there.

But then when he says my hour has not yet come, it baffles me because somehow it appears that Jesus understands that Mary is asking more of Jesus than just to supply more wine for the wedding. Somehow she is asking him, in Jesus's mind, to manifest himself as the Messiah of Israel through miraculous provision at this wedding. And he says to her, my hour has not yet come.

Mary paid an enormous personal price all of her born days to be the woman chosen by God to bring the Messiah into the world by virgin birth in order to fulfill the scriptures. She is blessed among women today in the minds of Christians all over the world. She did not have that blessing in that day.

And later on in the book of John, when we get to it, and Jesus is confronting and confronted by the religious leaders, and they get a little bit upset with the fact that they can't trap this guy, and one of them blurts out, we were not born by fornication. We're not bastards. We're not illegitimate children in a day when that was a tremendous stigma in a culture.

That was not just a slam against Jesus. That was a slam against Mary. And it was the widespread feeling or suspicion concerning Mary all of the days of her life.

And there is perhaps with Mary here the desire in saying to Jesus, would you do something spectacular here? I've been telling people that you're the Messiah, that you are virgin born, and if you do something spectacular, maybe they will then recognize you as the Messiah and accept the truthfulness of the virgin birth. I don't know. It seems like there's a little bit more happening there than just the request for wine is as best as I can see it.

She's wanting her story to be often confirmed by heaven, by the Lord. Jesus' response to her in verse four again is, woman, what does your concern have to do with me? Now the word woman is kind of harsh, isn't it? I don't know what your mother was like, but I never called mine woman. I would have been afraid to go to sleep at night.

Clean your room, woman. Those are the things you only say once in life. And I have a friend who is a pastor.

The pastor is at Calvary Chapel. Sometimes he comes and speaks here. I won't identify him, but he has a French Canadian accent.

And he for years referred to his wife as a term of affection. He called her woman. So he'd say woman this or woman that, you know, and it was a thing just between them that worked, you know, not everybody else understand it.

He finally had to stop referring to her in that way because all of the women in the church were so offended by it and perhaps fearful that their husbands might take a lesson or two from it or something like that. I don't know. But he ended up stopping doing it.

And of course, you know, what it meant in that culture and what it means in this culture are two entirely different things. It's not nearly as harsh in that culture. And it would be the way we would, it was a term of respect.

It would be what we would refer to someone as lady. It's a lady. So it wasn't derogatory in any way.

It wasn't condescending. He said, woman, what does your concern have to do with me? My hour has not yet come. And his mother said to the servants, whatever he says to you, do it.

Now that's as good a counsel as you can give anybody in all the whole wide world about Jesus. You can sit down to a sentence, huh? Whatever he says to you, do it. Now there were set there six water pots of stone according to the manner of purification of the Jews.

Now the Jews had all of these purification ceremonies for hand washing and all of these different kinds of things. And so they had these six pots and were told here that the pots contained 20 or 30 gallons a piece. So you put the six together, you've got somewhere between 120 and 180 gallons of capacity in these six spots.

And so there they are, they're sitting there and all in that place used for that purpose. And Jesus said to the servants, fill the water pots with water. And they filled them up to the brim.

And I like those four words up to the brim. He tells them to fill the pots. They fill the pots and more.

They obey him as much as was humanly possible to obey the command. They didn't fill it to the neck. They didn't fill it halfway.

They didn't fill it three quarters of the way. They filled it to the brim. And at this point, they have no idea that he is going to turn this water into wine.

They have no idea that the degree to which they obey him is going to be the degree to which he is able to fully bless them. And the way to be blessed in the Christian life is to obey God's word to the brim, to obey it and every command as far as it can be obeyed, to experience the fullness of every blessing that is behind every command, not halfway, not three quarters, not seven eighths, but all of the way. I really, I have difficulty.

I'm glad for the people that I get to serve with here at this church, including you. And I'm glad to be surrounded by, to the brim people, to the brim in their Christian life, to the brim in their service. If you've ever worked with a clock watcher, they're in it for the money.

Their heart isn't in it. That's why they're a clock watcher. I mean, nothing could drive me more crazy than that.

You never get to the brim out of them. Paul wrote to the Corinthians and he said, therefore, whatever you eat or drink or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God. He wrote to the Colossians and he said, and whatever you do, do it heartily to the brim as to the Lord and not to men serving with exuberance, serving with that extra leading worship with the extra doing what I do for the Lord with the extra, with the fullness of

it.

And surely the fullness of joy, which we get to in a moment, because wine is a symbol of that. Then he tells them, draw some out now and take it to the master of the feast. And so they took it.

And when the master of the feast had tasted the water that was made into wine, he did not know where it came from, but the servants knew who, who had drawn the water knew. I don't know if they're like winking and stuff, you know, we know what happens and the whole thing. And so they knew what happened.

The why water that's been made into wine is brought to the master of the feast and the master of the feast called the bridegroom after he tasted it. And he said to him, every man at the beginning sets out the good wine. And when the guests have well drunk, then that which is inferior is put out, but you've kept the good wine until now you have reversed the whole way that things are done.

That's the way that it was with wine at weddings. You put out the good stuff when people still had their taste buds operating and they didn't have a buzz on or anything like that. And they could appreciate the good wine and that kind of thing.

And then after you've gone past that, you can serve them anything and they won't know the difference. So you break out the Thunderbird, you break out the Boone's farm, strawberry Hill. I don't even know if they make these things anymore, but nobody knows because by then they don't have the capacity to appreciate in, in all of this.

And so he commends the bridegroom. He doesn't know that Jesus has done this. He thinks that this is something the bridegroom is.

And it's interesting that Jesus doesn't do anything to kind of, you know, to expose those that he's kind of covering for here. It's the way he is. This is you've reversed the pattern of inferior going from superior to inferior.

That's how the Lord works. The world always goes from the superior to the inferior. And I hope you know that, especially you young people, they will only show you the best at the beginning.

They'll never give you the slightest inkling as if this is how good it is now. And you just, you know, you know, cast your sail with us and then it's going to get better and all, always hiding the fact that when you get lured into that stuff in disobedience to the Lord, you're tasting the best at the beginning. It only goes downhill from there.

It's the way that sin is. It's the way that rebellion against God is, but God and how he operates, it goes from inferior to superior. And I don't know of a single person that I've talked to at the end of their life that ever has had a complaint of living for the Lord all the way to the brim.

That hasn't said, I am glad that I have lived for him as fully as I live for him. I wish I had another lifetime to do it even better. Life has got nothing but better for me in my walk with the Lord.

And so it's true of Jesus and wine that a wedding is true of Jesus and a human life. He takes something inferior and he makes it into something superior. Now, one of the things that always interested me concerning this miracle, since the gospel, according to John, is built upon seven miracles with the idea that they would cause a person to come to a saving faith in Jesus Christ.

And you look at the miracle of Jesus turning water into wine and you can ask John, Charm, why did you include that miracle? What is the big deal? I know that only God can turn water into wine, but aren't there more spectacular miracles that he did that could have been included rather than this one? Like Lazarus, when he's raised from the dead there in John chapter 11, which is the last miracle of the book. And here you have Jesus, a miracle at the wedding and then a miracle at a funeral. He's with us in the best and the worst of times in life.

But isn't there something to top this? Is this just kind of a little dog and pony show turning water into wine? What's the big deal in all of this? Why is the first miracle that he records the changing of water into wine? Because what Jesus is doing here is much more about much more than changing water into wine. Because what he is doing here in this first miracle represents an endorsement of marriage as understood by the Jews, by Jesus. And you cannot use your miraculous power in any higher way short of the resurrection than to let all of the world know forever and ever how important marriage is to you and marriages to heaven.

That's what he's doing here. That's what he's communicating. He is endorsing marriage, which is an institution of God.

And he's not endorsing marriage as defined by the United States of America. In this passage, he is endorsing marriage as practiced by the Jews and as taught in the Old Testament scriptures. It is an endorsement of a family and the family unit.

But what you have here is an endorsement of a family by God's definition as a building block of a human society. The Lord does not endorse living together. He endorses marriage.

You know, when I was a kid, nobody lived together. We didn't call it that. We called it shacking up.

The terminology has always changed in order to remove the sting. But there is a point when a society is in a free fall where you don't help people necessarily. And I don't know what the answer to it is, except to call things by their biblical terms.

But today, the terminology that's foisted upon me and foisted upon us as a culture is that people are living together. But when I was a kid, maybe it happened, but I didn't know it. I did not know of a single one of my friends or anyone where the parents were living together or shacking up together.

There's plenty of sexual immorality, but they wouldn't do that. And now today, it is so prevalent and people think that this is just another way to live. And what they don't understand is that they are living a life and they are supplanting an institution of God and they are living in rebellion to that institution.

They are tearing down an institution of God in our culture and in this world. It is not an issue of a single man and a single woman deciding to do what they want. Sin is far-reaching within a culture.

There are effects of it. And for every person that chooses to live together or to shack up or whatever it might be or to fornicate, which is the biblical terminology for it, it isn't just that they are doing that, but they are doing damage to the institution of God, the family as it's defined by God, the building block of any society. And so the young boy and the young girl, they live together, they fornicate together.

Then one day you get the phone call. It hasn't been my experience for which I thank God, but I have known many who have. They're living together in violation of everything that you believe and everything

that you raised that daughter in.

Now the holidays come and they want to come and stay in your house. How am I supposed to view that boy? Do you think I raised that daughter, my flesh and blood, for your sexual expression in adult life? Do you think that that's what I dreamed of for her? Do you think I am happy that you like her enough to fornicate with her, but you don't love her enough to marry her? And then you want to come and spend the weekend in my house and I'm supposed to like that. How can there ever be a relationship based upon respect when you have so disrespected me in this way? And now you have a fallout throughout the entire family as a result of it.

In this passage, Jesus is endorsing marriage by biblical definition. He is not endorsing living together or fornication. He puts his blessing upon this institution.

It's this one he's able to take it from the inferior to the superior. It's those that are living within the confines of that institution and a commitment toward one another that he's able to bless in the way that he wants to bless and he wants to bless. And in all of this, Jesus is endorsing not all of these new definitions for family that are floating about in the United States today.

He is endorsing marriage that involves a husband and a wife and children being brought into that God-instituted organism. That's what he's excited about. That's what he understands to be important for the longevity of any culture.

Now, the marriage that Jesus endorses here, Jewish, as laid out in the Old Testament, it was spiritually and legally binding. It would have required a writing of divorcement to terminate the marriage. No Jewish young man or no Jewish young woman would have ever lived together and then even remotely thought that this was acceptable before God or acceptable in the law of Moses.

And I have continually over the years run into mostly men, some of whom who have claimed to be Christians and say, well, it's just a sheet of paper. Doesn't mean God knows what's in my heart. Yes, God knows what's in your heart.

You have no commitment. That's what's not in your heart to the other person. They say, well, it's of no real importance.

You know, it's just a sheet of paper and all, but it is much more than that in a society. And it's more than that in the eyes of God. It's more than a sheet of paper.

He endorses it here. And marriage is so important to the Lord that he even makes it the imagery for the relationship between Jesus Christ and the church. That's what he uses to paint a picture to the world for the beauty of the relationship between an individual human being and the body of Christ as a whole, and then with him.

And it is marriage that represents this relationship, not two people living together and fornicating. It's interesting when you read all of the statistics that the divorce rate among those who live together prior to being married is actually higher than the divorce rate for those who do not live together. Now, in the human mind, you would expect it to be the opposite.

You say, well, you kind of tried each other out and gotten to know each other and all this kind of stuff and everything and the whole deal. And you'd think, wow, you'd have a much higher success rate having lived

together for a little while. But God knows what he's talking about in all of this.

And there is a certain level of commitment and respect on the part of one person toward another when there is a desire and a willingness to marry that is not present in the other situation. And everybody knows it. You cannot violate God's word, who is the maker of man, and expect that my wisdom in violation of his word is going to be better than how the maker knows he made us.

You might have read a few months ago in the newspaper, it's covered in the newspapers and the magazines and all of this, that Jewish school in New York, and they should have known better, which they decreed about the time of Mother's Day and then Father's Day, that they will no longer allow for the celebration of Mother's Day or Father's Day in the school because it's not inclusive enough. It does not give proper respect to the new definitions of family, principally homosexual. And when these young children are in this school and they're talking about their mommy and their daddy, that it causes those that have two mommies or two daddies to be uncomfortable.

So who gets to change? Out goes mommy and out goes daddy as terms, and out goes Mother's Day and out goes Father's Day. And little by little you see God's definition of the family unit disappearing before your very eyes. I've had the privilege to go to Europe a number of times for one reason or the other, mostly to go do something for the Lord there.

And to go to Europe, I mean, you see the most amazing castles, the most amazing buildings, the most amazing, amazing, amazing, amazing things. This is why tourists go, of course. It's one of the most amazing scenery.

Though I'm pretty hung up on California. I think it's the most beautiful part of the world that I've ever seen. I'm not which part of California, I'm just saying.

You wouldn't catch me living on the coast there with all that cool weather during the summer. No siree, not me. And to me, and I don't know if it's anybody else, but when I've walked through those countries, my spirit is more grieved than as if I walked into a seance, especially in France and England.

Switzerland still has a strong Christian influence. And there are Christians in all of these places, but they've been overrun. And you look around at what has happened to their society under their own wisdom.

And they're the future. That's the future of the United States of America apart from people making a stand on these issues. And it may be even if we make a stand in light of the Scriptures on the last day.

I was talking with Chuck Fleming over there last time we were there in York, England. And we walked from the town center of York out to where Chuck and Daryl and the kids are living. It's about a three-mile walk.

It's a beautiful walk. And I was just talking with him about, as I looked at these people and I looked at everything going on, and I said, tell me about society here. Tell me about the family.

Tell me about these things. And we began to talk about these things and all. I'm thinking, how are we going to reach them? I mean, where do you start here on all this? And we got to Chuck's house, and I asked Chuck, I said, in this neighborhood that God has put you in, how many children do you know of that are being raised by both their biological father and biological mother? Chuck said, not one that I know of.

There may be some, but not one that he knew of. And on television in England, in all of the advertisements and in the newscasts, you never hear reference to husband or wife. It's always partner.

It's always partner. So no one is offended by the moral code of another, even if it's God's moral code. And so what a blessing here in this passage that Jesus comes in knowing sometimes the tide that people have to go against in order to live faithfully for God and to marry, and marriage is not always something that is so easy.

I happen to be in an easy one. She does everything I want and without a peep, and it's so fabulous of the repent a moment here, just a second on that. But it really is.

It's an easy one. We respect each other and we love each other and we just kind of move forward. There's no, you know, nobody's setting the house on fire or anything like that, you know.

But you know, sometimes for others, there's, you know, some things where maybe it's not as easy for other people. But this is what the Lord blesses. And I would say to you, if you're a young person, and of course, when they do the newspaper articles, they always say that the young people are abandoning marriage because the terrible things and the lack of commitment, the high divorce rate among their parents and all.

Listen, your parents did not institute marriage. You haven't seen God's institution of marriage so often. So you can't throw it away because it's been poorly represented by someone even as close to you as your parents.

You have to look at it for what does God say about it and the virtues of it and the wisdom of it and just the pure obedience to it. And give yourself to that. But I think that this passage represents and communicates to us just Jesus's desire to bless a wedding, bless a marriage, because, you know, wine in the scripture so often is used as a symbol of joy.

And here he is. He makes sure that the supply of joy is consistent, that it's always supplied. In fact, superior joy, ongoingly superior.

And when a marriage is in his hands and under his control, the joy gets greater and greater and greater and greater. And joy is superior to happiness. Happiness is based upon having some kind of things.

It's based upon some physical deal. And it's based on something temporal. Joy is a fruit of the spirit.

It's based upon something higher. And you can be dirt poor and not have two quarters to rub together and have the most amazing joy in a marriage because the Lord is the foundation of that marriage. Joy is different from happiness.

Vastly superior. Now, let me say for a moment before we leave this, a little bit about Christians and wine here in Gallo country. And I'm kidding on that.

Sometimes people will look at this and they'll say, well, Jesus turned water into wine. You know, there's an excuse for drunkenness. The Bible says that we're never to be as Christians under the influence of anything other than the Holy Spirit.

We're never to be drunk with wine. The Christian, according to Romans chapter 14, is supposed to take other brethren into consideration as it relates to this and the wine, of course, in those days, it was kind of

the drink that they drank, kind of like the way people drink sodas today. It was you put the wine a little.

The beverage would be you'd put a little bit of wine in it or you'd have a weak kind of wine. It would kill all the amoebas in the water. So it made it safe to drink, but it wasn't the high alcohol content necessarily that we have today.

But the Bible says that we shouldn't partake of something that would stumble a brother. And I think that for the most part, certainly for someone that's in my position, that to partake in drinking of any kind would stumble another person if they saw it or certainly have great potential to do it. And the Bible says that love tells you to put your liberties away in order to do that.

And I think as Christians, we also have to be considerate of the fact in all of this, in terms of any and all alcohol, is that there can be a large number of people in the body of Christ, just as is the case in the world, who have a difficulty with alcohol. And so they don't need the aggravation. They don't need the temptation.

They struggle with it. So why would I bring that in before them? And so this beautiful miracle that was done and then the effect of the miracle upon the disciples, this beginning of signs, Jesus did in Cana of Galilee and manifested his glory and his disciples believed in him. And after this, he went down to Capernaum, he and his mother and his brothers and his disciples, and they did not stay there many days.

Now, the Passover of the Jews, which was a religious feast of the Jews, was at hand and Jesus went up to Jerusalem. Now they're in the north at Capernaum. And when they're going south now to Jerusalem, you think they'd be going down to Jerusalem, but they don't.

Always in the scriptures, when they talk about going to Jerusalem, they talk about going up to Jerusalem. And the reason they do is that Jerusalem is an elevated city. It's on a mountain, it's on a plateau.

And so you always went up to Jerusalem. And that's why when you read the psalms and those final psalms of the 150 of those psalms, many of them are called the psalms of ascent. They were the psalms that the pilgrims would sing when they were ascending up into Jerusalem from the low country up into the city of Jerusalem.

So they go up into Jerusalem and Jesus found in the temple those who sold oxen and sheep and doves and the money changers doing business. Now, when he comes to the area, and it's not in the temple itself, the temple building, it's on the temple grounds. And he goes up there and they're selling oxen and they're selling sheep and they're selling doves on there.

And it was a practice that probably began innocently enough because when people would come from all over the world, the Jews would come to offer sacrifice during these great feast days. And they would have to bring a lamb or an animal without spot and without blemish. And if you're coming a hundred miles or hundreds of miles or a thousand miles to bring that lamb with you or to bring that goat with you or whatever, or the dove with you, I mean, that really made a trip a lot longer.

And so they realized that this created kind of a hardship for the people. And so someone had the bright idea, somewhere along the line apparently, that let's provide some animals here that they can just bring their money with them, buy the animal, and then sacrifice it. They don't have to deal with it on the journey.

Well, it was a good idea. And good ideas kind of catch on. And so people begin to take advantage of this convenience and everything.

And then pretty soon somebody's eye got on it and realized, hey, this is very, very popular. I think we could make some money off this. And then they began to reject any of the animals under false, you know, kind of ways.

They'd find something on the animal that wasn't really there and say, no, you can't offer that. You got to buy one of these. And they're forcing everyone to buy these animals.

And they're charging a fortune for the animals. That's what's going on in the scene. Jesus comes into it.

And I love the way that John puts it here by the Holy Spirit. He sees them doing business. Verse 14.

The money changes the same way. You couldn't offer Roman money, and Roman money is what everybody used. Couldn't offer Roman money to God.

Roman money had a face on it. Because it had a face on it, the Jews considered it to be an idol. So you would have to take the money and you would have to exchange it into Hebrew shekels and then offer that money to God.

Because on the Hebrew shekel, there was always some kind of an agrarian symbol on it. Take the offering here. I was to declare to you that we no longer accept the United States currency for our tithes and our offerings.

Now, you have to understand, for the Jews, it was mandatory to give. Certainly considered that to be in their mind. It was mandatory for us to give.

But I mean, for them, there's no question about it. And what if I said, listen, we're not accepting the United States currency. We're only accepting Calvary bucks, which we're exchanging out in the fellowship hall at 25% exchange rate.

What would happen? Well, you'd probably find another church. But let's say you lived in a town where there wasn't another one. There are no options.

You might do it out of your love for God, but you'd grind your teeth. And the Lord recognized what these people were doing. And the whole operation was now under the supervision of the high priest.

And they actually, with the number of pilgrims that would come in, they would come in like a million pilgrims for each one of these three great feasts. And all you've got to do is make a buck or two off of each one. And it's said by Josephus that in that day, they were making millions of dollars equivalent.

They're making a fortune. And so Jesus comes in and he sees this whole thing and he sees that this thing has turned into a business. And may I say to you that almost all of the ministry models that I receive through the mail are business models for the church.

They're what works. This is what you do. And then they do this.

And the Lord has never been thrilled with a business model because the bottom lines of business is always numbers and money. And that doesn't matter to God. His model is always a servant model that the leaders exist to serve the body, not to fleece them.

So he looks at this whole scene and he's troubled about it and he makes a whip of cords. I don't know how long it took him to make it, but he made it and he drove them all out. There's some strength there.

He drove them all out of the temple with the sheep and the ox and he poured out the money, the changers money, and he overturned the table. I mean, he just, the whole place goes up in smokes here. And he said to those who sold doves, and it's interesting because the doves were the offering for the poor.

These guys couldn't even keep their hands off the poor. And he told them, take these things away. Do not make my father's house a house of merchandise.

And he scatters them out. These guys, now sometimes you think about these guys that are doing all of this stuff and everything. These are not wimpy people.

And Jesus begins to do what he does and just the anointing upon him. Nobody even tries to stop him on what he's doing. And I have a sense, as we'll see next week, that anyone with a conscience left knew that this man was doing what was right in that place.

And Jesus does what? He cleans house. He said, take these things away. Do not make my father's house a house of merchandise.

He cleans the house out, which is very, very interesting in terms of the timing, because the feast of Passover was a single day. It was a one day feast, but God adjoined to that one day feast, a seven day feast called the feast of unleavened bread. And during that seven day feast, the Jews would go through the entirety of their house.

And if they had any leaven, which was a symbol of sin in the Old Testament, the leaven was to be removed. Not that they were just to remove the physical thing of leaven from their house, but they were to check their entire house for any corruption that had been brought into their house over the course of the preceding year. It was a way in which God instituted for people, his people to stop and consider everything in their house in the light of him at least once a year.

It's not a bad thing to do. And so what does Jesus do? He knows that since everyone else is cleaning their house in the light of the feast of unleavened bread, he says, well, I might as well clean my father's house out of all of the corruption. And so he drives it all out.

Then his disciples remembered that it was written zeal for your house has eaten me up. Now, let me say this. For those of you who have trouble with your temper, trouble with your temper is a nice way to put it.

Let's let's let's put it this way. Those of you who are dealing with the sin of wrath and anger, I know nothing of it. You cannot take this and say, yeah, but you remember Jesus, you know, and I mean, all manner of fleshly anger, you know, is attempted to hide behind this this thing.

All of this was a righteous, righteous anger that was expressed here. And so the Jews answered and they said to Jesus, what sign do you show us since you do these things? Now, this is kind of the temple security and they had temple police. It's a pretty big kind of tough, brawny guys.

And it was their responsibility to keep peace there in that temple area. They come to Jesus and they said, what sign do you show us since you do these things? And Jesus answered and said to them, destroy this temple. And in three days, I will raise it up.

And these Jewish men said to him, it has taken 46 years to build this temple and will you raise it up in three days? But he was speaking of the temple of his body. And therefore, when he had risen from the dead, the disciples remembered that he had said this to them and they believe the scripture and the word which Jesus had said. So they asked for his authority.

To clear the temple. He said, I'll give you a sign that will reveal to you that I have not only the authority to cleanse this temple, but I have the authority to do anything I want because I am the son of God, because on the third day I will raise myself from the dead. What is my authority? I cleansed this temple in the authority of being the Messiah and the son of God.

That's what he's saying to them. It's 46 years to build this temple. They've been building it for 46 years.

They had a workforce of 18,000 men who worked nonstop for 46 years on that temple. Now, those of you who are contractors, you tell me what you could build in 46 years with 18,000 people, slave labor, and unlimited resources to give to it. And they would spend another 20 years building it.

And they would finish at 1967, 68 AD, they would finally get finished building this temple. And the amazing thing, no, in 66 AD, they finished building the temple. And then in 67 AD, the Jewish revolt against the Romans began culminating in the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple.

In 70 AD, they didn't even have a year to enjoy it. And why was God not troubled with the destruction of the temple? Because he no longer abided in that temple. He had departed the temple in the Old Testament long before.

And he had created on the day of Pentecost, a new temple made up of living stones called the body of Christ. That temple meant nothing to him any longer. And when he was in Jerusalem at the Passover during the feast, many believed in his name when they saw the signs which he did.

But Jesus did not commit himself to them because he knew all men and had no need that anyone should testify of man, for he knew what was in man. There's something about the commitment of these people. In verses 23, 24, and 25, that Jesus looks at and says, that's not a commitment I'm going to commit to.

Something superficial about it, and he knows it. And it appears that the superficialness of the commitment is because their faith was based upon the miracles that he was doing. But whatever it is, he doesn't like it and he doesn't commit to it.

And then in John chapter three, as we look at Lord willing next week, we see a faith that he will commit to. In his dealings with Nicodemus, signs and wonders are never a great faith for having in God based upon signs and wonders, faith comes by hearing, hearing by the word of God, faith comes by hearing the word of God. And a faith that is based upon the word of God is a faith that's going to be unshakable because the word doesn't change.

But miracles, sometimes God does them, sometimes he doesn't do them. And so if I have a faith based upon miracles, then when he doesn't do the miracle that I want him to do, then my faith is shot. And here you've got this relationship that's up and down, and I'm in with him, and I'm out with him, and I believe in him, and I don't believe in him, and the whole kind of thing that goes on.

Maybe that's what's going on here. But Jesus is going to make sure with Nicodemus that it's going to be a faith that's based upon the word of God and a clear understanding of who he is and what he's about.

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