

House of Prayer - Part 1

by Jim Cymbala

Jim Cymbala emphasizes the vital role of prayer in the life of believers, illustrated through Jesus' cleansing of the temple.

Duration: 5:15

Scripture: Psalm 69:9, Isaiah 56:7, Matthew 21:12-13, Mark 11:15-19, John 2:13-16

Topics: "Temple Cleansing", "Righteous Anger"

Description

This sermon reflects on the powerful and unusual depiction of Jesus cleansing the temple, showcasing a side of him that is rarely seen - filled with righteous anger and authority. It emphasizes the importance of having fresh communion with God and making a real difference in our lives through this encounter with Jesus overturning tables and driving out those who defiled the temple. The message challenges believers to consider the depth of Jesus' character and the significance of his actions in cleansing the temple.

Transcript

...for the last, I think, about eight, nine, ten years. They're dear, dear friends of ours. Jim and Carol Pastor in Brooklyn at the Brooklyn Tabernacle.

How many years have you been there? Twenty-one. Twenty-one years. So much integrity within the city.

We were there for a celebration that they had at Radio City Music Hall, three nights, and they filled the place. They did, with their choir and their ministry. The city loves these people because of the wonderful work they're doing.

You talk about mission work, these people are doing it. They love the Lord with all their hearts. Plus, Jim is a big basketball fan, so he can't be all bad.

For a dear old guy coming from Indiana, we have a good time discussing basketball. Jim, you're with friends, and we love you. Speak to us.

Thank you. It's a real joy to be here at the Praise Gathering, and I want to talk for a few moments about something so vital, and yet it's so simple. It's so familiar to us that that's the danger.

I want our session this morning to be something that'll make a difference in our lives rather than just some kind of talk with more information about God. I pray that by his grace we can have fresh communion with

God. To approach that subject, I want to give you one of the most strange and stunning pictures of Jesus found anywhere in the Bible.

Of all the portraits you've ever seen painted, there is no portrait found in the Bible stranger. We see Christ on the cross. We know Christ as the good shepherd.

We know Christ walking on the water. We see Christ sitting at the well with a woman in Samaria. But in your wildest dreams, can you ever picture this? Have you ever wondered why God would put this in the Bible, not just once but twice? And so they came to Jerusalem, and Jesus went into the temple and began to drive out those who bought and sold in the temple.

And he overturned the tables of the money changers and the seats of those who sold doves, and he would not allow anyone to carry wares through the temple. And then he taught them, saying, Is it not written, My house shall be called a house of prayer for all nations? But you have made it a den of thieves. And the scribes and the chief priests heard it and sought how they might destroy him, for they feared him, because all the people were astonished at his teaching.

And when evening had come, he went out of the city. Now the Bible has many pictures of Jesus Christ, and to me, none is stranger. The Lamb of God, the one who came to take away the sins of the world, the gentle, loving Jesus who, as the good shepherd, puts the lamb on his shoulders and brings it home.

And yet, in this portion of scripture, we see Jesus physically emoting in a way that is really hard for us to picture, that he would actually take tables and overturn them and throw money on the ground, that he somehow, all by himself, with no armed helpers, the disciples were passive in this, that he would stop people from carrying their merchandise and just by a word of authority said, get out of here with that, you can't bring that through the court. And that he would go to the people who sold the oxen and the sheep and the doves for the poor people and he would say, out, get your business out of here. I mean, it's an amazing picture of Jesus Christ.

The loving Jesus that we know, we think that for anybody to be that irate and physical must mean they're not in the spirit. But this is Jesus Christ. And what's strange about this is this is not the first time this has happened.

I read from Mark. And the Bible tells us in John, the second chapter, that in Jesus' first visit to the temple after he began his public ministry when he was about 30 years old, he did the same exact thing. In fact, the Bible tells us there that he made, are you ready, a whip out of cords.

And used a cord, these cords and this whip, to actually physically thrash them out of the temple. Now it's three or two years later from there and now he's getting ready to face Calvary and he comes back to the temple and he cleanses it again. Why would God put something so stunning in the Bible that he would go into it?

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