

Applying It In My LifeGroup time - 20 minutes

1. What lessons about the importance of pure and undistracted worship can we learn from Jesus' cleansing of the temple? What do we learn about the contrast between spiritual and material interests in worship? What applications of Jesus' lesson here could we relate to church and denominational practices today?

2. Jesus was angry. Why in this situation was Jesus' anger justified? Why does our anger often get us into trouble? What practices in today's world might make Jesus angry? In what practical ways can we demonstrate the same concern that Jesus did for the holy character of God?

3. Some people who attend church have a belief in God that doesn't need Jesus. What behaviors and attitudes characterize a person who has a belief in God that doesn't need Jesus? What must we do to avoid any kind of practice that makes worship superficial and external? How is the ministry of Jesus a "voluntary process toward a predetermined goal?"

Prayer TimeGroup time - 15 minutes

Thank God that He has replaced the old sacrificial worship system with the new covenant based on Jesus. Ask God to help you avoid any hint of superficial and external worship in your life. Pray for transformation of your mind and a willingness to present your life as a living sacrifice to God.

Finish your prayer time by praying for the needs of those in your *Growth Group*. Take a few minutes to share prayer requests. Ask someone in the group to record your prayers so you that in future weeks you can see where God is answering your prayers.

BELIEVE *Jesus Cleanses the Temple*

The Feast of the Passover

John 2:13-17

- It was God's plan that the Jewish people would SHARE the blessings of God with the whole world.

- God is looking for people who want to WORSHIP Him in "spirit and truth."

- We need to be UNDISTRACTED in our worship of God.

The Destruction of Temple

John 2:18-25

- Jesus always had the END of His ministry in view.
- Jesus is not satisfied with SUPERFICIAL faith.

- The ministry of Jesus was a voluntary process toward a PREDETERMINED goal.

GROWTH GROUP HOMEWORK

Week of February 2-7

Getting StartedGroup time - 15 minutes

1. Do you find yourself believing and behaving according to any of one of the following ideas?
 - We should dress and behave differently in church because it is "God's House."
 - Pastors have a greater knowledge of and access to God than other people.
 - God is more approving of me when I give generously or serve in the church.
 - Sitting in church out of habit or because you feel you should, but not really engaging in the worship that happens there.
 - Judging other people's spirituality by what they do or don't do, and not by their heart.

What common idea are all these attitudes characteristic of?

FOR GROWTH GROUP TIME

Getting Into God's WordGroup time - 40 minutes

Read **John 2:13-25** (In preparation to answer questions)

1. Following the wedding at Cana where did Jesus go and what was His purpose in going there? What did Jesus see was happening in the temple courts? Describe what He did about this offensive situation. What reason did Jesus give for His actions in the temple court?

2. What did the Feast of Passover celebrate? Why was its significant for the Jewish people? What did it have to do with what was going on in the temple? How was the money-changers actions evidence of the abuses going on in "Jesus' Father's house?"
3. According to tradition only the Messiah had the authority to cleanse the temple. The Jewish people recognized that and asked Jesus for a miraculous sign to confirm His identity. What "sign" did Jesus point them to? What was so significant about this sign for the Jewish people?
4. Read Hebrews 10:1-14 and 19-23. How did Jesus fulfill and make better the temple worship practices? In what specific ways are the Old Testament practices of worship and sacrifice now changed as a result of Jesus' perfect sacrifice? Describe how Jesus wants us to worship Him today?
5. Later Jesus' enemies used this statement regarding the destructions and rebuilding of the temple against Him? What did Jesus' statement really mean? What effect did Jesus' statement have on the disciples following His death and resurrection?