

# GROWTH + GROUPS

NAVIGATE LIFE TOGETHER

## Maranatha Chapel Sermon Based Study Guide

### SPRING CLEANING

JOHN 2:13-25 (SB 06.12.2022)

#### Receiving the Message and Relating to the Study

What insights, principles, or observations stood out to you from this week's message? Discuss with your group.

There are some obvious things that would make anybody upset, but sometimes, it's the tiniest annoyances that make us rage the hardest. One thing that is almost guaranteed to test my patience is putting together furniture from Ikea. It's not good for my emotional wellbeing. At some point, I end up doing something wrong or putting something together backwards and I have to do it over. It doesn't help that there aren't any words on the instructions, just pictures. (Why is the guy in the drawings always smiling? That just makes it worse.) We all have little things that anger us, but sometimes our anger can have an adverse effect on our health. According to a Harvard study, 10 million adult men in the United States are so angry they're physically sick. The disease even has a name: intermittent explosive disorder (IED). Studies have also revealed that bad-tempered people are three times more likely to have heart attacks. But here's something that might surprise you: sometimes it's good to be angry. There's a good kind of anger. In fact, you can tell a lot about a person by what makes them laugh and what makes them angry. Today, we're going to look at a story where Jesus gets mad. Let's get into our study...

1. What spoke to you from Pastor Daniel's sermon?
2. When is a time you have been angry that, in retrospect, wasn't really for a good reason?
3. On the other hand, talk about a time you have been justifiably angry. What is the difference between these two experiences? How do we learn the difference?

**Depending on your personality, you may be more given to anger than another person. However, we all have those times where when we calm down, we realize that our anger was out of line and unnecessary. People get angry for all kinds of reasons, some better than others. But what can we learn about anger from what angered Jesus? Jesus became angry when people profaned the temple of God. What, then, does that mean for the church today in whom the temple of God resides?**

#### Digging Deeper in God's Word: Life Lessons

#### HAVE A VOLUNTEER READ JOHN 2:13-16

1. Why did Jesus go to Jerusalem at this time? What help does the context give us in understanding what was going on in the temple?
2. Look closely at verse 14. What about the practice of selling animals angered Jesus so much?

When Jesus arrived in Jerusalem, the Passover was near. Because of this, people would need to make sacrifices. The court of the Gentiles, the outer part of the temple where all people were welcomed, was filled with people selling the animals that would have been required for Passover sacrifices. Jesus became angry because these sales were occurring "in the temple complex" (v. 14)..

1. Read Isaiah 56:7 and Jeremiah 7:11, which Jesus referenced in Matthew's account of the same event (Matt. 21:12-13). How had the money changers taken something sacred and made it common?

## **BREAKTHROUGH! in 2022**

2. Since we know that Jesus never sinned, we know that His anger was righteous. Read Ephesians 4:26. When is it good and right to be angry?
3. How do you know when your anger requires action?

The temple was where the presence of the Lord dwelled among His people. While it was the center of Jewish worship, it was not only for the Jews. The temple was to be the house of prayer for all people. God has always had a global purpose to include people of all nations in His distinct people. The commerce angered Jesus because the money changers were treating the temple flippantly and not reverently. He was right to be angry, and His anger motivated Him to action—turning over tables and driving money changers out. The Bible makes a distinction between righteous and unrighteous anger; as we grow in the Holy Spirit, we learn to tell the difference between the two.

### **ASK A VOLUNTEER TO READ JOHN 2:17-22**

1. Compare and contrast the disciples' response to Jesus and the Jews in the temple? How did the Jews misunderstand and misinterpret Jesus? What did they not understand about the temple?
2. Read Ezekiel 36:27, 1 Corinthians 6:19-20, and 1 Peter 2:4-5. Where does the temple of God reside today? Why does this matter?
3. Re-read verse 22. If we want to be sensitive to Christ and the work of the Holy Spirit, why must we be continuously immersing ourselves in the Scriptures?

The temple was holy because of the presence of God, not because of a location or place (John 4:21-24). The Jews did not connect the Messianic prophesies as Jesus' disciples did. Jesus was the presence of God in bodily form in the temple. It was His temple, and He was able to do as He pleased. Today, the temple of God is in believers of Jesus because the presence of God dwells in us through His Spirit. The temple is where we are. For this reason, we cannot take our actions lightly. We must be governed by what God finds acceptable, rather than what is acceptable in our culture.

4. How should being a temple of the Holy Spirit change the way that we live? What is one concrete way the Holy Spirit has changed you?

### **HAVE A VOLUNTEER READ JOHN 2:23-25**

1. Look back at verse 18, and then verse 23. What causes the "many" to follow Jesus? Why was this not enough for true faith (v. 24)? How was their faith misplaced?
2. Can you identify any part of yourself or people you know in the variety of response to Jesus in John 2?
3. How did the common understanding of faith in the time of Jesus' earthly ministry keep them from seeing who He really was? What keeps people today from seeing Jesus for who He is?

John frequently used the word "sign" to describe Jesus' miracles. Many people followed Jesus because of His power, but not because of His identity. John condemned such belief because it was not centered on the person of Christ. God is not fooled or convinced by insincere worship which the first century cultural climate—and our own—made room for. People did not want to accept Jesus as Savior and Lord for the same reasons people reject Him today: it's inconvenient and brushes up against our preferred understanding. However, we must always pursue truth where it is found—in Jesus Himself.

What did you learn from this study and how does this personally speak to you? Discuss with your group.

Anger is one of the many emotions that we have been given the capacity to feel. Our ability to feel comes from God, who is Himself an emotional being. God is not a robot. In Scripture, you'll often read about God being moved to compassion. You'll also find Him laughing, crying, grieving, loving, and yes, even getting angry. I bring that up because sometimes I think we mistakenly believe that the more spiritual you become, the more detached and unemotional you will become. That's not true. If anything, the more connected you become to God, the more in touch you will become with your feelings. There are times when you should be angry. When you see wickedness and injustice and evil, it should cause something to well up inside of you and make you mad. In fact, most of us would agree that a person who feels nothing when they see terrible injustice is not emotionally or mentally healthy. The trick is learning how to differentiate between righteous and unrighteous anger.

1. Is there anything in your life that society praises, but God would condemn? Why must we be vigilant in searching our hearts to identify these areas of weakness?
2. Ultimately, Jesus cleansed the temple both because He cared for God's worship and for the people who were worshiping Him wrongly. Are there people with whom you have developed a kinship that allows them to speak difficult truths into our life? How does the presence of the Holy Spirit in the church make this possible?
3. At times, it is better to be spiritually correct than politically correct. However, there will be other times where we need to extend grace. How do we discern the difference between those two occasions? Give examples.

PRAYER: Praise God for making and keeping His temple a place where all people are welcomed. Pray that you would love what God loves and be angered by what angers Him. Ask the Holy Spirit to make your heart sensitive enough to respond, like JESUS, in boldness and clarity.

*'Search me, God, and know my heart; test me and know my anxious thoughts. See if there is any offensive way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting.'* {Psalm 139:23-24}