

# Week 1.2 - Jesus Clears the Temple Courts

*Small Group Lesson*

## OBJECTIVE:

- John 2:13-25

## EXPLORE:

(These are different commentary notes that can be used to explain the context to our students. Feel free to use your own.)

### Location

- The Second Temple in Jerusalem was a pivotal structure in Jewish history, serving as the focal point of religious and national life for centuries.
- It stood from 516 BCE to 70 CE, replacing the First Temple (which King Solomon built) destroyed by the Babylonians.
- Today, only the [Western Wall](#) (Kotel) remains as a physical remnant of this significant site.

### Conversion then Cleansing

- John begins with the miracle of conversion: Jesus turning water into wine.
- He then records a work of cleansing: Jesus driving out corruption from the temple.
- This order is intentional: Jesus always works this way in His people—conversion first, then cleansing.
- Passover itself included the act of cleansing, as every speck of leaven (yeast) had to be removed from homes, symbolizing cleansing from sin.

### Jesus' Authority in the Temple

- During Passover, as many as 2.25 million Jews could be in Jerusalem (Barclay).
- Each had to pay the temple tax (about two days' wages) in a special temple coin, creating a booming business for moneychangers.
- Some commentators believe Jesus used the whip only on animals, others say both men and animals—but in either case, the act was more about authority than violence.
- Jesus drove them out, poured out their money, and overturned tables.
- This happened in the Court of the Gentiles—the only place Gentiles could worship—which had been turned into a house of merchandise.

## Superficial Belief and True Knowledge

- Many believed in Jesus when they saw the signs, but their faith was superficial—built on admiration of the spectacular rather than true trust.
- Because of this, Jesus did not commit Himself to them.
  - Morgan: “If belief is nothing more than admiration for the spectacular, it will create in multitudes applause; but the Son of God cannot commit Himself to that kind of faith.”
- Jesus knew what was in man: our sin, weakness, and flaws.
- Yet He also saw the image of God in fallen humanity—and still chose to love.

## STUDENT RESOURCES:

- [The Chosen - Season 5, the famous -The cleansing of the temple 1](#)
- [Gospel of John Summary: A Complete Animated Overview \(Part 1\)](#) [3:00-4:37]

1.2 temple before

**Second temple (before destruction)** Image not found or type unknown

1.2 temple

**Second temple (after destruction by Roman army in 70 CE)** Image not found or type unknown

## SMALL GROUP QUESTIONS:

### Scripture (S)

- Read it together! What details stood out to you in this passage that you may not have noticed before? What context provided stood out to you as well?

### Observation (O)

- Why do you think Jesus reacted so strongly to what was happening in the temple? What does this show us about His heart for God’s house?

### Application (A)

- If our lives are like a temple for God’s Spirit (1 Corinthians 6:19–20), what “tables” might Jesus want to flip in our hearts or habits today?

- What's one way you can show passion and respect for God's presence in church, at school, or at home this week?

**Prayer (P)**

- Pray for God to give you a heart like Jesus, one that honors Him and removes anything that doesn't belong.