



**October 15-16, 2022**

**Ice Breaker Questions**

- What is the busiest place you've ever been; what did you see there?

**Understand Their Story**

In John 2:12-25, Jesus goes up to the Jewish capital, bustling with people coming from all over the Roman Empire to celebrate the primary Jewish holiday. Read the passage and answer the questions below.

1. It sounds like the temple was a busy place when Jesus was there.
  - a. List all the people and animals that were driven out. (v. 14)
  - b. Can you picture this scene? Can you hear it? What would it have been like?
  - c. Why were these services, the money-changing and selling of animals, offered?
2. Historians tell us that in times before Jesus, the money-changers and merchants would set up in the Kidron valley, *outside* the temple, but in Jesus' time, they set up in a part of the temple called the Court of the Gentiles, the outermost part of the temple.
  - a. What was the purpose of the Court of the Gentiles?
  - b. What effect would the bringing of all those people and animals into the Court of the Gentiles have had on that space?
  - c. Who had the power to stop the Court of the Gentiles from being used this way but allowed it?
3. In verse 18, John refers to the religious leaders in the story as the Jews.
  - a. Where else in John's Gospel have we already seen these people show up?
  - b. When the religious leaders ask Jesus their questions, what is their attitude like? What is their primary concern?
  - c. Based on their initial question to Jesus, do they think Jesus is a lunatic, a mere troublemaker, or a possibly important figure? If an important figure, what kind?
  - d. If Jesus is that kind of important figure, what happens to the religious leaders if they ignore him?

**Connect to His Story**

4. The temple was an important place for the people of God. What did it signify?

- a. Read Exodus 29:43-46, and John 1:14-18 What was God doing by giving the Israelites the temple — and its predecessor, the tabernacle — and how is Jesus better?
- b. Read Revelation 21:1-4 and 21:22. What sort of communion or connection will we enjoy with God in the world to come?
- c. Read 1 Corinthians 6:19-20, and 2 Corinthians 6:16. Where does God dwell now?

### Apply to Our Story

And God's house is a place to meet with "God, our saviour, who desires all people to be saved and come to a knowledge of the truth" (1 Timothy 3:3,4).

5. How do we let duties and responsibilities get in the way of our communing with God?
6. What would it look like to be people who, with hospitality, welcome and invite those who don't know God?
  - a. Are there specific things we can do now to become that sort of people?

### Prayer

(these have been borrowed from this week's daily devotional)

- *Pray in Adoration for the way Jesus came as the new temple of the Living God, dying and rising again in victory over sin.*
- *Pray in Confession for the ways that our worship of God has gone from holy adoration and persistent prayer to noisy, busy, and focused on the wrong pursuit; full of bustle, but devoid of life.*
- *Pray in Thanksgiving that God has chosen to dwell, by His Spirit, in each of His children, and we now have immediate and unveiled access to the Father. What a gift!*
- *Pray in Supplication for those who have yet to trust in this Savior.*

### God's work and our Work

#### How All of Life Connects to the Gospel - in John 2:12-25

The history of the protestant church has revealed at times a tension between what some would call the secular and the sacred. At first glance, this passage may lend itself towards supporting an idea that the marketplace and its activities are inherently sinful and the temple (or the church) is a sacred place in stark contrast to the world. Yet throughout scripture we see many passages that reveal to us that work itself is a form of worship and our workplaces can (and should in some ways at least) also be sacred places.

So, what can this passage inform us about how we view or engage in our work and our workplaces? The selling of livestock and the service of currency exchange are activities that are necessary in our daily lives and are not wrongful activities, yet Jesus was clearly upset about what was happening in the temple. Whenever we extort the needs of others (and there are numerous scriptural warnings specifically about using people's need for God as a means to excessive financial gain) we turn the God-honouring purposes of work into a selfish and sinful distortion of God's design for human flourishing.

- Discuss the ways that you may have incorrectly prioritized the sacred over the secular
- Discuss the ways that your work/workplaces exploit the needs of others for sinful ends.
- Pray that God would be at work in you and at work in your work to properly meet the needs of others and thereby give glory to God.