

The Gospel of John – A Lashing in Jerusalem

Today we're going to continue this series by looking at John 2:12-25. This scripture says:

- (12) After this he went down to Capernaum, he, and his mother, and his brethren, and his disciples: and they continued there not many days.
- (13) And the Jews' passover was at hand, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem,
- (14) And found in the temple those that sold oxen and sheep and doves, and the changers of money sitting:
- (15) And when he had made a scourge of small cords, he drove them all out of the temple, and the sheep, and the oxen; and poured out the changers' money, and overthrew the tables;
- (16) And said unto them that sold doves, Take these things hence; make not my Father's house an house of merchandise.
- (17) And his disciples remembered that it was written, The zeal of thine house hath eaten me up.
- (18) Then answered the Jews and said unto him, What sign shewest thou unto us, seeing that thou doest these things?
- (19) Jesus answered and said unto them, Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up.
- (20) Then said the Jews, Forty and six years was this temple in building, and wilt thou rear it up in three days?
- (21) But he spake of the temple of his body.
- (22) When therefore he was risen from the dead, his disciples remembered that he had said this unto them; and they believed the scripture, and the word which Jesus had said.
- (23) Now when he was in Jerusalem at the passover, in the feast day, many believed in his name, when they saw the miracles which he did.
- (24) But Jesus did not commit himself unto them, because he knew all men,
- (25) And needed not that any should testify of man: for he knew what was in man.

First of all, verse 12 appears to be just a comment to note that some time has passed between the two events recorded. Capernaum is a city on the Sea of Galilee that appears to become sort of a home base for the ministry of Jesus, and even appears to have become

his home city after he was totally rejected in Nazareth. We'll talk more of Capernaum when we come to other Scriptures related to this city.

It is unclear how long had now passed between the baptism of Christ and this trip to Jerusalem. Since it appears that Jesus attended at least two other Passovers before the one when he was crucified we can conclude that his ministry was at least three years, and most believe that it was about 3 ½ years.

Verses 14-16 are completely out of the context that many people represent Christ as today. Christ is represented as loving who could never judge, yet he saw wrong and sought to correct it. You see, the sacrifice was supposed to be about people bringing their best to the temple to be offered to God, but it had come to people buying what was available from the moneychangers. Church, then, had become a very profitable business for some. It was no longer about sacrifice. I often see this happening in the Church today. People get focused on material things and forget what Church is really all about. Yes, there are material needs, and church members are expected to supply those material needs, but if that's the sole focus then there's a problem. The church isn't supposed to be about buying and selling – it's supposed to be about dispensing the Word of God! God set up a model of freely offering our sacrifices – a model that I think we would do well to heed today.

John follows this up by noting that the disciples remembered the writing of the psalmist with regard to the house of the Lord. They remembered that God was not satisfied with anything but true worship. They understood that it's what comes forth from the heart that really mattered. The Jews here were zealous toward the law, but they were zealous only to the extent of the letter of the law, and not the intent. Too often day churches fall into this same category – we get caught up in the letter and overlook the intent. We get caught up in the natural and overlook the Spiritual. We get caught up in the visible and overlook the invisible.

The Jews were naturally outraged that Jesus would come into the temple and do such things. What authority did he have to do these things? Was he sent by the Roman governors? Did he claim to be a prophet? Was he the Messiah? They were essentially saying that he had no authority in this matter. I think churches today often follow this same approach. God is questioned on every hand. How dare you do something a little different. What authority do you have? You have no right to change things! This is the way we've always done things! (even though always really isn't always – just as long as they can remember). Sometimes things can be done differently and yet still line up perfectly with the Word of God. Sometimes things need to be done differently in order to line up with the Word of God.

Jesus gave the Jews a sign, but they didn't understand it. They were proud of the magnificent building that they had built, and yet Jesus spoke of a more important temple. The concept of God in Us was foreign to them. They spoke of God as an unseen God, but they were focused on natural things. Many are hindered today by this same blindness within the Church. People just don't want to step out into the Spiritual realm – we have a tendency to want to stay in the natural realm where we can see, feel, and taste.

It appears then that Jesus began to perform many miracles while at the feast in Jerusalem. Perhaps this was about proving to the unbelieving Jews that he truly was the Son of God. There was obviously no excuse to not believe, and there were many who did. This would seem contrary to John 1:11 which says that he came unto his own and his own received him not. In reality, though, these do fit nicely together because there was room for some to receive him. Many, here, is a comparative word. Many compared to what? Many compared to twelve could be only a few dozen. I find it likely that this means much more than that, but many compared to the whole number of Jews was probably rather small.

The last two verses of this chapter are interesting. While these “many” believed because of the miracles, it appears that many of them had not truly believed from the heart. They were only following Jesus for the miracles and weren't along for the ride. They weren't totally committed to him. We'll find in John 6 that this truly bears out in that many of the disciples leave him when he begins to really get into the meat of the word.

So, in conclusion today, I want to ask you a question. What kind of Christian are you? Are you the shallow Christian who can't take the meat of the word? Are you the type of Christian who are obsessed with the superficial rather than the spiritual? Are you the type of Christian who are without substance? Are you the type of Christian who is constantly seeking out God's will in your life? I hope that the latter is true.

Perhaps, though, you're not a Christian at all. If that's the case then I encourage you to email me at john@intotheword.org. I'll be glad to discuss the plan of salvation with you in detail.

Also, don't forget that you can follow us on Facebook at [Into the Word Ministries](#). I would love for you to become a Facebook Fan.

Yours in Christ,

Bro. John Rich