

# SERMON APPLICATION GUIDE

## JOHN 2:12-22

Read John 2:12-22 and Matthew 21:12-17 as parallel texts to inform your discussions today.

### DISCUSSION 1: THE TEMPLE

1. From our reading and the Old Testament as background, what was the temple in Jerusalem supposed to represent or be used for?
2. What are some ways it's being used by religious leaders in John 2? What does the response of Jesus show about how God feels about this misuse? How does Jesus' response point to his role as God's Messiah?
3. How might we apply this when we consider whether we are living out God's purposes for our lives versus whether we are pursuing our own purposes? You might apply this to schedules, priorities, worship vs idols, finances, entertainment, use of social media and internet, obedience to God, etc.
4. When we consider that we as believers are now God's temple (1 Cor. 6:19-20), how might you apply this passage to your own heart, body, and life? In what ways do you give the things that should honor God and seek after God over to selfish or worldly purposes?

### DISCUSSION 2: WHAT KIND OF FAITH?

1. Does Jesus have the right to confront and challenge the people like he did in John 2? Why?
2. In this passage, Jesus challenges the self-centered, sign-seeking faith of the religious leaders, and the religious leaders reject Jesus because he doesn't meet their felt needs and demands. What are ways we might approach Christ, or his Church, with a focus of having our wants, needs, and preferences met?
3. It's easy to use Jesus or make demands on Jesus to give us what we want or do for us what we want. How do we fight to maintain the mindset of a servant of Christ who obeys him rather than a consumer out to get something from him?
4. Notice how the works and words of Jesus end up strengthening the faith of his disciples but lead to unbelief from others. What are a few reasons the same words and actions of Christ lead to different results in these groups? How should this affect our posture towards God in faith, and how does it help us understand why some reject Christ?

### DISCUSSION 3: RESURRECTION

1. Read through John 2:12-22 again. Identify at least two or three ironies hinted at in this text.
2. What in John 2:12-22 points to the fact that Jesus is the Messiah with authority from God?
3. Read Matt. 26:61; 27:40; and John 10:18. When Jesus claims to be God's temple and claims to have authority and power to raise up the temple (or his body), the people understood he was claiming to be God. Why is this significant to our understanding of who Jesus is? How might this affect how we relate to, trust in, and even turn to God through Jesus?

## FAMILY DISCIPLESHIP QUESTIONS

1. What are some ways we might turn good things given to us by God into a selfish thing or misuse it? (Consider how we might approach our material possessions, church, our home, skills and gifts, etc.)
2. Why do you think Jesus was so upset that the temple of God was being misused as a place to make money off of others and to keep groups of people outside or away from the temple?
3. Read John 2:18-22 and 10:18. If Jesus has authority to die and raise himself to life, what does that tell us about who Jesus is? How should we then respond to him?

## APPLICATION

- **Group:** John 2:13-17 point out how Jesus has authority over all things and sometimes his authority might be uncomfortable because we want to do something different, or because others around us live differently and we've absorbed those behaviors or beliefs. Because we want to submit all parts of our life to Christ's authority, but know we are often blind, deceived, in error, or caught up in wrong thinking, we need Gods' people speak grace and truth to us. As a group, discuss ways you can provide accountability and encouragement to one another in your thinking, desires, behaviors, habits, and beliefs. How can you better cultivate openness and honesty so people know where your life doesn't match up with Scripture or where you might need challenged by Christ or the Bible? How can you leverage this group as one way God helps ensure your life stays in submission to God and his priorities?
- **Individual:** We've talked a lot about how Jesus challenges the religious leader's misuse of the temple from what God intended. Make a list of key roles and areas of your life. This might include things like work, church, relationships, stewardship of time and resources, sexuality or purity, neighbor or citizen, how I spend my free time, usage of things like internet, TV and movies, or social media. For each thing you write down, prayerfully ask God for wisdom as to how your approach to these things and how you engage with them might not match with God's priorities and desire. Then write ways in which you might better approach these areas in a way that is consistent with God's desire for you.

## FOR FURTHER STUDY

- **Read the article** "8 Ways to Battle 'Comfort Idolatry'" by Brett McCracken at [thegospelcoalition.org](http://thegospelcoalition.org).
- **Parallel passages:** Mt. 21:12-17; Mk. 11:15-19; Lk. 19:45-48.
- **Christ's Resurrection:** Psalm 16:10; 1 Cor. 15; John 10:18; 20.
- Read Psalm 69, a psalm of David being opposed by enemies in Jerusalem. This provides backdrop to what Jesus is now experiencing in Jerusalem as the religious leaders oppose him.