

[00:00:00.820] - Speaker 1

The passage on which the teachings based this morning is printed in your bulletin. It's John 2. Last week, we looked at the first part of the second chapter of John, John 2, 1 to 11. Today, we read John 2, verses 12 through 25.

After this, He went down to Capernaum with His mother and brothers and His disciples. There they stayed for a few days. When it was almost time for the Jewish Passover, Jesus went up to Jerusalem. In the temple courts, He found men selling cattle, sheep, and doves, and others sitting at tables, exchanging money. So, he made a whip out of cords and drove all from the temple area, both sheep and cattle. He scattered the coins of the moneychangers and overturned their tables. To those who sold doves, he said, "Get these out of here. How dare you turn my father's house into a market?" His disciples remembered that it was written, Zeal for your house has eaten me up. Then the Jews demanded of him, "What miraculous sign can you show us to prove your authority to do all this?" Jesus answered them, "destroy this temple and I will raise it again in three days."

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The Jews replied, "It has taken 46 years to build this temple, and you are going to raise it in three days?" But the temple he had spoken of was his body. After he was raised from the dead, his disciples recalled what he had said. And then they believed the Scripture and the words that Jesus had spoken. Now, while he was in Jerusalem at the Passover Feast, many people saw the miraculous signs he was doing and believed in his name. But Jesus would not entrust himself to them for he knew all men. He did not need man's testimony about man for he knew what was in a man. And this is God's word.

The goal of this series of sermons, which is going to last quite a while, is to look at the life of Jesus. We're building a biography, as it were, a biography of the single most important and influential figure in human history. I don't think there's any doubt about that. So, there's really nothing that would be more important for anyone. If you want to live intelligently in the world, you need to know about someone like this. And we're looking at the events of his life.

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And last week we looked at the first part of John 2, which was the first miracle Jesus did in his public ministry. And he was at a wedding feast, and the bride and groom ran out of wine, and Mary came and asked him to help. And he filled water jars filled with delicious wine, and he kept the party going. And now here in this particular passage, we have Jesus cleansing the temple. Notice verse 12, it says, And after this... And you know what? I think in some ways that's the most important couple of words in that whole chapter if you want to understand the meanings of these profound events. Because over the years, I've studied these things many times, and it's only in the last couple of weeks that I realized that John has put these two things together. The wedding and the temple, the changing of water into wine and the cleansing of the temple. He puts them together. Actually, no other gospel writer does. And it raises a lot of

interesting questions about chronology, which we won't get into now. But the point is, he puts them together, he says, after this, he sticks them together because on the surface they look utterly different.

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They are incredibly different. I was thinking about it and laughing about it. Because on the one hand, at the wedding feast, you have Jesus as the greatest party maker in history. And in the temple, you have Jesus as the greatest party pooper in history. And the wedding feast, you have Jesus acting quietly hidden privately, almost nobody knows about it. Here you have him public and dramatic. There he's adding, bringing into your life. Here he's subtracting, throwing it out. There he was requested, he was asked in. Here he goes where no one has asked him to go. He intrudes, he intervenes. There he brings joy and laughter. Here he brings weeping and lashing of teeth. There he comforts. Here he disturbs. Incredible. They seem utterly different. But I think the secret and the key, and actually something that's helped me a great deal, John is saying that they only look different on the surface. Underneath they are the same. In fact, the very same things are happening. In both, he's showing us who he is. In both, he's showing us what he does. In both, he's showing us what he brings. And let me get down the practical brass tacks right away, and I'll get back to it at the end.

[00:05:04.880] - Speaker 1

There is nothing more practical than this because it is a simple fact of Christian experience that if Jesus Christ comes into your life, he will, on the one hand, sometimes fill your table with a feast, and other times, he will turn your table over and spill everything on the ground. It is a simple fact of human experience, of Christian experience, that when Jesus comes into your life, sometimes he talks like that. Sometimes he does things. He answers your prayers. He brings you joy. He comes through at the last minute. He does exactly what you want. He fills your table. And other times, he throws everything on the ground. He messes everything up, and he doesn't tell you why. And many, many, many people have been for a very long time, many Christians I know have really been just taken out of the game by this. They've lost it. They've been overthrown themselves by it. And they say, "This is crazy. There is no coherence to Jesus. There's no coherence between these two Jesuses. It's like Dr. Savior and Mr. Lord. There's no coherence. It's schizophrenia." And John is trying to say, "No, no, no. These are both Jesus."

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In fact, somebody just got it, right? In fact, what John is saying is these are not two different things that he does, turning over the tables and filling the tables. These are not two different things he does. They are two different ways of doing the same thing. If you can see Jesus filling your table and turning over your table as not two different things, but two different ways of doing the same things, your life will have coherence. It'll make all the difference in the world. And only when you read these two things together, back-to-back, in close proximity do you really see it. Let's do it. First of all, as I said, first of all, both of these things show us the authority of who he is. Then they show us the purpose of what he does, and then they show us the glory of what he brings. They both show us the same thing. Only in this case,

where he's hurting, where he's stinging, where he's alarming, where he's disrupting, he's doing the very same thing. Now, look, first of all, they both show us the authority of who he is. Now, admittedly, in the wedding feast, the authority issue is a little bit muted.

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But don't forget, Mary comes to Jesus and says, "We have a problem. We have no wine." And what does he say? He says, "It is not my hour." In other words, he gives her a cryptic strange response. He does not give her an immediate response. Basically, he says, essentially, "I'm not on a leash. I'm not a tame God. You cannot tell me what to do." And Mary responds appropriately. Mary responds and does not get all bent out of shape. But rather she says to the servants, "do whatever he says." Now, the authority issue is muted. You know why? Because when you read the story of the wedding feast at Cana, because he comes through and does what we want him to do, and he does what we expect him to do, and he answers the prayer exactly the way we want. We overlook the fact that even in the midst of that, he let us know about his authority. Even in the midst, he says, "Wait a minute." He gives us a strange, cryptic, confusing answer, but Mary remembers the angels. Oh, that we remembered the angels. And Mary says, "Do whatever he says." But now in the temple, this authority issue is much more clear.

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In fact, his authority is actually even more clear if you read carefully. One of the things that's so interesting about verse 15, it says, He made a whip out of cords. Now, what the Greek experts will tell you is the word cords should be translated rushes. A rush was a reed. A rush was a plant out of which you make baskets or you make papyrus. And you also have to see that since Jesus saw... It says, look in verse 13 and 14, He saw the changes and He saw the sellers, so He, He got mad, and we'll talk about that in a second, but He got mad and He quickly put a bunch of rushes together. And you know what this means? This means nobody in the world could have been hurt by this whip. When you think about a whip, you're thinking of a leather or a rubber thing that really can sting and inflict damage. This is the wimpiest possible whip. If anybody worries about the idea of Jesus hurting people and raising welts and blood, he couldn't. And you know what that means? The cause was so much less than the effect. Here are hundreds of people, maybe, running away, screaming.

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It says he drew them all out. Why? What do you account for it? He wasn't hurting anybody. It was almost a miracle. It was a manifestation of his glory. It was his looks. It was his being. It was his presence. It wasn't the whip. Nobody got hurt with that whip. And what we have to ask ourselves is, how do we account for it? And the answer is, because people knew instinctively when he showed up that he had the right to do this they all ran out. And if you want confirmation of what I'm saying, you realize, look at verse 18, after it's all over, they come to him and they say, "Give us evidence. Give us an explanation for the authority that we felt." See, that's what they're saying. They're saying, "You're just a carpenter's son. What right do you have to do this? Where do you get the authority from?" And the answer, of course, we'll see

in a second. But the point is, they had felt the authority. He came in and he just said, "I have the right to do this," in a sense. And they felt that instinctively. Now they're looking for an explanation.

[00:11:03.230] - Speaker 1

But Jesus shows up with this incredible sense of authority that they instinctively respond to. Everybody does. And He comes in and he says, "I have a right to do this. This is my place." And he cast them out. Now, what does this teach us? This is very practical, and it's also really not very pleasant. I'm a teacher, and therefore, when I study a passage, and I'm considering how I'm going to preach it to you on a Sunday, I get all these various ideas and points out, then I have to decide what the right order is. And I know as a teacher, the best way for me to go about it would be not to have told you about how he whipped people and threw them out. But rather, shouldn't my first point be why he did it? Don't you want to know why he got so upset? Don't you want to know what the big deal was? Don't you want to know why it was that he was throwing everybody out? Of course, you do. And actually, you would have a lot less trouble with his anger. Essentially, he almost seems like he blew up.

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This disturbing behavior, this angry behavior. Most of us would say, "I would have a lot less trouble with this, I never thought of Jesus like this, but if you just tell me why he was so upset, then it'd be easy for me to understand." And I'm not doing it in that order. I will not do it in that order. And here's why. That's not the order in which these people got it. He cast them out before he told them why. He let them feel his authority. He told them I have a right to throw you out without telling them why. And if you're a Christian, or if you become a Christian, the same thing will happen to you. He will overturn your tables before he gives you an explanation. That is just the way it goes. Afterwards, you can come and say, "Now, why did you do that?" But as it happens, he doesn't have an explanation. That is because he says, "I am doing this, though I have reasons, and I'll tell you reasons, eventually, I'll give you reasons. But the primary thing for you to know is I have the right to do it.

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This is my place." Now, is this disturbing? Think with me for a minute. This is exactly what happens to Job. Job, you know, God comes in in a sense, or God allows Job's whole life to be thrown over. Everything falls apart in his life. And he spends a great deal of time complaining and says to God, "Why? Why? Tell me why you're overturning my tables. If you could tell me why, then I could handle it." But when God shows up, even though we know as the readers of the Book of Job, we know why. We know some of the reasons why. But when God shows up, He never gives them a reason why. Instead, he says to Job, Job, "surely the lightning consults with you before it decides where to strike, the way it does with me." And at the end of that, that diatribe, Job falls to the ground and says, "I see." See what? If you read the Book of Job, you say, "All God did was come and say, Because I am God, I have the right to do this and you don't." And Job falls down. He says, "I see." Well, now you say, "What goes on?"

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I'll tell you what goes on. It is as critical for us to obey God just because of who He is, before He tells us reasons, of course, He has reasons, but it is so absolutely critical to us spiritually to obey God because of who He is. Look at the Garden of Eden. Go back. Adam and Eve were told, "You can do anything in the whole world." Adam and Eve didn't have Ten Commandments. They didn't have 100 regulations. They had one. One Commandment, Don't eat the tree. And they didn't know why. And the serpent comes and says, "Why?" They said, "We don't know why." And the serpent says, "Well, if you don't know why, why do you have to obey?" And Adam and Eve reached out and picked it out. They saw it was good to eat. And they fell. Why? What happened? What was so bad about the tree? Over the years, there's been theologians who said, "Well, maybe the tree was poisonous, or maybe the tree had some chemistry in it, so that when they ate it, then certain things happened to them metaphysically and so on." No, the whole point was God gave them one command, and there was no reason for it other than the most important reason of all.

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And that is, I would like you to obey me simply because of who I am and who you are. Because if you only obey me because you know the reason, you're not obeying me at all. In fact, you're using me. Now, if you think, Well, that's strange. Let me put it to you this way. What if you fell in love with somebody? Let's just imagine also, and for some of you, this is true, some of you it's not. Let's also imagine that you have a lot of money. You've got a trust fund or you've made a lot of money and so on. This person falls in love with you. And just several weeks before the wedding, you come up to them and you say, Guess what? A terrible thing happened. There was a stock market correction. We used to have crashes. Now we have corrections. It was a stock market correction. Crash, negative, correction, positive, but we still lose all of our money. And you say to your friend, you say to your spouse, I mean, your spouse to be your fiancé, you say, "Guess what? I lost all of my money. It's just terrible.

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I really need your comfort tonight." And what if that person looks at you and says, "Gee, maybe you ought to call off the wedding. I don't know." And what if you come to realize, and what if you find out that the truth is, this person doesn't find you very attractive now that you're poor? You would be utterly outraged. You would be deeply violated. You would say that, "this is about as low and as deep a blow to my humanity as possible. You didn't love me. You only loved what I brought to you. You didn't love me for me. You didn't love me for myself. You loved the money, not me. You were just using me." Now, listen, if God, because he's God, the creator of the universe, says, "I'm bringing something into your life and I want you to accept it just because of who I am." And you say, "If I could see it's practical, if I could see the reason, if I could see it helps me to my goals, then I could accept it." But if I don't know, what are you saying to him? It's not you, it's the goals. And don't you think he has the right, even a greater right, to be outraged by the blow you have made to his divinity?

[00:17:39.200] - Speaker 1

You feel the blow to your humanity. He feels the blow to his divinity. In fact, he also feels the blow, in a sense, to his humanity. Because our humanity is a reflection of his divinity. He is a person. If there's one thing the Bible shows us, God has feelings. Why? Because our feelings are just the image of his. And God's used and God has been trampled upon. If God comes into your life and says, I'm bringing things into your life just because I want you to submit just because of who I am, because I have the right to do it, because I'm your creator, because I'm your redeemer. It is extremely important to see that maybe the biggest reason for what's going on is no reason but that. Maybe there is no other reason but that, and yet it's the most important reason of all, to learn to love him for who he is. You want it, don't you want it? Aren't you outraged when someone isn't doing it for you? Then how dare you treat him in a way that you wouldn't put up with yourself? You know what I think happened when God showed up and said to Job, Job, I'm not going to give you any reason.

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I'm just going to show you who I am. And I think this is what happens when you sense the authority before you. And when you sense, as these people did when Jesus showed up, I don't know why he's doing this, but I know he's got the right to do it. And they ran. And why anybody feels that way when you actually get to meet the real God. I'll tell you, it goes something like this. I think Job bowed down and said, "Wait a minute. If he is so infinite and great that I can be mad at him for failing to rectify the world, then he must be so infinite and great as to have good reasons to be doing what he's doing that are beyond my comprehension. I can't have it both ways." Did you hear, listen to that? You can't have it both ways. If God is so infinite and great that you're mad at him for not rectifying your situation, then he must be infinite and great enough to have wisdom to which your... Wisdom that is not answerable to yours. You can't have it both ways. If he's really so great that you'd be mad at him for not making the world straight, then He must be great enough for him to be beyond your comprehension.

[00:19:55.170] - Speaker 1

And so, I think, Job must have bowed down and said, "You know what? If I could totally understand Him, He wouldn't be worth totally obeying." Mary understood that. Jesus comes and says all kinds of strange things, all sorts of non sequiturs, all sorts of confusing things, all sorts of harsh things. And she says, "Let's do whatever he says." And when Jesus is overturning your tables, the first lesson is, I have the right to do it. And you're, don't you see?... If he has the ability to fill your table, he has to have the right to overturn it. How can he be the Lord of the wine if he's not Lord of the Whips? Okay, so first of all, they both show us his authority. They both do.

Secondly, they both show us not just the authority of who he is, but the purpose of what he does. You remember what his purpose in life is from the wedding. The reason that he makes this cryptic statement, after we spent time looking at it last week, we realized that Mary comes and says they are out of wine. And Jesus immediately says, "It's not my time to die."

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And everybody goes, Huh? And so, we begin to realize that the wine reminds him of his death. The wine reminds us that he is going to have to die if he's ever going to be married to us. That he is going to... In order to provide wine for the wedding feast in which we fall into his arms, he's going to have to die to save us from our sins. So, the wine reminds him of his death. Now, he walks into this place and he blows up. Again, something sets him off. He sees something and it reminds him of something, I guess, because he just really goes ballistic here. I'm not saying he's out of control, but he's mad. Well, what is it he looks at? Well, you see the changers and the sellers. Well, what are the moneychangers and the sellers? What he sees is the animals for sacrifice. What is setting Jesus off? Over the years, I was, one commentary said it's astonishing how people over the years have tried to find something wrong with what the moneychangers and what the sellers were doing. Some people have said, "Well, you know, probably the moneychangers had coins and the coins would have had pictures of Caesar on them or pictures of idols and maybe Jesus...

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They're trying to find some reason why what they were doing was wrong. Oh, no. Here's what went on. Here's what went on. Because the Jews now lived all over the world. When Jews wanted to come to worship, one thing that Jews knew was you cannot approach God without a sacrifice. You cannot go into God without a sacrifice. But of course, if you're traveling from Spain, you can't bring a lamb with you. So, what they would do is they would come to... when the Jews would come all over the world, they'd come to the temple. They had foreign currency that needed to be changed. Then they had to buy an animal and then they could offer it up. Well, what Jesus found, and we know this especially from the Gospel of Mark, was that he called this a market. By the way, the Greek word he uses there is an emporium. You have turned the sanctuary into an emporium. And it means right around the altar, you had Canal Street, basically. You had people buying and selling and haggling, and you had the animals and you had all this thing. And they would come on in and they would pay their money and they'd take the animal, they'd turn two steps, give it to this priest.

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The priest, of course, there's nothing more you can do. And all of that cacophony and all of that confusion and all of that noise and all that clamor. All they could do is turn around, slay the animal, everybody bows, I did my duty, and out he went. Here's what Jesus is saying. Jesus says, and we know this from other Gospels, he said, "My house should be a house of prayer, and you have turned it into a market. When you lay down an animal, you should be thinking. You should be seeing what the sacrifice means. When you lay down an animal and you see it slain, you should be saying, "This should be me. Why isn't it me?" You should be saying, "If justice was to be done, I should be slain. I don't love God with all my heart, soul, strength, and mind. I don't love my neighbor as myself. Why isn't this me? This is slain and now I'm spared." You see, the sacrificial system, though very mysterious, was like the gospel. Because the sacrificial system, on the one hand, was very humbling. It said to you, "You know what? You can't just go into God.

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You just can't go into God. There has to be punishment. There has to be judgment." But on the other hand, it was also joyous because it said, "But there is a way for you to be provided for. There's a way for you to be spared." It was all very mysterious, but it was humbling. It was joyful. And were they doing that? No. And Jesus says, "Oh, my word. They don't see what it means. They don't see what it means. They could be ready for me. They should be ready for me. They're not. They don't know what the sacrifice means. They don't feel a need for a savior. They don't see. They don't have any idea because they're not praying. It's a market. It's mechanical, you see. They're not even engaged. They're not even reflecting, not even thinking. Get these things out of here." There was no problem with them being outside. The real problem is they'd squeezed out real communion with God, real reflection on the meaning of the substitutionary sacrifice. When Jesus sees the wine and goes kind of crazy because it reminds him of his death. Now he sees the animals to be sacrificed.

[00:25:49.470] - Speaker 1

And again, he's emotionally in turmoil because Jesus Christ had one thing and only one thing on his mind. He was here to die for us. It was never, it was always before. The one book that Kathy and I read about two or three times every year is the novel Lord of the Rings, the trilogy. And the little hero is a remarkable Christ figure because he has a burden. And the burden is that he has to go right into the heart of the realm of the evil Lord and take his ring of power and throw it into the mountain of fire and destroy it. But in order to go toward that evil and go toward that terrible doom, he feels it in front of him all the time. At one point, the narrative says, just like a man, if you close your eyes, you can always tell which direction the sun is because you feel it beating on you. He felt his doom beating upon him. It became a wheel of fire. When he even closed his eyes, he saw it, the ring, the doom. Now, this is Jesus. Jesus is always thinking about his death, and he's always thinking about us, and he's always got it on his heart.

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He said, you know the place in John 17, where he says, "for their sakes," he says to his father, "for their sake, I sanctify myself." You know what that means? To sanctify means to totally devote yourself to something. It means I have excluded everything else. I am living for them. Everything about me, all of my powers, all of my privilege, everything is completely dedicated and devoted to living for them. And therefore, he wants to die for us. He's going to die for us. "But look," you say, "But then why was he so different here?" Ultimately, it's the same thing. He is so concerned that we don't understand the meaning of his death. Sometimes he shows us what he's doing for us by adding; other times in order to wake us up, to show us the importance of his sacrifice he has to throw the tables over. But you know what? This is a secret to the Christian life. This is a secret to the Christian life. Listen, there's lots of regulations, lots of regulations in the Christian life. There's lots of things the Bible says about, well, if somebody hurts you, forgive them. And it tells you about how to forgive.

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And if you feel guilty, then ask God for forgiveness. And it tells you all about this. But there's another sense in which there's not 10,000 regulations. There's only one. Just as Jesus only had one thing in front of him, we only have to have one thing in front of us. And what's that one thing? That one thing is the fact that he died for you. The one thing that's always on his mind should always be on our mind. Look, are you having trouble forgiving somebody right now? You know what Jesus is saying in this passage to you? He is saying, reflect on the meaning of my sacrifice. Stop being mechanical. You may say you believe that I died for you. Get all these other things out and reflect, engage, think. Make it a living thing for you. And you know what? If you're having trouble forgiving somebody, it's only because of what Jesus is saying here is you're not thinking about what my sacrifice means. Because if you think about him dying for you, it'll humble you down until forgiveness is no problem. On the other hand, what if you failed in some way and you're hating yourself and you're filled with self-loathing?

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And you're saying, "Maybe I should go to counseling." Well, maybe you should go to counseling. That might be very, very helpful. But I'll tell you, the foundational thing is that you're being mechanical as opposed to organic. You're being mechanical in your understanding of his sacrifice instead of really engaging and thinking and looking at it and realizing what it means. Because if you're hating yourself and you think he died for me, it'll lift you up until you have no problem. Wherever your problems are, no matter what, you can look for the regulations, but there's actually only one thing. It's the same thing that was always on Jesus' mind, always. He says, "Realize what this is. Realize what my sacrifice means. Have it on your mind all the time and you will always be brought down when you need it. Lifted up when you need it. You'll always be prepared."

Okay, now lastly, both situations show us his authority, and both situations shows us his purpose. And that is to die for us and to bring us to see the value and the beauty and the glory of that death. But see, last of all, it also shows us the incredible glory of what he offers.

[00:30:21.240] - Speaker 1

You know what he offers? Last time I said it was wine. At the wedding feast, it was wine. We said that to become a Christian does not just mean you sign a bunch of codes of conduct, you subscribe to a bunch of codes of beliefs. Rather, it's a feast. The Bible uses sensory language. It talked to us. It says it's like drinking wine. It's like singing. And we left it at that. But if you want to know how that's possible, here it is. When they come to him and they say, "What authority have you got to cleanse the temple? What authority have you got to have to act like the temple belongs to you? You act like you own it. What right have you got to act like you own it?" And what does he do? He looks at them and of course, he says it in code. John has to explain. He says, "Tear this temple down in three days, destroy it, and I will raise it up in three days." And John says what he was talking about was his body. And here's the point. They were saying, "How can you act as if you own it?"

[00:31:22.550] - Speaker 1

And he said, "Own it? I am it. Own it. Own the temple. I am the temple. I am the temple." And what he is saying, he is saying "I am the climax, I am the final temple. I am the climax of the history of the sanctuary." In the very beginning, the Garden of Eden was a sanctuary. You know what a sanctuary is? A place where you walk with the Holy. A place where the Holy is in fellowship with you. Sanctum means holy. A sanctuary is a place where the Holy is in fellowship with you. And the Garden of God, the Garden of Eden, we walked together. God and us, we had His glory all around us. But when Adam and Eve, when we decided to instead of love God, to use God, when we decided we'll obey as long as, we'll serve you as long as it fits us. In other words, when we decided to serve ourselves, when we started to use God, God did to us exactly what we would do to that person who says, "I don't think I'm interested in you now that you've lost all your money."

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God expelled them. And He expelled them from the sanctuary. And you know what He put in front? A flaming sword. The Cherubim, flaming sword. You can't come back in and out of the sanctuary. And we were so lost. Even the Woodstock song knows about it. Remember when the Woodstock song says, "We're stardust, we're gold, and we're trying to get back into the garden." There's an emptiness. We sense a loss. And God created a sanctuary in the Old Testament, first a tabernacle, then a temple. And there was a huge veil before the Holy Place. And you know what was on that veil? Palm trees and grass like a garden of Eden and Cherubim. And behind the veil was the Holy. Behind the veil was the shalom. Behind the veil was the Shekinah glory. Behind the veil was God's presence. But nobody could go back except the high priest. And he could only go back once a year if he went in with a substitute, if he went in with a sacrifice that went under the sword. No way back in to God. No way back into the sanctuary unless you go under the sword. And you know when the temple was destroyed, when the Babylonians came and overran Israel, the temple was destroyed and they were carted off into exile, Ezequiel made a terrific prediction and prophecy.

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And what he said was, someday there'll be a final temple, someday there'll be a temple so great, he says, the prophet said, that the glory of the Lord will fill the whole temple, that everybody in it will experience the glory of God. And when the Israelites came back from the exile and they rebuilt the temple, you can read about this in Ezra 3, Ezra 3, when the old timers saw the new temple, the ones who still remembered the Solomonic temple, the Solomon's temple, they wept. Not because it was small or even though it was, but because this couldn't be the final temple that Ezequiel talked about. Where's the final temple? Where's the place where you walk in? And it's not just that the glory of God is back there, but the glory of God is all around. How can we finally get back into the garden? Where's the final temple? Excuse me. Where is it? And Jesus shows up and says, "I am he. I am the ultimate sacrifice, and therefore, I'm the ultimate temple. I went under the knife. I go under the sword." And the Mark Chapter 14, verse 53 says, the moment Jesus died, the veil in the temple was ripped.

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Why? Because now the way is open. In spite of the fact that we used God and he expelled us, He found a way to bring us back. And Jesus says, "I am he." Now, you know what that means? This is the reason for the wine. This means that being a Christian is not just now subscribing to a code of conduct. This says that if you become a Christian, the same raw presence of God that used to kill things on contact, the Shekinah glory, when it came down on a mountain, and anyone touched the mountain, they were dead. The Shekinah glory of God, which used to kill living things on contact, is now an explosive life-giving force that floods into us. We are partakers of his glory through Christ. It is an absolutely astounding claim. And that's the reason why, if you're a Christian, you're here for wine, not just rules and duty. You're here for a relationship, not just a regulation. That's what Jesus is saying. He says, "Get these things out of here. You're all caught up in regulations and you're missing the relationship. You're going through the motions and you're missing the relationship."

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There should be glory in your life. You should experience my presence. All of this is available to you."

Now, let me apply this to conclude. Christian leaders, those of you who are the most-busy in the church, do you know what Jesus is saying? Jesus is saying it is possible to be so busy with your religiosity to turn your life in a sense into a market and miss the most important thing, which is prayer, which is fellowship with him. Let me just pull the screw here on you. Let me just tell you, he did not die and make this sacrifice in order for you to run programs and to fill your schedule filled with all sorts of busy activities. You could do that without the sacrifice. The one thing you can't do without a sacrifice is pray and experiences his presence. What's your prayer life like? Are you connecting with him? Do you sense his presence in your life? If you say, "Well, it's been months, but I've been very very busy." What is he saying? He says, "Get it out of here. Get it out. Throw it away. You're missing the whole point of the sacrifice."

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I don't care how busy you are. Are you experiencing the presence of God? What do you think I did all this for?" So that you could know the glory of God, that you can feel his presence, that you can actually come in. You can have his love shadow brought on your heart. Is that happening to you? Or are you just saying your prayers? Are you all mechanical? Simplify your life. Make sure that you're meeting with him. Throw everything else out. That's the Christian leaders. To Christian seekers, people who are seeking, you're saying, "Well, I'm trying to find out something about Christianity." Look at it. The real difference between the first and the second, the wedding and the temple is in the wedding, Jesus is only a guest in the house. But at the temple, he's the host. Now, if you simply ask Jesus Christ occasionally for help, that's one thing. But if you ask him into your life to live there and to dwell, here's how you know that you have. He has the right to subtract things. He has the right to throw things around. He has the right to cast things out. Is he doing that?

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Some of you don't even have an epistemology that allows him to do it. Some of you say, "Well, I will come to Christianity as long as I feel that it's meeting my needs." And you read the Bible and you say, "Well, I believe this and this, but I can't believe this, and I can't believe this. This is too primitive. We're modern people. I don't believe this." In other words, Jesus could never contradict you. You immediately filter out anything that he would say that would really be hurtful, that would really be hard, that would really be difficult. You immediately just roll it out. You couldn't even have a God if you wanted one. All you can get is an errand boy. All you can get is a secretary. If you invite him into your life and you say, "Take it over, live here. Don't just be a guest, a consultant, but live here," then he has the right to rearrange the furniture. Listen, don't be creatures of your time. Last week when you looked at Jesus Christ, the wedding, you said, "How exciting. That's what I want. A lover of my soul, someone who takes all of his power, no matter how small my problems and meets my need."

[00:39:36.500] - Speaker 1

And he loves me and he's ravished with me and he covers my deformity. Even if I'm ugly, he finds me beautiful." You get all excited. Now, this week, now, are you excited? Jesus says, "If I'm in charge, if I live with you, I have the authority. I have the authority to ask things of you without telling you the reason why." You say, Boy, I don't want a guy like that. That's demanding, don't you see? In traditional cultures, where people believe that there's salvation through self-denial, they can understand the temple Jesus, not the wedding Jesus. And you live in an individualistic feel good "me" culture, and you can understand the wedding and you can understand the temple. Let Jesus be who he is. Don't push him through the salad spreader of your cultural grid. Do you want a real God? Or you just want a projection of your own heart? Let him be who he is. He is the Lord of Wine and the Lord of the Whips. He's the Lord of Wine because he's the Lord of the Whips. He has to be. How shall we escape if we neglect so great a salvation?

[00:40:42.810] - Speaker 1

These are both Jesus. He overturns your table and he fills your table for the same reason, because he loves you. Because he loves you.

Let's pray. Now, Father, I've asked that when we put these two sermons together, we might get a picture of your son. And we ask that we would finally come to grips with the real Jesus. Those of us from backgrounds that can believe in a Holy God, but not a gracious God, and those of us who have the understanding that we can believe in a gracious God, but not a Holy God, I pray that you'd cut through. We have religious people and secular people in this room who are the victims of their culture. They can't see the real Jesus. I pray that he would break through now. We pray this in Jesus' name, Amen.