

Read: John 2:13-22

Jesus Deeply Desires We Keep his Word

John 2:14-17

In the temple courts [Jesus] found people 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 courts, both sheep and cattle; he scattered the coins of the money changers and overturned their tables. To those who sold doves he said, “Get these out of here! Stop turning my Father’s house into a market!” His disciples remembered that it is written: “Zeal for your house will consume me.”

In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

“Why was Jesus so angry?” Why would Jesus get so angry that he forced sheep, cattle, and the people who were selling them to run away from the temple courts? Why would Jesus get so angry that he even flipped tables over, knocking coins all over the ground? Is Jesus throwing a temper tantrum like a little two-year-old who didn’t get his way?

The simple answer is no, but why was Jesus so angry? Well, Jesus actually had a very good reason. Remember who he is. When you think of Jesus, what comes to mind? A powerful Lord who calms storms, heals the sick, and raises the dead? A Savior who blesses the little children? How about Jesus as the holy God, who is King of kings and ruler over all things—time, space, creation, and people?

Jesus is our holy God, who deeply wants us all to keep his Word. Unfortunately, we all fail to do that on our own. In his Word, God tells us what he wants us to do and not to do, but we do what we want. We go our own way rather than God’s way. We need Jesus to help us. That’s why Jesus came into our world. He cares so deeply about each of us that he became a human being like us. He perfectly kept God’s holy will in our place, even dying on a cross for us. We learn all about that in his Word.

So why was Jesus so angry in the temple? There was nothing wrong with selling animals or exchanging money, but that’s not why God gave his Word or the church where we hear that Word. The temple, like church, was meant to be a place where people could worship and offer prayers to God. There they learned God’s Word. The last thing Jesus wanted to see in his Father’s house was people arguing over prices and purchases rather than hearing his Word and worshiping his heavenly Father. So, in holy love for his Word, Jesus cleared the temple that day.

Do we love God's Word like Jesus? Do we get angry when something gets in the way of hearing it? Do we love learning about Jesus and what he has done for us? Jesus passionately desires that we love his Word. In that Word, we learn about him. With his help, we will see how important it is to spend time with Jesus in his Word. With his help, we will love his Word as we learn how deeply our Savior loves us. With his help, we will keep that Word as we live each day, serving Jesus, our Savior-God.

The questions below are to help families discuss this devotion. The questions are divided by age group as suggestions, but anyone could reflect on any of the questions as they desire.

Questions for the Younger Children

- Describe what happened when Jesus went into the temple.
- Name two places where you can listen to God's Word.

Questions for Elementary Age Children

- Why was Jesus so angry in the temple?
- Why do we need God's Word?

Questions for Middle School and Above

- Explain this statement: *Studying God's Word is time spent with Jesus.*
- How do you respond to someone who tells you that attending worship and Bible study is not that important?

Closing Prayer:

Dear Jesus, you are our Savior and our God. Forgive us for not giving your Word the respect it deserves. Help us to gladly learn and keep your Word all the days of our lives. Amen.

Hymn: CW 282:1-3 – Lord, Open Now My Heart to Hear

Lord, open no my heart to hear, and through your Word to me draw near.
Let me your Word e'er pure retain; let me your child and heir remain.

Your Word inspires my heart within; your Word grants healing from my sin.
Your Word has pow'r to guide and bless; your Word brings peace and happiness.

To God the Father, God the Son, and God the Spirit, Three in One,
Shall glory, praise, and honor be now and throughout eternity.