



Scott Turansky, Senior Pastor  
August 26, 2018

## JOHN 2:13-25

John Series: Get a Life in Jesus

[PRAYER] Lord, we know the next few minutes are really strategic for us because it's an opportunity for us to hear you speak to us through your word. So we're asking you to touch us and change us and inspire us and convict us. Use your word to do that this morning. In Jesus' name, amen.

Would you please stand with me? We're going to look at our passage today. Our passage today comes from John 2. Let me read our passage today. This is from John 2. This is the miracle or confirmation that they had in the temple when Jesus cleared out the temple. That's the story we're going to learn about today.

Starting in verse 13 it says – *When it was almost time for the Jewish Passover, Jesus went up to Jerusalem. In the temple courts he 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."*

*The Jews then responded to him, "What 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."*

*They replied, "It has taken forty-six 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. Then they believed the scripture and the words that Jesus had spoken.*

*Now while he was in Jerusalem at the Passover Festival, many people saw the signs he was performing and believed in his name. But Jesus would not entrust himself to them, for he knew all people. He did not need any testimony about mankind, for he knew what was in each person.*

You may be seated.

If we look at the geography of what's happening in Israel, this is a map so you can kind of get a visual feel of what's taking place. Jerusalem is down towards the south and Nazareth is up north. Now Jesus, remember, is coming earlier from this story in Cana, which is halfway between

Nazareth and the Sea of Galilee. Then it says He went up to Capernaum. When you think of Capernaum, think cap. It is at the top of the Sea of Galilee. But now in our story as we read, we see that the very first verse of our passage tells us that *when it was almost time for Jewish Passover, Jesus went up to Jerusalem*. Not down because it was set, but up because it was this elevation twenty-four hundred feet above sea level. So when you were going up to Jerusalem, there was sense of climbing up the mountain or going up the hills. You went up the hills, then you would see Jerusalem in the distance. You would be coming up and it would be quiet a celebration.

Now all of the Jewish people, particularly the men, would enter into a pilgrimage every year on Passover and they would all go together. So the transportation, of course, was walking. So you would see on the roads all the roads going up to Jerusalem, groups of people all heading up for Passover. And as they would be going up, they would be singing Songs of Ascent.

If you look up Songs of Ascent in your Bible, you will find that Psalm 120 through Psalm 134 are these Songs of Ascent that you would hear the people singing as they go. So there would be a sense of camaraderie as groups of people would be singing and then others would join in and they would sing these songs, looking forward to being up in Jerusalem what God might do. Psalm 121 says – *Looking up toward the mountains, up toward the hills; that's where my help comes from*. There's this beautiful camaraderie going on as people know they're coming to Jerusalem to worship. They're coming to experience the Passover together. It's just such a beautiful experience.

Then when they get here, many of them are bringing their lambs because the lamb would be offered as a sacrifice. It would be this place where they could connect with God. Because they would come into the temple area and this temple place was a very sacred place. When they would come onto the temple mount itself there were different courts and when they would come into that place, there was this awesome sense of connecting with God.

So if we're going to define the temple, I think, in terms for today, we're going to say that the temple is this place where God's heart and man's heart connect. So they're coming together. And the temple is this great place of connection. What are we connecting? Two things – God's heart and man's heart. It's coming here on the temple mount. It's an exciting time. It's a brilliant time. It's a really special time. A time of worship that you would experience God and you would just go away saying, "Yes, I am with God today."

But on this occasion, as Jesus came up the temple mount when we come to the next verse where it says in verse 14 – *In the temple courts he found people selling cattle, sheep and doves, and others sitting at tables exchanging money*.

I guess I should explain a little bit more about this because it probably started as a good thing. If you're bringing your lamb and everybody lived right around Jerusalem or in Israel, that was fine because you could just carry your lamb or you could bring your doves and you could bring them as sacrifices to the Lord. But as society grew, there was a cultural change that took place and people were now coming from Syria, and they were coming from Greece, and they were coming from Africa. It's kind of hard to bring your animals if you're coming that far and they might

even get damaged in the process. When you come up on the temple mount, you would have to show your animal to the priests who would approve this animal as a spotless animal, a spotless sacrifice, a pure one that could be offered. And so in that cultural time, things had changed.

There was a new idea in their society, an idea about how we handle this. That really what we're going to do now was equip these people from other places when they come, they would buy a sacrifice here and make it easy for them. Maybe that was a good thing, but probably shouldn't have been doing it on the temple mount.

What was bad about all of this is there was some greed involved in this process. So now some of the priests would look at the sacrifice and say, "Oh that sacrifice isn't good enough. You'll have to buy one from us." And when you went to buy the doves or you went to buy the sheep, then the prices were really high because these were special sheep. Someone was making money on this whole deal.

And furthermore, you couldn't even pay for them with your currency. If you came from even Israel, you couldn't even use your Israeli currency to pay for this. You had to buy special currency. It was temple currency. So everybody had to exchange their money. There were people who were taking commission on the exchange. Those were the money changer's tables. So really what was happening was you're coming and you're first being rejected of your lamb and when you don't have one, you've got to go to the money changers table and get some money you can use or you're losing some there, and then you buy a sacrifice that's inflated. So it's turned into something that is robbing the people of their worship experience.

When I lived in Portland, Oregon, I was a student in college and I taught in our church the third grade class of kids. I was always interested in doing fun things with the kids. We'd do drama to act out the various stories or whatever. This story was coming up and this is the story I would be teaching. The story about Jesus overturning the tables of the money changers. So I decided I would teach the kids about this by getting some real money. I could have used paper or fake money, but I decided to go down and get some real money that looked different so I could show them about the exchange.

So I went down to the city center in downtown Portland to the big bank building and they told me I had to go to the third floor to get the money that I wanted to exchange. That's where you exchanged money. I went to the counter and I said, "Look. I'm telling a Bible story about the money changers and so on and I really want some kind of money that's very different. I don't want Canadian money. I mean I want money that really looks different when you look at it. I don't care what country it's from." I took my ten dollars and I said, "I want ten dollars worth of money." This week I checked on the inflation calculator to see how much my ten dollars is worth today. Forty-four dollars is basically what I took in. Ten dollars. I said, "I would like ten dollars of foreign currency of some kind."

So she goes into the back and she's gone for a while. She must have been looking at different kinds of currency. Finally she brings out this stuff that really looked weird. Odd-shaped, not round. It was great, just what I wanted. All these coins. So I paid my ten dollars for these coins. I

went and did my Sunday school class with the kids and had a good time talking to them about exchanging money and all that.

So then I wanted to go back on Monday to get my money back. So I go to the bank on Monday and I take all my coins. I give them back and I said, “I want to exchange this and get my money back.” I knew there would probably be a little bit of a loss. You know what they give me? \$1.67. I said, “\$1.67? I just go this money last week!” She said, “Well we really don’t have need for that kind of money, so we don’t spend a lot of money to buy it.” I said, “Fine. I’ll keep my \$1.67 worth of coins,” and I walked out of there saying, “This is a rip off! I can’t believe these people are making money on me like this.” And then as I get out of the bank I’m realizing this is what the people must have felt when they’re at the temple mount and they’re coming in to have this great experience of their heart connecting with God’s heart on the temple mount. And this is a rip off is what they’re imagining and feeling.

So Jesus comes and sees this desecration that’s pretty significant. I want to define this desecration this way. Allowing the modern philosophy of the day to rob the temple of its holiness. The modern philosophy of the day to rob the temple of its holiness. So in the midst of that, Jesus sees that and experiences passion and then He unleashes that.

Let’s look at this next verse and see what happens. It says in verse 15 – *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!”*

Would you say He was angry? Yes. I would suggest that Jesus was angry in this picture. So if you have this picture of Jesus that He’s kind of this milk toast sweet guy, I want you to see He’s a very strong and passionate person. He comes in here. Was it anger? I’m sure it was anger, but there might have been other emotions that He experienced. But in the midst of that, we have this passion unleashed.

So let’s take a moment and just talk about anger itself. Because I find that some people, particularly some dads I talk to, will see something going on and they’ll get angry with and yell at their kids or whatever. They’ll say, “Well my anger is justified. It’s a righteous anger because my kids are being disrespectful or they’re fighting with each other or they’re leaving stuff around after I told them not to do it.” So sometimes dads and others, all of us I suppose, feel at times that our anger is justified because we found something that’s wrong. The interesting thing about anger is that anger always happens when something is wrong. In fact that’s the emotion. We experience anger when something wrong happens.

The problem is we don’t know if the something wrong is out here among others that really needs to be corrected, or maybe the something wrong is in my heart. That when dad yells at his son because he can’t find the remote control because his son didn’t put it back where it was supposed to be, there’s at least a little bit of mixed emotion here. I’m not only angry with my son because he didn’t put the remote control back like I told him to, but I can’t find my remote control! So when anger is self-serving it certainly is dangerous.

Another time that anger I would suggest is not good is when it lingers. That's why Ephesians says – *Do not let the sun go down on your anger*. If you've got an anger that lingers, then we've got a problem. It's a dangerous kind of anger. I suppose that we could say anger is dangerous and that's why James warns us by saying *quick to hear, slow to speak, and slow to get angry*.

The problem is that anger, although it identifies problems for us, isn't usually the best solution for us to solve problems. I'm not saying it never is. But I would suggest that even Jesus Himself didn't use anger to solve problems a lot of times. He's the one who told us to bless those who persecute us, to love our enemies. If someone hits you on one cheek, turn the other cheek. If someone says go one mile, go an extra mile. Jesus taught a lot about forgiveness and grace and gentleness and so on. It's not the only option we have when something doesn't go our way is to get angry. There's something that we need to ask ourselves in this very important emotion. Because I think we need to justify our emotions and think that we have this righteous anger when really there's some mixed emotions.

So we could go away from this story having talked about anger and learned what we need to learn and that could be the end of our message today. But I would suggest there's something bigger going on in this passage. So that's really a tangent to talk about anger.

Let's come back to what's really going on here. Because in the midst of this experience, the holiness and bright white light of God Himself is met with the dirtiness of what's going on in this temple, the philosophy of the age, these ideas that changed their behavior. So they felt okay with doing these things that were wrong and desecrating the temple. And when they come together, they're together and Jesus Himself drives them all out. You can imagine the guys who were at these tables going out and being condemned as they were, judged as they were here, with their heads down, looking back and justifying their actions or just realizing that what they'd done was just so bad. Because the holiness of God has met with the dirtiness of what's happening and this philosophy of the age of the temple.

Well it's not the end of the story, so we go on in the story. This is an example of Jesus Christ's anger. I just want to show you this because in Mark 3:5 notice how Jesus Himself is feeling angry. It says He's angry in this passage, but when He turns and He looks, He does something different. In other words, He sees He's angry with the leaders and when He's angry with the leaders He doesn't address them specifically, He just turns around and does the right thing.

I would just suggest that many times we have options when we're angry. *Jesus looked around at them in anger* (those are the religious leaders), *deeply distressed at their stubborn hearts*. So notice the mix of emotions there. *He said to the man, "Stretch out your hand."* *He stretched it out, and his hand was completely restored*. Jesus Christ had a lot of options when it comes to dealing with people. Knowing when to respond to our anger and how to respond to it is going to be very important for us in our lives.

Well let's go on and see what else happens in this story. *His disciples remembered that it is written: "Zeal for your house will consume me."* *The Jews, those people around, are on the temple area responded to him, "What sign can you show us to prove your authority to do all*

*this?” Who are you anyway? How is it you’re driving out these people? What does this look like?*

*Jesus answered them, “Destroy this temple, and I will raise it again in three days.” Now notice how He’s using the word temple in a different way than they were thinking. “Destroy this temple, and I will raise it again in three days.”*

*They replied, “It has taken forty-six 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. Then they believed the scripture and the words that Jesus had spoken.*

Let me go back and talk about the temple itself for a moment just so you get an idea of these forty-six years and what’s going on. The first reference we have to a temple is the portable temple, the tabernacle that God instructed Moses to build. When it was built, it was in the middle of the camp. So you had three tribes on each side and when they opened their tent in the morning, they would look toward God who was in the middle and that portable temple represented the very presence of God. The cloud would come down and when the cloud came down, they would camp, and when it came up they would move on. So it just represented the heart of man connecting with the heart of God in the midst of that. That was the portable temple.

When they entered into the Promised Land and they were there under Solomon’s leadership, they built this amazing temple, this magnificent temple out of gold. So much gold it’s beyond how we could even measure it. It’s just a huge amount. I saw one estimate today this week that Solomon’s temple today would be worth 157 trillion dollars. It’s just an unbelievable amount of money. It was made out of gold. Gold overlays, bronze, all this precious metal in all of this. That was in 997 B.C.

So track with me on a timeline for a minute. In 997 B.C. we have the temple built by Solomon. It was destroyed in 586 when Jerusalem fell and the Israelites were taken into captivity. They destroyed that whole temple. Took all of the gold, of course, and everything that was there. They just destroyed it. For seventy years they were in captivity and then under Ezra and Nehemiah they came back. When they came back to rebuild, they rebuilt a temple. It was just kind of a plain temple, but they had one. 586 to 516. They started this temple in 516 B.C. Until 20 B.C. right before Christ was born, they lived with this temple. But in 20 B.C. they started outfitting it more under Herod the Great. So Herod the Great starts building this temple. So when they say it’s forty-six years, they’re referring to this time between 20 B.C. until where Christ is that it’s being built and rebuilt and so on. So they’re outfitting it into this magnificent temple. Not nearly as great as Solomon’s, but very nice temple that Herod built. And that’s what they’re referring to. That temple will be destroyed. It will be finished in 63 A.D. and destroyed in 70 A.D. So it doesn’t last very long.

Now since 70 A.D. until 1967 (that’s 1,897 years), the Israelites did not own that upper temple mount. They could not build another temple because they didn’t own the property. But in the Six-Day War in 1967 they regained the property. So now the Israelis own this property and they’d love to rebuild a temple. In fact they already have the plans drawn, but there are two

Muslim mosques there, the Dome of the Rock and the Al-Aqsa mosque are on there. And you don't just take down Muslim mosques in a political environment. So they're waiting somehow to build the temple. In fact just last May when the embassy was dedicated in Jerusalem, our ambassador looked at new plans for the temple that the temple would be built.

But the Jews are thinking about a physical temple and Jesus is saying something now completely different. He's describing the temple of Himself because now it's going to be the heart of man meets the heart of God through Jesus Christ Himself. Jesus is saying He is that temple.

If we're looking at the word *temple* in the Bible, we come to Jesus, but we also come to this very interesting passage I want to take you to in 1 Corinthians. This passage in 1 Corinthians is one that has to do with us being the temple. So now I want you to think about yourself. Because if you are a believer, then you are a temple of the Holy Spirit.

Let's start at the very beginning where it says – *Do you not know that your bodies are members of Christ himself?* We are members with Christ. This is such a cool statement. This is the verse that I like best about the passage. The rest is rather challenging. But the first verse is the members together. We are members with Christ.

But now watch what goes on now in Paul's description and how he uses this idea of temple to help us understand our lives. Watch this. He says – *Shall I then take the members of Christ and unite them with a prostitute? Never! Do you not know that he who unites himself with a prostitute is one with her in body? For it is said, "The two will become one flesh." But whoever is united with the Lord is one with him in spirit. Flee from sexual immorality. All other sins a person commits are outside the body, but whoever sins sexually, sins against their own body.*

There's several things I want to point out about this passage. The first one is that sex is a spiritual activity. Now you've got to understand in our culture that's not what our culture is saying. In our culture today, our culture says it's a biological thing. We're just animals, just like other animals evolved from other animals, and so on. And therefore sex is just one of those biological things that you can engage in. That's not what God is saying in this passage. What He's saying is two will become flesh. There's this spiritual thing that happens when two people have sex. It's a spiritual activity.

In fact I would suggest that if we think about that and understand sex in that way, it's going to have deeper meaning in a marriage relationship. It will draw two married people closer together because it is a spiritual activity that they're engaged in. It's not just a biological activity. It's spiritual. That's the first thing He's saying here.

Now the next thing he's saying *flee from sexual immorality*. So I would suggest that you've got a temple here. Notice he's saying the body is the temple of the Holy Spirit (verse 19). That means your body is this place where the heart of man connects with the heart of God. It's this place that God has designed for us now to connect. It's the temple of God. How very interesting.

And desecration of the temple, when we talk about this, he's saying is sin. In particular he's talking about sexual immorality taking place. But see, our culture has this idea of "Oh I love this

person. If I love them then sex is okay.” Do you see what’s happening to our culture? Our culture has changed the idea of sexuality and turned it into something that God didn’t design and it desecrates the temple of God.

If you’re involved in sexual sin, something outside of the marriage relationship of a husband and wife, then you’re desecrating the temple of God. This is really bad. It’s so bad that you could picture the holiness and the white bright light of God and this desecration needing some kind of rebuke or correction and Jesus comes in and cleans the whole temple. I want to tell you, it’s a dangerous place to be. If you’re involved in sexual immorality, you are in a dangerous place. Let me just tell you that the most dangerous place you could be is to be calling yourself a Christian but engaging in habitual sin. That your heart is practicing sin. That is the most dangerous place that you can be in your life if you’re practicing sin and calling yourself a Christian. I want you to know if you’re doing that, then bad things are going to happen. You’ve just got to understand that.

We know that in the passage what we see of Jesus coming and clearing the table, there’s this fear of His wrath, this judgment of God coming in the midst of that. Now how do we picture this in our own minds when we’re Christians and God is coming in to... we use the word judge or maybe we’d use the word (verse 12) that He comes in to discipline us. That *whom the Lord loves, he disciplines*. I just want you to know that’s painful. Bad things are going to happen. If you’re living in habitual sin, you can expect bad things are going to happen. I’m not trying to predict that for you. I’m just trying to say that’s what happens in life. The storm clouds will come into your life, the storms are going to threaten you in ways that you never imagined. It’s bad. You don’t want to be there.

It’s like Jonah who had fallen asleep in the boat. Why is he falling asleep? Because he got so used to this idea of disobeying God. Everybody else is up in arms and these unsaved people are going to call out to Jonah saying, “Why don’t you pray to your God? They’re going to be rebuked by the world. What are you doing? You can’t be sleeping here. You’ve got to be praying to your God.” And Jonah says, “I’m the problem. And that’s why this storm is taking place.”

You’ve just got to know that if you’re living in habitual sin, whether it’s an anger problem, whether it’s a problem with materialism, or in this case a problem with sexual immorality, you are in big danger because God does not allow His temple to be desecrated like that.

The passage says *you are not your own*. You see that in verse 19? Because the common philosophy in our world is this: “Hey, it’s my body. I can do whatever I want with it. We love each other. We’re not hurting anybody else.” I just want you to see in the passage it says *you are not your own*. You are this temple that God has created that’s really valuable. *You were bought with a price*. Therefore what do we do? *Honor God with your body*. Wow. There are a lot of applications that He could take us here, but He’s mainly taking us to this idea of sexual immorality. It is dangerous. Not only is it dangerous for your future marriage (and as a result many marriages fail today), but it’s also dangerous because it’s just the wrong thing to do. It just damages you on the inside. It’s a bad thing.

Let's go back to another verse here because I want you to see even though sin is really bad, there's another truth we must understand and that is that God's forgiveness and His grace are really good. In fact Psalm 103 talks about *how far the east is from the west, so far he has removed our transgressions from us*. That forgiveness is so free, it's so beautiful. God's grace empowers us to live the life that He's called us to live.

Do we sin still? Yes. But there's a big difference between the two people here. The one who is receiving God's grace and determined to do what's right and moving in a direction of godliness and saying, "Yes, I made some mistakes, but I'm still moving forward." That's one heart. The other heart says, "Well I'm a Christian and I go to church, but I'm not going to change this area of my life. My heart is still over here doing the wrong thing." There's a difference between those two kinds of people.

I would suggest the most dangerous position that anyone could have in life is to be living in sin and calling themselves a Christian. Because God is going to be there disciplining. But the safest place to be is to be right in the center of God's will. Even if it takes you through trials and problems and struggles and whatever else, then you're in the safest place to be right there.

Sin is really bad and really need to wrestle with it. We need to give it up, we need to repent, we need to change. God's grace and His mercy are so beautiful. We have to make a choice. "Oh but I love him so much," or "I love her so much. I don't think I can live without her." Okay, just think about what you're saying when you say that. What you're saying is, "I love this person more than I love Jesus." You've got to come to a place where you're saying, "I'm going to love Jesus more than I love anybody else." That loving Christ is the most important thing in our lives and that's what drives us forward.

Let's end by going back to our passage in John 2 again. Look at the last verses where he says – *Now while he was in Jerusalem at the Passover Festival, many people saw the signs he was performing and believed in his name*. A lot of people saw the signs and they were attracted to them and they believed.

But notice what happens in this next verse. Very interesting. It says – *But Jesus would not entrust himself to them, for he knew all people. He did not need any testimony about mankind, for he knew what was in each person*. I just want to suggest today, Jesus knows you. This isn't about me. This is about you and Jesus. And Jesus knows your heart. He knows what you're doing. He wants to free you tremendously. This is between you and the Lord. God will leave sin and we've got to serve the Lord 100% in our lives.

You might say, "Hmm...not a very... If you preach these kind of sermons, we're not going to get much church growth around here." I suppose that if you measure church growth by numbers then there are some people who might leave our church because this message is uncomfortable. But I would suggest that God has offered us a mission and that mission that we have a Calvary Chapel Living Hope is to take the message of the gospel to a world that needs to see that we are different than other people. We are not like everybody else. We stand for something that's very different. If we just blend in with the cultural philosophies of the day, we are no different. We are different people.

So the most important thing is we are a discipleship church and a discipleship church means that we are growing. We are growing in the Lord. It's not about feeling good necessarily on Sunday morning, although we do feel good a lot. But sometimes there's this time when we just need to experience the conviction of God in our hearts so that He can do that deeper work to draw us to Himself, to call us to something bigger than where we are. Because God love us.

I would suggest that the discipline that happens in our lives of sin is because of His love (that's what it says in Hebrews). He's prompted to love us and He wants us to move forward. So we have to make a choice in our lives. We have to choose whether we're going to continue to live in sin or we're going to move to something bigger, something greater that God wants to do. I just trust that God will use that message in your life to draw the application to your heart and allow Him to speak. Let's stand together and pray.

[PRAYER] So Father, we're coming before you. Lord, we don't want to say Jesus is beautiful and sing those songs on the one hand and live in sin on the other. So we're coming humbly before you. I just pray that you would work in each of our hearts to draw us powerfully to yourself, to recognize you are the most important thing. That giving up anything else is minor compared to serving you. We ask that you would draw us deeper to yourself in ways that we don't even realize. Lord, I pray for those that are in this room that need to make a very important decision in their lives. You know what that is and they know what that is, and I pray that you would guide them to make those decisions permanently. Those who listened to this message on Facebook or audio, we ask that you would help each person recognize your greatness. Lord, draw us to yourself in a great way. We ask in Jesus' name, amen.