

Rev. Thomas Emery
“Cleansing Our Temples” John 2:13-22
Salem Presbyterian Church
Sunday, March 8, 2015

People came to offer their sacrifices at the Jerusalem Temple during Passover. Many of them were from the far reaches of Judaism, and they couldn't bring an animal with them to sacrifice. Unfortunately, they couldn't use Roman coins to purchase one. These coins were considered impure. After all, they bore the image of Caesar, which broke the commandment against graven images. The money changers were exchanging Roman coins for shekels, temple coins, and some of them were making an outrageous profit at the expense of simple, believing people, when they needed to purchase an animal in the Temple court. Seeing this injustice in God's Temple, Jesus knew it appeared discouraging to those in the pursuit of seeking God. Then upon taking in the situation, Jesus exploded. According to the picture we get in the Gospel, Jesus gets angry at people who exploit religion.

TEACHING POINTS

Teaching Point One: *Anger is not a sin.*

Teaching Point Two: *From God's perspective, some things should make us angry.*

Teaching Point Three: *There is a time for action.*

THIS WEEK'S MEMORY VERSE

Then, going over to the people who sold doves, he told them, “Get these things out of here. Stop turning my Father's house into a marketplace!” (John 2:16 NLT).

ACTION POINT

The gospel of Jesus, is a conviction that tells us we really matter, not because there is anything remarkable about us, but because there is something remarkable about God. Christ was a law-abiding man. He kept most of the sacred traditions of his people. But, tradition wasn't as important to him as people were. That is why Jesus drove the money changers from the Temple. Jesus cares about people. I invite you to accept the same authentic faith of Jesus, a faith that has one goal, to help us grow in love for one another and God. This same faith is the heart of Lent and the Easter Story.