

## Unit 31, Session 3: Jesus Cleansed the Temple

*Matthew 21:12-17; Mark 11:15-19; Luke 19:45-48*

### Christ Connection:

**Preschool:** Jesus was right to be angry when He saw people were using the temple in a wrong way. God is holy and must be worshiped in the way He says. Jesus came so that people would no longer have to offer sacrifices to worship God. Now we can meet with God anytime and anywhere. Jesus came to sacrifice His own body so we can worship God forever.

**Kids:** Jesus was angry that people were misusing the temple, the place people could go to meet with God. Today, Christians do not go to a temple to meet with God or to offer sacrifices for sin. Jesus died on the cross as the final payment for sin, and God's Spirit lives in us.

### Adult Connection Point:

*Read Revelation 19:6-9.*

Jesus' forcing people to leave the temple, as recorded in the Gospels, reveals to us God's concern that His people worship in purity. God is pure, so people must worship Him in purity. Since everyone is a sinner and impure by nature, we must be made pure through the work of Jesus on the cross on our behalf. Through Jesus' death and belonging to Him by faith, we are made clean and able to approach God (1 John 1:7-9). God declares us to be righteous in His sight because of Jesus' perfect obedience (Rom. 5:1). We are as a result called to live a life of purity in light of this declaration. The New Testament uses the imagery of a bride adorning herself in purity while she awaits her groom to depict the church's relationship to Jesus as we long for His return.

As we have considered the images of *body* and *temple* during the two previous weeks, so we now turn to that of *bride*. Who are we? We are the bride of Christ. And the Bible speaks of a day in which our marriage to Christ will be consummated in unending joy. The last book of the Bible paints a picture of a glorious wedding feast, with Jesus as the groom and the church as the bride in Revelation 19:6-9.

"His wife has prepared herself," wrote John. As the bride of Christ, we are to make ourselves ready for the coming marriage supper, the consummation of our faith and hope. We have something to do as we wait. Until the final glorious day, our duties are not done. For as final preparations are being made through the rehearsal and into the day of the wedding, so provision is being made constantly by the saints for that blessed feast.

Good works are an evidence of the internal wonder of faith. As the righteousness of Christ is imputed to us in the gospel, so it flows through us and creates an actual righteousness in us that begins to transform our lives. God looks upon the heart (1 Sam. 16:7), but His seeing doesn't stop there. Why? Because the heart is made evident by the hands and feet that follow wherever the heart leads. Those who love goodness and holiness and justice will pursue those things and thus adorn themselves accordingly. Those who consider others greater than themselves and have minds and hearts set on what is above will gladly serve Christ by serving His body. Those who are the bride of Christ will prepare themselves for this glorious day.

Materials: socks (clean and dirty)

Direct your children to gather their socks and place them all over your kitchen table. Similar to what Jesus did in the Bible story; allow each child to swipe the socks off the table.

Review today's story.

Ask: "What made Jesus angry?"

Remind your kids that long ago in the Old Testament the prophet Isaiah had told the people that the temple would be a place of worship. Just like the kitchen table is for eating at and not for putting dirty socks on, the temple was a place to worship God and make sacrifices. The people forgot and turned it into a noisy market. They were selling the animals to make money showing Jesus that the people were more interested in money than worshipping God!

Ask: "What made the religious leaders angry?"

Recall how the leaders were afraid of Jesus and were plotting to kill Him. They did not understand who Jesus was and how He would have to die on the cross as the final payment for our sin. Mention that today we do not have to offer sacrifices because Jesus was our sacrifice once and for all. When we trust in Jesus, God's Spirit lives in us. We can then talk to God anytime and anywhere, we do not need to go to the temple.

Choose a praise song from the curriculum and lead your kids to worship Jesus.

Pray, thanking God that you can talk to Him anytime and anywhere.