

## John – Week 10 – Cleaning House – Bible Study Helps

Title: Cleaning House: Jesus' Zeal for God's Glory and Our Lives

**Sermon Summary:** This sermon examines Jesus' cleansing of the temple in John 2:13-25, demonstrating His righteous anger against those who corrupted worship and made merchandise of God's house. The message emphasizes that just as Jesus cleansed the physical temple in Jerusalem, He desires to cleanse the lives of believers today, as our bodies are now temples of the Holy Spirit. The sermon challenges Christians to examine their lives for anything that dishonors God and to respond with the same zeal for God's glory that Jesus displayed. It explores the difference between sinful anger and righteous anger, showing how Jesus maintained perfect control while driving out corruption. The application extends from the historical temple cleansing to personal spiritual inventory, calling believers to repentance and alignment with God's Word.

**Key Points:**

- The Jews' Passover had become corrupted religious activity rather than true worship according to God's Word
- Jesus demonstrated controlled righteous anger by making a scourge and driving out those who made God's house a place of merchandise
- The disciples remembered Scripture (Psalm 69:9) about zeal for God's house when witnessing Jesus' actions
- Jesus prophesied His death and resurrection when He said "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up"
- Righteous anger is possible without sin when it is controlled, according to God's Word, and for God's glory
- Biblical examples like Nehemiah and Josiah show similar zeal for restoring proper worship
- Believers' bodies are now temples of the Holy Spirit (1 Corinthians 6:19-20)
- Jesus knows what is in every person's heart and inspects our lives as His temple today
- God's chastisement comes in love to drive out sin from our lives
- We must be zealous to remove anything from our lives that causes us to sin against God

**Scripture Reference:**

- John 2:13-25 (primary passage)
- Exodus 12:11, 27 (Lord's Passover origins)
- 2 Kings 23:21-25 (Josiah's Passover)

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- Isaiah 56:1-8 (God's house as house of prayer for all people)
- Jeremiah 7:1-11 (temple made into den of robbers)
- Psalm 69:9 (zeal for God's house)
- Matthew 21:12-13 (second temple cleansing)
- 1 Corinthians 6:19-20 (body as temple of Holy Spirit)
- Matthew 12:38-40; 16:4 (sign of Jonah)
- Mark 6:3 (Jesus' siblings)

### Stories:

- The account of Josiah finding the Book of the Law and restoring proper worship, including removing Tobiah's apartment from the temple (Nehemiah 13)
- Paul's confrontation with false religion in Ephesus where idol sellers complained he was turning people away from Diana worship (Acts 19)
- The prophet Amos being told by the priest Amaziah to stop prophesying at Bethel (Amos 7)
- Modern illustration of a man whose wife committed adultery through computer communication, requiring drastic action to remove the source of temptation
- Reference to Acts 5 where Ananias and Sapphira were struck dead for lying to God, causing great fear in the church
- Historical context of money changers exploiting worshipers with unfair exchange rates and declaring acceptable animals unacceptable to force purchases

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### Discipleship Questions

How does Jesus' cleansing of the temple challenge our modern understanding of His character, and what does righteous anger look like in our own lives without crossing into sin?

In what ways have we turned our own bodies, which are temples of the Holy Spirit, into houses of merchandise rather than houses of prayer and worship?

What is the difference between participating in religious activities and truly bringing glory to God, and how can we ensure our worship remains pure?

When Jesus inspected the temple and found corruption, what might He find if He inspected your life today with the same intensity and standards?

How does the disciples' response to Jesus' actions differ from the Pharisees' response, and what does this teach us about recognizing and submitting to God's authority?

What does it mean to have zeal for God's house that 'eats you up,' and how should this zeal manifest in practical ways in our daily lives?

Why do you think Jesus chose to make a scourge rather than immediately confronting the corruption, and what does this tell us about controlled, purposeful action versus impulsive reactions?

How can we avoid becoming like the religious leaders who knew they were wrong but still demanded a sign rather than repenting immediately?

What 'small cords' of sin have we woven together in our lives that need to be driven out, and what is preventing us from taking decisive action today?

If Jesus knows what is in every person's heart and did not commit Himself to those who believed based only on miracles, what does genuine faith and commitment to Christ actually require?

# Small Group Guide: Cleaning House

## Based on John 2:13-25

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### Opening Prayer & Icebreaker (10 minutes)

**Icebreaker Question:** Have you ever witnessed someone take a strong stand for what's right? What was your reaction? How did it make you feel?

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### Sermon Review (5 minutes)

#### Key Points:

- Jesus cleansed the temple early in His public ministry
- He demonstrated righteous anger against those corrupting worship
- The disciples remembered Scripture and believed
- Our bodies are now God's temple and need cleansing too

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### Discussion Questions (40-45 minutes)

#### Understanding the Passage

1. **What shocked you most about Jesus' actions in the temple?** How does this challenge or confirm your view of who Jesus is?
2. **Why do you think Jesus took time to make a scourge rather than just reacting immediately?** What does this teach us about righteous anger versus sinful anger?
3. **Read Ephesians 4:26 - "Be ye angry and sin not."** How is it possible to be angry without sinning? What's the difference between Jesus' anger and the anger we typically experience?

#### The Religious Corruption

4. **The religious leaders were making money off people coming to worship God.** Where do you see similar corruption in Christianity today? How should we respond?
5. **The passage says it was "the Jews' Passover" not "the Lord's Passover."** What's the significance of this distinction? How can religious activity become "ours" instead of God's?

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6. **Isaiah 56:7 says God's house should be "a house of prayer for all people."** What was preventing people from worshiping God in the temple? What prevents people from coming to God today?

### Personal Application

7. **The sermon stated: "Jesus Christ has come to inspect His temple today - your body."** If Jesus walked through your life this week with a scourge in hand, what would He find? What would He want to cleanse?
8. **What are some "money changers" or "dove sellers" in your life?** (Things that seem religious or acceptable but actually hinder your relationship with God)
9. **The disciples "remembered that it was written" (verse 17).** How does knowing Scripture help us understand what God is doing in our lives? Share a time when a Bible verse suddenly made sense in light of your circumstances.

### Zeal for God's Glory

10. **Verse 17 says, "The zeal of thine house hath eaten me up."** On a scale of 1-10, how would you rate your zeal for God's glory? What increases or decreases your zeal?
11. **The sermon mentioned Nehemiah 13 and Josiah's reforms.** What can we learn from these biblical examples about taking a stand for God's truth? When is it appropriate to be bold about sin?
12. **Jesus "did not commit himself unto them because he knew all men" (verse 24).** What does this teach us about superficial belief versus genuine faith? How can we guard against merely being impressed by miracles without true commitment?

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### Key Takeaways (10 minutes)

Have each person share one key takeaway by completing this sentence:

**"This week, God showed me that I need to..."**

Possible takeaways:

- Clean out specific sins Jesus has revealed
- Be more zealous for God's glory
- Stop corrupting worship with wrong motives
- Remember that my body is God's temple
- Take righteous stands when necessary
- Align my "religion" with God's Word, not my preferences

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## Practical Applications (15 minutes)

### Individual Actions

**This Week's Challenge:** Conduct a personal "temple inspection"

1. **Set aside 30 minutes alone with God** - Ask Him to reveal what needs to be cleansed from your life
2. **Make a list** - Write down specific things the Holy Spirit brings to mind
3. **Take action** - Like Jesus driving out the money changers, make decisive changes:
  - o Delete apps that lead to sin
  - o Cancel subscriptions that corrupt your mind
  - o End relationships that pull you from God
  - o Confess and repent of hidden sins
  - o Restore what you've stolen or damaged

**Scripture Memory:** Memorize 1 Corinthians 6:19-20

"Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body."

### Group Accountability

4. **Pair up with an accountability partner** from the group
  - o Share one specific area where you need to "clean house"
  - o Give permission to ask hard questions
  - o Commit to pray for each other daily this week
5. **Check your motives** - Examine your religious activities:
  - o Why do you come to church?
  - o Why do you serve?
  - o Why do you give?
  - o Are you doing it for God's glory or your own benefit?

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## Going Deeper (Optional)

### Additional Study

- Read and compare all four Gospel accounts of temple cleansing
- Study Psalm 69:9 in context (the verse the disciples remembered)
- Research the history of Herod's temple and the Court of the Gentiles
- Read Nehemiah 13 - another example of zealous temple cleansing
- Study 2 Kings 23 - Josiah's reforms and "Passover according to the Word"

## Reflection Questions for Journaling

- What "religious activities" am I participating in that aren't according to God's Word?
- Am I more concerned about being loving or being truthful?
- What would a "Josiah moment" look like in my life - getting back to what the Bible actually says?
- How have I made Christianity about me instead of about God?

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## Prayer Time (10-15 minutes)

### Corporate Prayer

- Pray for courage to clean house in our personal lives
- Pray for the church to maintain purity and zeal for God's glory
- Pray for those trapped in false religion to encounter the true Jesus
- Pray for boldness to speak truth in love to those around us

### Personal Prayer

Take 5 minutes of silence for personal confession and repentance. Ask God:

- "Lord, what do You see in my temple that grieves You?"
- "What needs to be driven out today?"
- "Give me the courage to make necessary changes"

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## Closing Challenge

### Before next week:

- Complete your personal temple inspection
- Take at least one decisive action to remove sin
- Share your testimony with your accountability partner
- Be prepared to report back to the group on what God did

**Remember:** Jesus cleansed the temple because He loved His Father's glory more than people's comfort. He loves you enough to cleanse your life too - will you let Him?

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## Leader Notes

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- **Be sensitive:** Some may be dealing with serious sin issues. Create a safe, non-judgmental environment
- **Be specific:** Help people identify concrete actions, not just good intentions
- **Be encouraging:** Emphasize God's grace and forgiveness, not just His judgment
- **Be biblical:** Keep pointing people back to Scripture, not just opinions
- **Follow up:** Check in with group members during the week about their commitments

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*"For he knew what was in man." - John 2:25*

Jesus knows everything about you and loves you anyway. Let Him clean house so you can bring Him more glory!

# 5-Day Devotional: Cleaning House - A Journey of Holy Zeal

## Day 1: The Discovery - What Does God Find in Your Temple?

**Reading:** 1 Corinthians 6:19-20; John 2:13-17

### Devotional:

Your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit. Just as Jesus inspected the physical temple in Jerusalem, He examines your life today. What would He discover? The religious leaders had corrupted God's house of prayer into a marketplace of merchandise. They performed religious activities while dishonoring God's glory.

Consider this sobering truth: Jesus knows your thoughts, your motives, and your secret sins. He sees what you watch, where you spend your time, and how you treat others. The question isn't whether He knows—He does. The question is: will you agree with Him about what needs to change?

Today, invite the Holy Spirit to search your heart. Ask Him to reveal areas where you've allowed the world to set up shop in God's temple. Don't wait for His chastisement—respond to His gentle conviction now.

**Reflection:** What "tables" need overturning in your life? What activities or attitudes have corrupted your worship?

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## Day 2: Righteous Anger - Be Angry and Sin Not

**Reading:** Ephesians 4:26-27; Psalm 69:9; Nehemiah 13:1-31

### Devotional:

Jesus made a scourge. He drove out the money changers. He overturned tables. This wasn't uncontrolled rage—it was righteous, holy anger at sin corrupting God's house. The disciples remembered Scripture: "The zeal of thine house hath eaten me up."

Many Christians have an effeminate view of Jesus, imagining He never confronted sin directly. But true love doesn't tolerate what destroys. God's anger is always controlled, purposeful, and aimed at restoring holiness. The wrath of man works not the righteousness of God, but righteous indignation—like Nehemiah's or Josiah's—brings revival.

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Are you zealous for God's glory? Do you care enough about His reputation to confront sin in your own life? Righteous anger begins with hating your own sin, then extends to grieving over the world's rebellion against God. This isn't about self-righteous judgment—it's about loving God enough to defend His honor.

**Reflection:** What sins have you tolerated that should provoke holy grief? How can you channel anger into righteous action?

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### Day 3: The Sign of Jonah - Death, Burial, and Resurrection

**Reading:** Matthew 12:38-40; John 2:18-22; Jonah 1-2

**Devotional:**

When religious leaders demanded a sign, Jesus pointed to Jonah—three days in the whale's belly, a picture of death, hell, and resurrection. "Destroy this temple," Jesus said, "and in three days I will raise it up." He spoke of His body.

The Jews required a sign, but Jesus offered only one: His death, burial, and resurrection. This is the gospel—the power of God unto salvation. Jonah's story prophesied that the Messiah would conquer death itself. When Jesus rose, the disciples remembered His words and believed.

Every promise God makes comes true. The Bible has proven itself through thousands of fulfilled prophecies. What's your problem with believing Him today? If 360+ prophecies about Christ came true exactly as written, you can trust every word He speaks about your life, your future, and your salvation.

**Reflection:** Are you trusting God's promises, or do you demand more signs? What word from God do you need to simply believe today?

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### Day 4: Cleaning House - Practical Repentance

**Reading:** 2 Kings 23:1-25; James 1:19-27; 1 John 1:9

**Devotional:**

King Josiah discovered God's Word and immediately cleaned house. He removed idols, expelled false priests, destroyed pagan altars, and restored true worship. The Bible says no king before or after turned to God with such complete devotion. This is the model for repentance.

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Jesus didn't gently suggest the money changers consider leaving. He drove them out immediately. Some sins require drastic action. If your computer, phone, TV, or relationship causes you to sin against God, get rid of it today. Don't negotiate with sin—destroy it.

Confession means agreeing with God about your sin. Repentance means turning away from it. God promises to forgive and cleanse when you confess, but you must also make necessary changes. Clean out the corruption. Overthrow the tables. Make your life a house of prayer, not a den of thieves.

**Reflection:** What specific action must you take today to remove sin from your life? What "idol" needs destroying?

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## Day 5: Living with Holy Zeal - A Life That Glorifies God

**Reading:** Romans 12:1-2, 9-11; Philippians 2:12-16; 1 Corinthians 3:10-15

### Devotional:

At the judgment seat of Christ, believers will give account for everything done in the body. Works done for God's glory with right motives will receive rewards. Works done for self, even religious works, will burn up as worthless. This should create holy urgency in how we live.

God calls you to be zealous—fervently passionate—for His glory. Not lukewarm. Not casual. The world goes nuts during holidays and celebrations, but God's people should burn with zeal for Him year-round. Present your body as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable. This is your reasonable service.

Jesus cleansed the temple twice—once early in His ministry, once near the end. Why? Because corruption creeps back in. You need daily, ongoing cleansing. Stay in God's Word. Confess sin quickly. Guard your heart diligently. Make every area of your life bring Him glory.

**Reflection:** How will you maintain holy zeal? What daily practices will keep your temple clean for God's presence?

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### Closing Prayer:

Father, thank You for loving us enough to cleanse Your temple. Search our hearts and reveal every area that dishonors You. Give us holy zeal to drive out sin and live wholly for Your glory. Help us remember that we are not our own—we were bought with a price. May our lives be houses of prayer, not merchandise. In Jesus' name, Amen.