

John 2:12-25

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Date: 08 June 2025

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[0:00] Please turn with me to John chapter 2. John chapter 2. So last week we looked at the first half of John chapter 2.

And so it ends.

I want to read first the very end of that text. It's John chapter 2 and I'll read verse 11. This, turning the water into wine, the first of his signs, Jesus' signs, Jesus did at Cana in Galilee and manifested his glory.

And his disciples believed in him. So, that's the bridge to our text today. So, before I read our text together, I just want us to have a few things in mind.

I think it would be productive for us to, I'm going to point some things out for you to be aware of, and then we'll read it and then we'll walk through it together. But, first, I need to pray.

[1:24] That is something I forgot. I want to pray for our time and hearing the word of God. Father, before we read this text, we thank you for giving us this text in our own language.

And we can have these words in our own language that we can pick up and read on our own. This is such a great gift. And we can do this publicly.

And we thank you for this. And let us not take this for granted, what we're doing during this time.

And I pray that you would help those who hear my voice not hear my voice or my words, but they would see you in your word.

And I pray this in your name. Amen. Thank you. So, there's one text in Paul I want you to have in mind as we read through this text.

I think this is the famous Cleansing of the Temple text in John, where flipping the tables, and we have these profound images of Jesus being angry, flipping tables, and yelling at people, making whips.

[2:34] But we don't really... It'd be interesting if you can recall what he says after his actions. Most of the time, we focus on what he physically does.

But what does he say after this? What was the purpose behind Jesus' flipping the tables, making whips? That's what I want us to spend most of our time here, not get distracted by what he actually did, but he was doing it for a purpose.

And this came up over and over in my study. I was just thinking about this, these two verses, and Paul writes to Timothy these words, For there is one mediator between God and men.

We'll see this later throughout. For there is one mediator between God and men, men, Paul, knowing that Jesus did this, was thinking when he wrote that to Timothy.

And so, there's a few things. I'm going to talk about the structure, and then we'll actually start reading it. So, it's broken up into three sections. There's an introduction in verse 12, landing us in the context.

[4:16] And then, there is was at hand, the Passover was at hand, or the Passover was near. So it was just before the Passover feast.

There was the first, and it's the flipping tables, and all that. And then, the second is, and at the end of that first section, is a very important quote that we just read in Psalm 69.

And so, that's like the center of the section. And then, from 19 to 22, there's the second section, and it's the Jews' response to Jesus.

And then, the third is 23 to 25, which I think is the interpretive key to those first two sections.

So, have that end in mind, what Jesus says, throughout our time walking through the text. All right.

So, and there's repeated phrases through here, so I encourage you to see how many things are

repeated.

[5:24] You can write those down as we read. So, I will read our text. Verse 12. After this, he went down to Capernaum with his mother and his brothers and his disciples, and they stayed there a few days.

The Passover of the Jews was at hand, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem. In the temple, he found those who were selling oxen and sheep and pigeons and the money changers sitting there. And making a whip of cords, he drove them all out of the temple with the sheep and oxen. And he poured out the coins of the money changers and overturned their tables.

And he told those who sold the pigeons, take these things away. Do not make my father's house a house of trade. His disciples remembered that it was written, zeal for your house will consume me. So, the Jews said to him, what sign do you show us for doing these things? Jesus answered them, destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up.

[6:37] The Jews then said, it has taken 46 years to build this temple and will you raise it up in three days? But he was speaking about the temple of his body.

When therefore he was raised from the dead, his disciples remembered that he had said this and they believed the scripture and the word that Jesus had spoken.

Now, when he was in Jerusalem at the Passover feast, many believed in his name. When they saw the signs that he was doing, but Jesus, on his part, did not entrust himself to them because he knew all people and needed no one to bear witness about man.

For he himself knew what was in man. So, before we jump in, remember, this comes off from what we just read and his disciples believed him in verse 11 after the sign of the water into wine.

And then, remember, what's coming right after this is the famous conversation between Jesus and Nicodemus. And I want you to have those in mind because this is a bridge and these are all connected and leading into specific conversations.

[7:56] So, leading into Jesus saying to Nicodemus, truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God, that bomb that he gives Nicodemus and others throughout, it gets more specific like you see chapter 4, you see Jesus and the woman of Samaria, and then there's a, Jesus heals an official's son in 5.

It gets, he has specific personal conversations about the things we have already seen in Cana and now at the temple. So, he's leading into these applications of what we'll be talking about today.

So, just have all that in mind and I'll read the first section. This is the first major section. And after this, he went down to Capernaum with his mother and his brothers and his disciples and they stayed or they remained there for a few days.

And the Passover of the Jews was at hand or it was near and Jesus went up to Jerusalem. In the temple he found those who were selling oxen, oxen, cattle, same, and sheep and pigeons.

And the money changers sitting and making a whip of cords he drove them all out of the temple with the sheep and oxen. And he poured out or he scattered the coins of the money changers and overturned their tables.

[9:20] And he told those who sold the pigeons take these things away or get out of here. Do not make, you can say stop making my father's house a house of trade or merchandise.

So here this is probably the first of two temple cleansings. He probably most likely did this twice. If you look at the other accounts of the Gospels this is actually one of the few things John records in his Gospel that is also in the other three Gospels.

So this is very important and this is probably the first of second. I'm not going to spend a lot of time making that case. If you think that's interesting you can gladly ask me about it.

But this is maybe the first of two. And notice the words here. Look down with me. You see oxen, you see sheep, you see pigeons, you see money being exchanged.

Think about what this and at the temple this is all part of the sacrificial system. So these merchants on the face of it if you're taking them at good faith these were helping those who were at the temple worship the Lord by being close to where the sacrifices would have been made.

[10:44] So it seems on the face what's the big deal? We are helping those who are worshiping the Lord. Notice that's it's not about greed or money

here.

Jesus' concentration is not about them being greedy. But the problem is that they should not have been inside the temple complex at all.

There was a courtyard of the temple and then there was the temple who had the Holy of Holies in an actual building. But here in the courtyard they were selling oxen, pigeons, exchanging money, so that people can make their sacrifices to be faithful.

But the problem is it was distracting. It was not their place to infringe on the house of the Lord. So here is not about being greedy.

It's about the right approach to the Lord. This reminds me, this Zechariah 14:21. You can turn there if you want.

[11:54] It's just a few pages to the left. Zechariah chapter 14 is the last chapter and 21 is one of the last verses. So at the very end of Zechariah, I'll let you turn there.

Zechariah, he writes this, this may Jesus have had in mind, and every pot in Jerusalem and Judah shall be holy to the Lord of hosts, so that all who sacrifice, key point, may come and take of them and boil the meat of the sacrifice in them.

And there shall no longer be a traitor, think unclean person, a traitor in the house of the Lord of hosts on that day.

So it seems like Jesus absolutely had this in mind, where the house of the Lord is not for traders, merchants, it's for the Lord and the right worship of him.

So what does Jesus do? He famously makes a whip for, I'm going to say, not for people, from reading at face value, it sounds like he whipped people, I'm going to say that's not the case.

[13:18] He made a whip for the oxen and the sheep, so he drove the animals out, so therefore the owners are just not going to sit there.

They're no longer sitting there as the text says, I'm sure. But he drove out with the whip, of course, the oxen and the sheep.

And notice the verbs here, and he overturned tables, which was for the money changers, and he spoke to the ones who were selling pigeons.

So how he approached it was equivalent to what they were bringing into, wrongly, the temple court. So don't think he whipped everybody and was in a huge rage or anything.

But he was concerned about the right worship of the Lord. And the whip was for the big animals, and overturning the tables made sense for the money changers.

[14:23] And then he spoke to the pigeon sellers, because probably they were in cages, and I guess you just can't flip over a cage. So he had to speak to those who were selling pigeons.

But this is what he said. He said to those who sold pigeons, take these things away. Do not make my father's house a house of trade.

And we saw Zachariah fulfilling that. And then you get to the most important point right here in this section, is his disciples remembered that it was written, here it is, zeal for your house will consume me.

His disciples, specifically, remembered. Not the Jews, but the disciples, remembered. And this is the first of two rememberings of the disciples in this text.

We'll come to another one later. His disciples remembered that it was written in Psalm 69, 9, zeal for your house will consume me.

[15:39] There's two words I want to dial in here. It's the word zeal and the word consume. Very important words to this for understanding what Jesus is saying here.

Zeal, probably very John here. He loves highlighting misunderstandings and double entendres. He's very interesting in this way.

I think there's a double entendre here. Because here, it's zeal. Jesus has zeal, but also the Jews had zeal.

They're zealous or jealous from the Lord, of the Lord here. But zeal for your house. Both Jesus and the Jews had zeal for the Lord, but it was godly zeal versus earthly zeal.

So you can have zeal, but misplaced zeal for the Lord. And here, the zeal is important. And look at the word consume me.

[16:43] Will consume me. Now, I love that we read 69 together, or most of it, but if you could flip back, put your hand here in John, and flip back to Psalm 69.

69. And I wonder if you caught this when you read the text together.

So 69 verse 9, I'll read for context 6. I'll start there, as you turn there. Let not those who hope in you be put to shame through me.

Remember, this is David writing, the Lord God of hosts, let not those who seek you be brought to dishonor through me, O God of Israel, for it is for your sake that I have borne reproach, that dishonor has covered my face.

I have become a stranger to my brothers, an alien to my mother's sons. For zeal for your house has consumed me.

[17:51] And the reproaches of those who reproach you have fallen on me. Here it says, for zeal for your house has consumed me.

But, if you turn back, John records this as, zeal for your house will consume me. So, in the whole timeline, you would think the future tense will consume me, would be in Psalm, David writing.

In the past tense, you would expect it to say, his disciples remembered that it was written, zeal for your house has consumed me. So, why did he change from past tense to future tense?

I think this highlights pointing to Jesus' death. Because consume, I always thought that this text really was more about mind at all times.

He was consumed with it. But here, because of the future tense here, and consume, it's more of, consume means more of devouring, or eating up.

[19:14] It's a lot different here. And so, with that in mind, he says, zeal for your house will devour me. Interesting.

So, it's less of fully given over to the work of the Lord, but it's more, as Jesus is using it, more pointing to the fulfillment of Jesus' own death here.

That's what I think John is doing in this text, by changing from the past to the future here. So, let's go on to the second major section.

And this is the Jews' response. We have yet to hear from them. So, when he was making whips, and sheep and oxen were going everywhere, and birds were flying, I'm sure the Jews probably felt like they had to say something.

So, this is what they said. ESV has it as, so the Jews said to him, what sign do you show us for doing these things? But I think this is actually kind of soft.

[20:27] In the original, it could also be, and if you go through different translations, it's going to be a little different, so you can look at that if you want. But it's a little more harsh, the Jews' response to Jesus. It's more like, what sign do you show us that you have the right to do these things?

What right do you have? I think that makes more sense in the context. think about the Jews.

The Jews are more than just Israelites at this point. It's, John uses this category as those who, more generally, those who reject Jesus' teaching.

So have that in mind as we go through John, and specifically here. And they were not concerned about the right approach toward God here, but they were more concerned with their own authority.

You see here in our 1st Timothy text, wait, I read, it's God and man. God is God and man is man. And you see this throughout this text here.

[21:34] And so, Jesus answered, and he said to them, destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up. And the Jews then said, it has taken 46 years to build this temple, and will you raise it up in three days?

But he was speaking about the temple of his body. And here, it's another surprising thing here, because you would expect it not to be a command.

Destroy this temple. It's like, it's an imperative here. It's a command. You all destroy this temple. It was a command. You always think, well, I've always thought about this as looking towards the destruction of that temple in 70 AD later.

But, it's present here, and it's a command to the Jews, to those who reject him. Jesus answered them, destroy this temple. And in three days, I will raise it up.

[22:44] So, if we say, you all destroy this temple, notice, you all destroy this temple, but then notice, and I will raise it up in three days.

You see man, you see God. Another thing to point out here, as you dig through this, he says, this temple, destroy this temple, and destroy this temple, Jesus is using a pronoun here, this, that in the original is ambiguous.

It's more general. I only say this, I only point this out, because the Jews, in their response, when they use this temple, it has taken 46 years to build this temple, and they're using an unambiguous or a specific pronoun.

So, they're as if pointing, because they're in the temple courtyard, they're standing in front of this huge temple, very important, central to the Jewish worship, that they're saying, this temple, but notice if we take this as a more general pronoun here, he's being way more general, not specific, because that leads him to say, that he was speaking about the temple of his body.

So, this is where typology comes in. I think Jesus interpreted generally the Old Testament in a typological way.

[24:30] What I mean by that is typology, think type, and it's a Bible word, it's used throughout types or forms or patterns, things.

And you see this throughout scripture, and it's a key to understanding how Jesus saw himself fulfilling all the things before. So, when we think about prophecy, it's not merely verbal predictions. That's probably the number one thing we think about, is this will happen. That's a small part. But when it comes to biblical prophecy, like all throughout here, it's more about painting pictures, events, people, and institutions, so think here, like the temple, that they are pointing to something greater.

They're always pointing to something greater. So, for example, there's always something that's off, or sometimes we could maybe even say missing in.

These things. So, think about animal sacrifices, always built in, expecting a better sacrifice. Think about the law.

[25:50] The law in the Old Testament anticipated holiness of the heart. You see that heart language. And think about the priests. The priests looked forward to a perfect priest.

This is all what the book of Hebrews is about here. Think about David. We just got done with a series on David. David, it wasn't really about David. David wasn't about David.

David, in the Bible, he's mentioned so many times after his physical life because it wasn't about him specifically. It was about pointing to a perfect and better David.

God met men. And think about in our text, the temple. The temple pointed forward to a better and final meeting point between God and man.

So if we think about our first Timothy text, there's one mediator between God and men. It was the temple. It was the temple.

[26:56] That was where God met men. That was the mediator. God provided that. But think about how this lands when Jesus says, destroy this temple.

And in three days, I will raise it up. And he says, explains, this was his body. This lands to where it's Jesus' body fulfills that temple.

So, let's continue. Verse 22. This might be a little confusing, but if we take all the things we have said just now into here, this is really the point he's making.

And this is the bridge from our text, from the cleansing of the temple, to you must be born again section. Here, chapter 3, the great chapter 3 that everybody knows.

This is the interpretive key. When, therefore, he was raised from the dead, I'm sorry, I totally forgot about this.

[28:11] This is the second remembering. When, therefore, he was raised from the dead, this is verse 22, his disciples remembered that he said this, and they believed the scripture, and the word, could be plural here also, in the words that Jesus had spoken.

This is the second of two rememberings, remember, I pointed out. And, one thing is scripture could be Psalm 69, but I would like to say it's a little more general here.

I think he's making a point where all of scripture is fulfilled in Christ. All the Old Testament is being fulfilled here. In light of Christ, the whole Psalms, the whole Torah, the whole prophets come together in Christ.

Verse 23, now when he was in Jerusalem at the Passover, this is during the Passover feast now, many believed and trusted in his name when they saw the signs that he was doing.

Now, I'm going to pause and just say many believed. I'm going to say trusted here. This is when you see belief, trust, language, faith, all those tend to be one point that out.

[29:32] And so this is, they don't have faith here, but they believed only because they saw it. And John loves this. Throughout our study of John, try to see how many misunderstandings he points out.

He loves to point out misunderstandings. Think about the wedding in Cana, the misunderstanding here. Both the Jews and the disciples, his disciples, both missed it.

Remember that the word remembered is in the past tense. Only after Christ's death did they really understand. So, just be pointed out even in a conversation with Nicodemus.

he's pointing out misunderstandings so that we can understand but only through the light of Christ. Alright, verse 24 and 25, I'm going to read these together here.

But Jesus, on his part, did not entrust, remember the trust, entrust, now, he did not entrust himself to them because he knew all people and needed no one to bear witness about man.

[30:47] For he himself knew what was in man. Notice the God men language here.

So, this is the second of two belief trusting words here. He did not entrust. They trusted. He did not entrust himself to them.

Now, this may be because it was before his final, ultimate sacrifice on the cross. But, many believed here Jesus did not entrust himself to them.

Now, this points out a very important thing where only God knows man. Think of Job. Only God knows man.

At the very end of it, man is man. He is created. But God is God. And God is the creator and sustainer of all creation. Of man.

[31:52] And he does it through means of, he has given them the temple before, and now he has given him Jesus in bodily form.

all of that was bending towards and yearning for Jesus' body to be sacrificed and to be raised on the third day.

So, you have this death resurrection text. It's so central here. And I think that's the key to these verses. But Jesus, on his part, himself, did not entrust himself to them, but because he knew all people and needed no one to bear witness about man.

For he himself knew what was in man. This seems judgmental, but I think there's hope here.

Because, as one commentator says, Jesus wonderfully promises to entrust himself to those who truly trust him.

Jesus fully promises to entrust himself to those who truly trust him. And you see this in chapter 10. So, chapter 10, I'll read it for you.

[33:05] It's that I am the good shepherd text. In chapter 10 of John, it says, I am the good shepherd. I know my own, and my own know me.

Just as the father knows me, and I know the father, and I lay down my life for the sheep. Notice how many of those words we saw in our text.

I'll read it one more time. I am the good shepherd. I know my own, and my own know me. Just as the father knows me, and I know the father, and I lay down my life for the sheep.

Now, before we conclude, think about what's next. I think you can't read verse 24 and 25 separate from the first few verses of chapter 3.

So, not to steal whoever is preaching next week, but notice, it says, now, now, there was a man.

[34:11] So, for he himself, for Jesus himself, knew what was in man. Now, there was a man of the Pharisees named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews.

This man came to Jesus by night and said to him, Rabbi, we know that you are a teacher come from God, for no one can do these signs, see signs again, that you do unless God is with him.

He's misunderstanding already. Jesus answered him, truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.

And he goes on, and we know the rest. And we'll take a closer look to that next week. But that cannot see the kingdom of God. And help us as we read this text throughout the week, I encourage you to pray for yourself, that you would think about what is the right worship of God in my daily life. Am I more about man, myself, or is my zeal more for God himself? Making God's name great and my name small.

[35:32] Are you praying for those things every day? I encourage you to do that. And so as we conclude, think about what I said in the beginning about Paul.

Paul writes to Timothy, for there is one mediator, no longer temple, but now Jesus. One mediator between God and men.

There's a great chasm between those two because of sin. But the man Christ Jesus, who gave himself as a ransom for all, which is the testimony given at the proper time.

We all respond to God's word. And if you are in Christ, I hope that you are encouraged by seeing what God has done and is doing and knowing what he will do by him saying and doing these things. And if you are not in Christ, if you do not trust him, he is the one mediator between your creator and you as the creation, you are created and because of sin, there has to be a mediator.

[36:47] And I encourage you to read this, ask questions to people you know who are in Christ who may be here with you and that we would all glorify him in our response to his word.

So in conclusion, pray with me.