



For Further Study



Read and meditate on the passage below:

¹³ When it was almost time for the Jewish Passover, Jesus went up to Jerusalem. ¹⁴ In the temple courts he found people selling cattle, sheep and doves, and others sitting at tables exchanging money. 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. ¹⁶ To those who sold doves he said, “Get these out of here! Stop turning my Father’s house into a market!” (John 2:13-16)

The above passage comes from John’s gospel, but instead of it being placed during the final days of Jesus’ life (as in the other gospel accounts), John places it at the beginning of Jesus’ ministry. It seems highly unlikely that this event would happen twice, especially in the aggressive and violent manner that John tells it. Surely, the religious leaders or even the Roman guards would not have permitted Jesus back into the building after such a “bar brawl.”

What Matthew, Mark, and Luke choose to emphasize as the last straw, leading to Jesus’ arrest, John shows from the very beginning of his story. Jesus is a threat to the religious and political system because he exposes their self-centered hypocrisy. Regardless of when and how frequently Jesus teaches this “embodied sermon,” the message is clear: God’s house should be based on kingdom economics not economic injustice.

Jesus turned over tables to show the need to turn over systems of neglect and oppression. This is not a violent outburst; it is a premeditated, intentional act to draw attention to the spiritual baptizing of ungodliness.



REFLECTION:

Consider things about our society that need to be turned over and changed.

PRACTICE:

What can you do (even if it is small) to change our society to be more just and Christ-like?