

**ZEALOUS FOR GOD**  
[jkroberts\\_us@yahoo.com](mailto:jkroberts_us@yahoo.com)  
[www.pacolethillsbaptist.org](http://www.pacolethillsbaptist.org)

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John 2:12-17

1. After performing the first sign or proof of His ministry Jesus, His family, and the five disciples that were with Him went down to Capernaum and stayed there for a few days.

2. Then Jesus joined the many pilgrims who were making their way up to Jerusalem for the Passover.

NOTE: The words up and down are in reference to elevation changes and not points on the compass.

3. In this passage we find Jesus taking deliberate and forceful action related to what He found going on in the Temple.

a. Standing in the Court of the Gentiles He observed animals being sold to be used as sacrifices and secular money being exchanged for Jewish coins.

b. As He took in the scene Jesus began to fashion a scourge (whip or lash) of cords (a type of rush or reeds).

c. At some point He acted, and began driving those who were doing business in the Temple out of the Temple, overturning tables, and commanding those involved to stop making His Father's house a place of merchandise.

NOTE: What was going on in the Temple was not a ministry; rather it was a for-profit venture overseen by the Jewish priests and leaders. Had this been a ministry to provide appropriate sacrifices at cost to those who traveled some distances to Jerusalem it might have been a different matter.

4. The practice of Judaism had become big business, a religion of convenience, and more show than substance.

5. His actions reminded His disciples of a Messianic passage found in the Old Testament.

Psalms 69:7-9

Because for Your sake I have borne reproach; dishonor has covered my face. 8 I have become estranged from my brothers and an alien to my mother's sons. 9 **For zeal for Your house has consumed me**, and the reproaches of those who reproach You have fallen on me.

NOTE: What consumes us, occupies our minds, arouses our emotions, or moves us to action?

6. This passage can provide much food for thought for those who are serious followers of the Lord Jesus Christ.

**I. Those who know and love God are going to manifest zeal related to the things of God.**

A. As Jesus observed what was taking place in the Temple He was filled with indignation.

B. We can tell a lot about where we are spiritually by what we get angry and indignant about.

C. Several Scripture passages immediately come to mind.

1. Ephesians 4:26-27, 30-32

BE ANGRY, AND yet DO NOT SIN; do not let the sun go down on your anger, 27 and do not give the devil an opportunity...30 Do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. 31 Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and slander be put away from you, along with all malice. 32 Be kind to one another, tender-hearted, forgiving each other, just as God in Christ also has forgiven you.

## 2. James 1:19-2019

This you know, my beloved brethren. But everyone must be quick to hear, slow to speak and slow to anger; 20 for the anger of man does not achieve the righteousness of God.

NOTE: Indignation that is the result of our relationship with God does achieve the righteous purposes of God.

### D. Paul pointed out the following in Titus 2:11-14.

For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all men, 12 instructing us to deny ungodliness and worldly desires and to live sensibly, righteously and godly in the present age, 13 looking for the blessed hope and the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Christ Jesus, 14 who gave Himself for us to redeem us from every lawless deed, and to purify for Himself a people for His own possession, zealous (one burning with zeal) for good deeds.

### E. Paul's life was an example of what a zealous life looks like. Philippians 3:7-16

But whatever things were gain to me, those things I have counted as loss for the sake of Christ. 8 More than that, I count all things to be loss in view of the surpassing value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them but rubbish so that I may gain Christ, 9 and may be found in Him, not having a righteousness of my own derived from the Law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which comes from God on the basis of faith, 10 that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death; 11 in order that I may attain to the resurrection from the dead. (that if possible I may attain to the spiritual and moral resurrection that lifts me out from among the dead even while in the body. 12 Not that I have already obtained it or have already become perfect, but I press on so **that I may lay hold of that for which also I was laid hold of by Christ Jesus.** 13 Brethren, I do not regard myself as having laid hold of it yet; but one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and reaching forward to what lies ahead, 14 I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus. 15 Let us therefore, as many as are perfect, have this attitude; and if in anything you have a different attitude, God will reveal that also to you; 16 however, let us keep living by that same standard to which we have attained.

F. In Revelation 3:19 Jesus confronted the lukewarm, self-satisfied, and misguided members of the church in Laodicea with, "Those whom I love, I reprove and discipline; therefore be zealous (burning with zeal) and repent."

## II. Our Lord is still concerned about what is going on in His temples.

A. Paul pointed out an important truth to the Athenians in Acts 17:24.

"The God who made the world and all things in it, since He is Lord of heaven and earth, does not dwell in temples made with hands."

B. Paul declared in I Corinthians that God now resides in us and in our churches in the person of the Holy Spirit.

1. While writing about the church in Corinth Paul stated, "Do you not know that you are a temple of God and that the Spirit of God dwells in you? 17 If any man destroys the temple of God, God will destroy him, for the temple of God is holy, and that is what you are."

1 Corinthians 3:16-17

2. When referencing individuals he wrote, "Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and that you are not your own? 20 For you have been bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body."

1 Corinthians 6:19-20

C. Jesus is fully aware of, and concerned about, what is going on in the life of His local body, the churches, and in the individual lives of those who make up those bodies.

1. Proverbs 15:3

The eyes of the Lord are in every place, watching the evil and the good.

2. Hebrews 4:12-13

For the word of God is living and active and sharper than any two-edged sword, and piercing as far as the division of soul and spirit, of both joints and marrow, and able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart. 13 **And there is no creature hidden from His sight, but all things are open and laid bare to the eyes of Him with whom we have to do.**

3. In Revelation, chapters one, two, and three we see Jesus, our Glorified Lord, in the midst of His churches, with eyes like a flame of fire, beholding the evil and the good.

### **III. Jesus is still able to cleanse His temples whether they be local bodies of believers or individual Christians.**

A. He took upon Himself our sins, atoned for those sins on Calvary's Cross, so that you and I might be clothed with His righteousness in the sight of God.

B. He has sent the Holy Spirit into our hearts so that we might be able to put to death the deeds of the body. Romans 8:12-14

So then, brethren, we are under obligation, not to the flesh, to live according to the flesh — 13 for if you are living according to the flesh, you must die; but if by the Spirit you are putting to death the deeds of the body, you will live.

C. He has promised in His Word that, "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." I John 1:9

D. He has clearly laid out in Scripture His plan and purpose for His churches.

### **APPLICATION**

1. We live in a day when much of what calls itself Christianity:

a. Has become big business; particularly here in America.

b. Has become a religion of convenience that requires little from its adherents.

c. Has become more show than substance; focusing on pleasing and entertaining people rather than pleasing and exalting God.

2. However those who desire it can have an intimate and growing relationship with God through the Lord Jesus Christ. Rev 3:19-22

"Those whom I love, I reprove and discipline; therefore be zealous and repent. 20 "Behold, I stand at the door and knock; if anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and will dine with him, and he with Me. 21 "He who overcomes (the present realities), I will grant to him to sit down with Me on My throne, as I also overcame and sat down with My Father on His throne. 22 "He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches."