

When Jesus cleared the Temple courtyards it must have come as a terrible shock to many people present at the time – I suspect His own disciples amongst them. The ‘after the event’ (post hoc) reference to Ps.69:9 may seem to justify Jesus’ action.

However, as usual, there was more going on than a casual reading would suggest. The stalls selling animals [for sacrifice] for example would have had a ‘cozy’ arrangement with the Temple authorities and, of course, one couldn’t use ‘ordinary’ money as a tithe, it had to be ‘pure’, meaning Temple coins which were exchanged at a very advantageous rate (for the Temple staff).

‘By what authority (right) do you do this?’ This question has been asked innumerable times by multitudes of people either by those in power or to those in power. The answer, all too often, is force.

Modern, Western, society has many ‘rights’ enshrined in statutes of law. It behoves us to remember that just because something is ‘a right’ doesn’t always make it right.

Read John 2:13 - 25

1. Why do you think that Jesus ‘went up to Jerusalem’ to celebrate Passover?
2. Jesus, apparently, made a distinction between the dove sellers and all the other traders. Why might that be?
3. Verse 19 could be seen as a ‘misdirection’, or as a later recollection added in (see vv. 21 & 22). What do you think?

4. Whilst Jesus was still alive, He refers to the time He would spend in the tomb after His crucifixion. Which ones can you think of?
5. Verse 19 highlights another recurring theme, that of asking Jesus to give ‘signs’ so that ‘they’ may believe. How do you explain your faith to others without ‘signs’?
6. What do you understand verse 22 to be saying about the faith of the disciples? What similarities can you find with, say, Lk 24:13-25?
7. Compare verse 18 with verse 23. What can we learn from what Jesus was doing and with whom?
8. Read verses 23 and 24 again. They tell us that ‘many people believed in Jesus . . . But Jesus would not entrust Himself to them’. What does that mean and why would Jesus be skeptical?
9. ‘Jesus knew all people’. What do you understand by that, both in a general and a personal sense?
10. Testimonies are important in all sorts of life experiences, from advertising to product reviews and especially in sharing our faith and at baptismal services. What do you understand verse 25 to mean where it states ‘He (Jesus) did not need any testimony about mankind?’

Prayer Points

Please pray for the ongoing conflict in Gaza and Israel. Pray for the needs of the poor, oppressed and those still held in captivity. Pray for peace in the region.

As the war in Ukraine continues into a fourth year, we pray for the Ukrainian Baptist Union and the hundreds of churches it supports, helping displaced Ukrainians maintain hope and a sense of purpose.

Sermon Notes



BIBLE STUDY

June 1st 2025

Clearing the way:

John 2:13-25

John 1–7 presents key themes that reveal Jesus' identity and mission. Jesus is the eternal Word of God, bringing light and life to a dark world. He calls people to believe in Him for eternal life, but many reject Him despite His miracles and teachings. A central theme is new birth—spiritual transformation through the Holy Spirit. Jesus offers living water and calls Himself the Bread of Life, showing He alone satisfies the soul. These chapters also highlight growing conflict and division, as people respond to Him with belief, confusion, or hostility. Through signs and deep conversations, Jesus reveals His divine nature and the offer of salvation to all, regardless of background or status.

If you would like to join a Connect Group, please contact the church office 01424 730001