

# Tale of Two Temples

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[ 0 : 00 ] This is the word of God, Luke 2, 41. And I'll read to the end of the chapter. And I'll read to the end of the chapter. Every year, speaking of the Lord Jesus, his parents went to Jerusalem for the feast of the Passover.

When he was 12 years old, they went up to the feast according to the custom. After the feast was over, while his parents were returning home, the boy Jesus stayed behind in Jerusalem. But they were unaware of it. Thinking he was in their company, they traveled on for a day. Then they began looking for him among their relatives and friends. When they did not find him, they went back to Jerusalem to look for him.

After three days, they found him in the temple courts, sitting among the teachers, listening to them and asking them questions. Everyone who heard him was amazed at his understanding and his answers.

When his parents saw him, they were astonished. His mother said to him, Son, why have you treated us like this? Your father and I have been anxiously searching for you.

[ 1 : 16 ] Why were you searching for me? He asked. Didn't you know I had to be in my father's house? But they did not understand what he was saying to them.

Then he went down to Nazareth with them and was obedient to them. But his mother treasured all these things in her heart. And Jesus grew in wisdom and stature and in favor with God and men. We can turn with me in your Bibles tonight to the Gospel of John in chapter 2. I know we read from Luke chapter 2.

That will give us a little background for some things we want to consider from John's Gospel in chapter 2 tonight. It is good to be with you all.

I was telling Sydney on the way here that I love coming back to Grace Fellowship Church in Bremen and getting to see you all and worship with you and to have the privilege of opening God's word to you.

[ 2 : 20 ] If you get a chance to talk to Sydney, you might be tempted as we sometimes are when we see someone from another place and go, Oh, you're from Africa. And you think of the one person that you know in Africa.

Africa is a really big place. And you say, Do you know Naftali Ogallo? And Sydney would say, Yes. Yes, he does know the one person from Africa that you might know.

And maybe you know more people from Africa, but they've crossed paths at conferences and we said, Hey, make sure that you meet Naftali at some point. And at some point they did. So anyway, yes, he does know Naftali.

And thankful that there's a testimony to the Gospel in different places all around the world. And that we have just a little reminder of that with us here tonight. So thank you for welcoming us.

And again, my joy to turn with you in the scriptures now to consider our Savior Jesus in John's Gospel. In Warsaw, at Grace Baptist Church, we've been making our way through John's Gospel.

[ 3 : 25 ] And I want to bring you tonight just a little bit of what we've considered there. And I want to ask you as we begin, how important to you is what happens here in God's house on the Lord's day?

How important is it to you? Is it really important what happens here in God's house on His day? Is it important but not really that important?

Other things could displace it without too much trouble. Or is it just not that important at all? Now, I want to commend you already tonight.

Just your presence here on a Sunday night tells me that it's important to you. And so I'm going to say some challenging and some hard things tonight about just how important it ought to be to us.

And for many of you, let it serve as a reminder of why you're here tonight. Because it really is that important to you what happens in God's house with His people on His day.

[ 4 : 26 ] And may it serve as a challenge to you. But if you're not sure how important it is to you what happens in God's house on His day, there's different ways you can gauge the answer to that question.

And I hope to help us think about that tonight. And I'll give you a few hints right up front by saying you can gauge how important it is to you by how high of a priority you make it to be here. By evaluating what you think about and what you do before you arrive.

And when you're here. Those things can help you think through how important it is to you what goes on here each day. And maybe it's not fair of me to just drop that on you up front.

How important is it to you what happens in God's house on His day? After all, you are here on a Sunday night. But I hope you'll see from the passage tonight why it's important to at least think about that question and to be encouraged by it.

And if we still need it, to be challenged by it in some ways. This passage gives us the opportunity to think about it further. And as we look at something that Jesus did early on in His ministry, I want you not just thinking about what happened then, but thinking about why it matters now.

[ 5 : 35 ] Why it matters today. What's its relevance for you here at Grace Fellowship Church in the year 2020? And I think the relevance has to do with how we view and treat the worship of God when we gather together as His people.

And so the consideration or the passage that we want to think together about tonight is Jesus cleansing the temple and some of the fallout that came after that. And so notice that with me from John's Gospel in chapter 2.

I want to pick up the reading at verse 13 and read down through the end of the chapter. Our focus will be verses 13 through 22, but I'm going to finish out the chapter in the reading. And so John 2, beginning at verse 13, this is the Word of God.

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.

[ 6 : 46 ] 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.

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.

And so from these verses tonight, I want us to think about a tale of two temples. The first temple that we want to think about is the Father's house.

[ 8 : 02 ] And the second temple that we want to think about is the Father's son. And I trust that you will see what I mean as we go. So we begin tonight with the Father's house, the first in our tale of two temples.

The occasion for what we're thinking about tonight is the Passover. The Passover was the Jewish celebration, you know this, of the night that God passed over the houses of the Israelites in Egypt that had the blood of the Passover lamb smeared on the doorpost and on the lintel over the door of their houses.

That was followed by a week-long feast of unleavened bread commemorating their hasty exodus from Egypt. You can read all about that in Exodus chapter 12 and 13.

The Passover, remembering that great event that pointed forward to Jesus, our Passover lamb.

The Passover meal and feast of unleavened bread had been celebrated on and off through Israel's history as their faithfulness and unfaithfulness came and went.

And as they found themselves more faithful or with a more faithful leader that led them to do so, they would remember that Passover celebration and other times they would not. And the remembrance of it would fall off.

[ 9 : 22 ] It would ebb and flow. But during the days of Christ, it appears it was in regular observance. And that was true for Jesus' family, for Joseph and Mary. And that's why I had us read Luke chapter 2.

And what you see there in verses 41 and 42 of Luke 2 where now his parents went to Jerusalem every year at the Passover feast. And when he was 12 years old, they went up according to custom.

It seemed to have been Jesus' practice from that famous trip that we just read about a little bit ago where he stayed behind. He gave his parents that scare. They thought he was with the group he was traveling with and he wasn't.

And they go back to Jerusalem and spend three days. We sometimes get a little nervous when we can't find our kids after about three minutes. Like, either they're in some sort of trouble like causing a problem or they're lost.

All right, three days they went and couldn't find their son. And when they did find him, they found him in the same place where we find him here in John chapter 2. In his father's house.

[ 10 : 28 ] Luke 2, 46. After three days, they found him in the temple sitting among the teachers listening to them and asking them questions. In verse 49, and he said to them, Why were you looking for me?

Did you not know that? It must be in my father's house. And that's why I'm calling the first temple in our tale of two temples the Father's house. Because that's what Jesus calls it.

Both in the Luke passage when he was 12 years old, and we just read it here in verse 16 at the beginning. This is the very beginning of Jesus' public ministry. He calls the temple his father's house.

And it seems that from early in his life, this was Jesus' practice to go to Jerusalem to celebrate the Passover. So we shouldn't be surprised to find him here at the beginning of his ministry in Jerusalem for that Passover feast commemorating that great event when the Lord brought his people out of Egypt, the Exodus.

And you'll find him there at the end of his life. You know what he's doing when he institutes the Lord's Supper with his disciples on the night in which he was betrayed the day before he's crucified. He's celebrating the Passover meal in Jerusalem with his disciples.

[ 11 : 38 ] This was the habit of our Savior to be there to commemorate what God had done. Jesus, who was himself the Passover lamb.

The problem, though, here at the beginning of his ministry is when he arrives in Jerusalem for the celebration of this Passover, he finds the temple crowded, not with worshipers, as it ought to have been, but with merchants, sellers of oxen and sheep and pigeons or doves, along with the animals that they were selling.

So there's the sellers of those things and then there's the things that they're selling. And so you can sort of imagine the cacophony in the temple courts with the animals making their noises, the money changers there as well, providing a service to the people.

It seems there were good reasons to have animals for sacrifice for sale and to have money changers there. It was more practical for those traveling from a distance, like Jesus, coming from Galilee in the north to Judea in the south.

More practical for them to be able to buy there the animals that they needed for offering for sacrifice than to bring them from where they lived.

[ 12 : 56 ] And so they were able to buy them there in Jerusalem. It seems the money changers also had a legitimate role. The temple tax could only be paid with a certain kind of coinage.

And the money changers for a fee would have provided an exchange of money. Just like when you go to a foreign country and you want some currency in that country, you can, for a fee, exchange your American dollars for whatever the currency is in that country.

They would do that so that you could have the only type of coinage that was accepted for the temple tax. So it seems there was a good reason for both sellers of oxen and sheep and pigeons or doves and for the money changers to be there.

Is it possible that they were in cahoots with the religious leaders to fleece the people and to charge them exorbitant prices and too high of an exchange rate? Yes.

In the other temple cleansing at the end of Jesus' ministry, Jesus calls it a den of robbers. Quoting Jeremiah. He doesn't say that here. They were providing a legitimate and needed service, whether they were doing it in a legitimate or corrupt way.

[14:09] The problem in view here in John's gospel is where they were doing it. It was in the temple. In the temple precincts.

And just one other note, maybe you noticed I implied there that there are two temple cleansings in the ministry of Jesus. One here at the beginning, Matthew, Mark, and Luke all recorded temple cleansing at the end of Jesus' ministry when he's there for that last Passover meal before his death. And I believe that the best explanation for finding one here at the beginning in John and one at the end in Matthew, Mark, and Luke is that there were two. I'm not going to get into all the reasons for that.

You want to have a conversation about that? That's great, but I think that's why there's two recorded. One at the beginning, one at the end. Some people think John thematically moves it up to the beginning. I think there were two temple cleansings.

But anyway, back to the where. The problem Jesus addresses in these things is that they're happening in the house of his father, the temple. And probably included there the temple precincts, including the court of the Gentiles where non-Jews were allowed to come into worship.

[15:17] And he's going to use a different word for temple a little bit later that probably refers just to the sanctuary proper, the sanctuary itself. And so some translations down in verse 20, or 19 and 20, some translations will say sanctuary instead of temple because it's a different word.

So the word up at the beginning when he's in the temple in verse 14, that probably includes all of the precincts, the court of the Gentiles, and the word later maybe just the sanctuary proper.

But regardless, there are things going on in the house of his father that ought not to be there. The enterprises of selling sacrificial animals and money changing should have been taking place somewhere else, outside the temple.

That's the problem. It's not what's happening, or even so much the way in which it's happening. It may have been illegitimate the way it was being done. That's quite possible. But the problem that Jesus has is the where.

It's happening in his father's house. And Jesus, who from childhood we see has a love for his father's house. As we just sang, I love thy kingdom, Lord, flowing out of that passage where we see Jesus in his father's house.

[16:29] He loved his father's house. He's consumed, it says here, with zeal for his father's house. And the disciples at some point would remember what David said and apply it to Jesus here in verse 17.

For it stands written, and it's quoted from Psalm 69 in verse 9, which says, Zeal for the house for your house has consumed me. And the reproaches of those who reproach you have fallen on me. Zeal for the house of God consumed David. And for David, that would have been the tabernacle. Remember, he wanted to build the temple, but that felt to Solomon to do. But zeal for the place where God met with his people, his house, consumed David, and that foreshadowed the zeal that the Son of God would have for the house of his father that we see here in this passage.

That house, the temple, was to be the place of meeting between God and men, a place where God is worshipped. And these sellers and money changers and their wares had made it something else entirely.

Not a house of worship, but a house of trade. A house of market. Instead of the house of God. It would have become something it shouldn't have been.

[17:44] It was not designed to be. And so Jesus makes a scourge of cords and he does three things in verse 15.

He throws them all out and the sheep and the oxen. He pours out the coins of the money changers and he overturns their tables.

And then he has something to say in verse 16. To the sellers of the pigeons or the doves, he says, to take away these things from here, do not make the house of my father a house of market.

Do you think it matters to Jesus what happens in his father's house? Oh, you better believe it does.

I don't know if Jesus could show us any more clearly that it matters to him what happens in his father's house. Jesus, who we just sang earlier, who has the true and perfect gentleness, was willing to make a whip and to drive out those who were doing what they ought not to be doing in his father's house.

[ 19 : 04 ] It must have been a striking thing to see the Savior do this, both at the beginning and at the end of his ministry. Such was his concern for what went on in his father's house.

Now, I want to make another quick note here. Jesus cleansing the temple is sometimes used as a justification for Christians to take a militant and hostile tone and action in dealing with opponents of the gospel instead of maybe a more gentle proclamation of the truth.

So, for example, someone writes a scathing blog post or Facebook comment from a Christian perspective defending Christianity, speaking up for Christ in a way that is just, yeah, scathing. And someone else will come along and say, shouldn't you be more gentle? Shouldn't you be speaking the truth in love and be more winsome? And they will say, yeah, but Jesus cleansing the temple wasn't gentle or winsome.

Well, it was Jesus the sinless one and who could do things like that without sinful anger.

[ 20 : 26 ] And of course, anger isn't mentioned at all in this passage. I don't think you have to picture here an out-of-control Jesus who's just flipped his lid and is going crazy.

All the things that Jesus does here you can do in a zealous and a measured way. I do think that Jesus had righteous anger. I think you see it in his actions even though that word isn't mentioned there.

But regardless, while there is a place for us to have righteous anger and to express it, be angry and do not sin, Ephesians 4.26, our remaining sin makes it very difficult for us to do so.

to have righteous anger and to express it in a righteous way. Jesus didn't lose his temper because to do so would have been to sin.

Often, even when our anger has righteous origins, we lose our temper and we express it in a sinful way. Even when there is a righteous cause which drives us towards that anger.

[ 21 : 38 ] And so in light of all the clear scriptural exhortations to be gentle and to speak the truth in love, I think we should simply use the example of Jesus here with great care and with great caution.

Not as a blanket. Yeah, well, Jesus did that so I can be as scathing and as harsh and as righteously angry as we see here.

Be careful how you use the example of Jesus. Let me give you a quote from Calvin on that point.

He says, all of us ought to have zeal in common with the Son of God. But all are not at liberty to seize a whip that we may correct vices with our hands for we have not received the same power nor have we been entrusted with the same commission.

We don't have the same role that Jesus did. And so careful how you use his example. Jesus cleanses the temple. He removes those who are doing things that may have been legitimate in and of themselves but they're doing them in the wrong place.

He drives them out. What's the importance and the relevance for us here where we have no temple, there's no animals for sale out in the foyer there. What's the relevance for us here?

[ 22 : 50 ] And here's where the question that we ask at the beginning begins to come into sharper focus. How important to you is what happens here in the house of God each Lord's Day.

And I ask because it was so clearly important to Jesus. And shouldn't what's important to our Savior be important to us?

Shouldn't the things our Savior loves be the things that we love? The zeal for his father's house consumed him. We can't say this was a matter of small importance to Jesus.

It wasn't. It was very important and so it must be for us as well. Maybe you say though that was the temple and we don't have that anymore. Well, the New Testament clearly points in several places to the church.

The gathering of the people of God as the temple of God. I'll give you one example and we could look at others. Ephesians chapter 2 verses 20 and 21. So then you are no longer strangers and aliens but you are fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God.

[ 23 : 57 ] Now that word household isn't the same as the house of God but it's a similar word. Members of the household of God built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets Christ Jesus himself being the cornerstone in whom the whole structure being joined together grows into a holy temple in the Lord.

The New Testament makes that connection. It calls the church the New Testament church the temple of God. And this is where the people of God meet with God.

Now that's what the tabernacle was it was temple was it was the place of God meeting with his people. And that is what the church in the New Testament is. What does Jesus say? Where two or three are gathered in my name there am I in their midst.

Where does God meet with his people? With the Lord Jesus Christ when his people gather together. I'm going to give away the payoff here but Jesus is the temple.

Where he is where his people meet in his name they're meeting they're tabernacling they're gathering together with God in that place.

[ 25 : 07 ] And so again what does that mean for us? This is the father's house where his people gathered it's not about this building this is the place where you meet but if all of you were gathered together in the parking lot that would be the father's house okay it's where the people are with Jesus in their midst.

How important to you then is what happens here and when I say here again not the location but this gathering of the people of God. Well you might gauge it in different ways and this this first one isn't exactly to the point of this passage but I think it's related.

You might be able to tell how important it is to you by how much of a priority it is for you to be here with God's people. And again you're here you're here on a Sunday night you're to be commended. Let this reinforce that for you. I'm glad that I'm here on Sunday maybe you're starting to wonder is it worth coming on Sunday night or on Sunday at all? Be encouraged that it is.

So how much of a priority is it for you to be here? How hard is it to displace from your life the worship of God with his people? Is it really hard to move this off of your schedule?

[ 26 : 25 ] Off of your calendar? Or is it pretty easy? How high of a priority is it for you to be here? Jesus clearly loved being in the Father's house. They came every year for Passover.

How important is it for you? How high of a priority do you make it? Will you move heaven and earth to make sure that you don't miss an opportunity to be in God's house worshiping with God's people?

Or is a vacation or a snuffle or a busy weekend or just feeling tired, is that enough to keep you away? If what happens here is important as Jesus shows us, then we will be in church.

We will be with God's people in his house on his day. How high of a priority do you make it? What's another way to gauge your answer to this question? How important is it to you what happens in God's house here each Lord's Day?

Well, how do you treat it? When you're here, are you fully engaged or are you heavily distracted? Do you remember and think about and meditate on who it is that you are coming to worship?

[ 27 : 37 ] The all power, think about this. They're just words that we rattle off. The all powerful, all-knowing, sovereign, holy God who created you and before whom you will one day stand to be judged as the one that you are coming to worship.

Do you think about that when you come? What is the way that you worship? Show about how you think about God and the importance of what happens here.

Do you prepare for this time together so as to give God the most glory and to get the most benefit from it? Do you prepare by getting enough rest, by reminding yourself of God's faithfulness and His provision and His gospel?

Preaching that to yourself before you ever even get here. By remembering. That's what Israel so often didn't do. They remembered. They forgot. They went astray. Before you come, do you remember how God has been faithful to you just in the previous week?

And remembered His faithfulness and provision. Remembering who God is, praying and reading and meditating on His word and reminding your family of where you're headed that morning and what you're doing and why you're going.

[ 28 : 46 ] Do you prepare? If what happens here is important as Jesus shows us here, then you'll prepare. You think about things that are really important.

You've got a presentation that you're going to give at work. And you know it's really important. And so you prepare. You know, go in sort of half-hearted and I think I've got a handout for you here.

And there's no reflection on not having a empty spirit. You don't you're a great distraction. There is you don't go in just kind of half.

If there's something important, you're going on a big trip, a big vacation with your family. You've got your packing list and you get it all together and you make sure you've got everything so that you are ready so that you're able to fully enjoy that time with your family and that trip and make sure that it's either as active or as restful as you want your vacation to be and you make sure.

Do you do any preparation when you come to do something that's far more important than a presentation at work or a vacation? You prepare. When you're here, are you carefully engaged in praying and singing and giving and listening to the word read and preached or are you distracted and just going through the motions?

[ 30 : 01 ] Right now, could you tell me any of the hymns that we sang earlier, the truths that are contained in them? I hope so. I think many of you could. Maybe all of you. Where do we sometimes show up with no forethought, find ourselves distracted throughout with little focus, little effort to focus, and walk away wondering why we didn't really get very much out of it?

Ask it this way. What would Jesus throw out of here if he walked in here today? What would he be bothered by at Grace Fellowship Church?

If he came in here and to this local representation of his father's house? Is there anything you would throw out? Is there anyone to whom you would say, why are you doing that here?

Why have you turned my father's house into a house of fill in the blank? Anything taking place here that should not be? Maybe it's our wandering thoughts to the world, the things of the world, the cares and the concerns that we have, what's on the calendar for the rest of the week, who we have to meet tomorrow, how we have to get ready for the week, maybe the game that was on earlier this afternoon, maybe you're thinking about how many episodes of your favorite show that you can binge watch tonight before you go to bed and still get enough sleep for tomorrow.

Maybe it's our distracted thoughts. What are you thinking about that for in my father's house?

Maybe there's more concrete things that pull our thoughts away from worship.

[ 31 : 33 ] How about our phones or other devices? Nothing wrong with the phone. I know you use it for your Bible. And I'm not saying it's wrong to have a phone with you.

Okay, I've got one. I said, well, it's in my coat. But typically it's with me when I'm in the father's house. Okay, you didn't hear me say you got to get rid of your phone, but just think with me for a moment.

Everything else that your phone does, besides being a Bible, it doesn't stop doing just because you walk through these doors. And so if we're doing email and texting and checking Facebook and Instagram and playing games and tweeting during worship, I would say we're right in the category of things that are fine in and of themselves, but that Jesus would not be happy to find in his father's house.

Because they're not worship. They're not helping us worship. Distracting us from it. You didn't hear me say you can't bring a phone to church, okay? You didn't hear me say that.

If you heard me say that, you weren't listening. But what do you use it for? How might it affect our thoughts and our actions here if we were better about remembering what we see in this passage today, that this is our father's house and that Jesus is zealous for what happens here?

[ 32 : 52 ] Would we come better prepared to worship? Would we remember that God takes worship seriously and be more inclined to do so ourselves? Would we remember that while we have access into the presence of God, that he is still a God worthy of reverence and all?

That he's still a consuming fire? Would we come waltzing in with little seriousness? Would we come in here with just sort of moderate joy? joy if we really remembered who God is and what it is that we do here?

Or would we come overflowing with joy and with an abundance of reverence for the God to whom we come? What do you think about before you arrive here?

What do you think about and talk about when you're here? Is your focus on the worship of the living God? Or is it just socializing? Checking your religious duty box for the week?

I know I'm supposed to. I did it. Going through the motions, no big deal. Worship in the Father's house mattered to Jesus.

[ 33 : 55 ] And it should matter to us. That's the first temple that I want us to think about. Tale of two temples, remember? One is the Father's house. The second is the Father's son.

There's another temple in view in this passage. Now, Jesus cleanses the temple and there's not really any record of any rebellion against Jesus cleansing of the temple.

It appears that the offenders left. But the Jews, you see in verse 18, aren't terribly pleased or at least they have a question. What sign do you show us that you do these things? And in some ways, it's a reasonable question.

what Jesus did was quite a thing to be done. I mean, who is this guy that just marched in here and just turned everything on its head?

Whoa! What right do you have to be here? What sign do you do to show us that you have a right to be here? In other ways, they should have known what was going on was unacceptable for the Father's house.

[ 34 : 58 ] And so, with the Messiah in front of them, whether they want to recognize that or not, they ask for a sign. And the Apostle John in his gospel is very careful to show us certain signs that Jesus does.

But they are not party tricks to be done on demand. But they are to be done in God's time and accord with his plan to reveal his Son as Savior and King. And so, Jesus doesn't perform a sign right on the spot when they say, what sign do you perform to show us that you have a right to do this?

for doing these things. He doesn't show them a sign. But, in a veiled way that not even his disciples understood until much later, he points them to the sign of his own resurrection.

He points them to the destruction of the temple and raising it up in three days. I'm going to use that different word for temple there. That word, some places you'll see translated sanctuary.

sanctuary. And, of course, the Jews take him literally as is to be expected, referring to how long it had taken thus far to build the temple, 46 years. There's other ways to take that time reference, but regardless, they don't see any way that Jesus could raise such a structure as they were in at that moment, in three days.

[ 36 : 15 ] What are you talking about? You're nuts. It's not possible. But Jesus was talking about the temple of his body. He was pointing to something far different.

And this is that second temple in our tale of two temples. The temple of his body. This is the God-man. God and man in one person. And so he is our Emmanuel, God with us.

Which is what God in the tabernacle was. God with his people. God in the temple. God with his people. And now, it is in Christ. God with us. It's not in a building.

It's in a person. The person of our Savior Jesus. Earlier, John said that Jesus came and tabernacled among us. The word became flesh and dwelt.

Tabernacled among us. John 1.14 The way God dwells with his people now is not in a physical building, but in the presence of Christ. And so you get to the end of the New Testament. Revelation 21.22 shows us Jesus as the temple in the new heavens and the new earth.

[ 37 : 20 ] Jesus who says where two or three are gathered in my name, there am I among them. Tear him down. Jesus.

Tear him down and he will rise in three days. And later, the disciples would remember what Jesus says here. It's too bad they didn't think of it when Jesus died. They might have viewed his death a little bit differently.

But later they would remember. Eventually, once Jesus is raised and they saw him, they would remember. So these opponents of Jesus, they want a sign.

Okay. Jesus says, my authority to cleanse my father's house comes from the fact that I am the temple. I know how God dwells with his people.

And you have defiled this physical temple, this house of God, this meeting place of God with his people. And you are going to defile this temple. You're going to destroy the temple of my body. And when I rise from the dead, there's going to be no question about who has the authority to cleanse the temple.

[ 38 : 22 ] Because I am the temple. And so Jesus almost issues a dare. It comes in the form of command, tear this temple down. And in three days, I will raise it up.

And in so doing, foretells his resurrection from the dead. And those words stand as a testimony against those who reject him and a bright beacon of hope for those who put their faith in him.

And for us, this is further reason to put our faith in this Lord Jesus Christ. The apostle John and his gospel is on a mission.

John wants his readers, and that's you. He wants his readers to believe that Jesus is the Christ. The Son of God.

And in believing, to find life in his name. That's what John wants. The apostle John wants you to believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and in believing, to find life in his name.

[ 39 : 30 ] John wants you to have eternal life. He wants you to believe in the Savior Jesus. And so as John writes his gospel, he's building his case. For Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, the source of eternal life.

And this is one of the building blocks in his case for who Jesus is. This Jesus who had the authority to cleanse the temple. This Jesus who would die and three days later rise from the grave. This Jesus who foretells his death and resurrection three years before it happens. Another reason for you to think, you know what? This historical Jesus, this real man that walked the earth. He foretold his own death and resurrection. And guess what happened? His death and three days later his resurrection. He's a prophet to be believed.

A true prophet. Prophet foretells something and it doesn't come to pass. You know what you should do with that prophet? You should not listen to it anymore. But if a prophet foretells something and it comes to pass, you know what you should do?

[ 40 : 33 ] You should believe him. And do you see what it says in verse 22? When therefore his disciples, 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.

Which are one in the same. They believe the scripture, probably Old Testament references to Jesus' resurrection. resurrection. And the word of Jesus.

The scriptures are the word of God. Jesus is the word of God. And Jesus here fits the bill for a true prophet. What he says comes to pass. So John is just, he's making his case bit by bit that you should believe in this Jesus.

And you read all of John's gospel, you see all the other reasons that you should believe in him. But here's another one. He's a true prophet. What he says happens. Do you believe him? If you do, you'll find eternal life.

And many of you have put your faith in this Jesus. And here is where any guilt that we may be feeling at the shortcomings in our worship of God. Maybe, maybe you're convicted by something tonight.

[ 41 : 43 ] I don't view what happens here as important as Jesus did. And it shows in the way I prepare. It shows in what I do when I'm here and the way I think when I'm here. And by how much of a priority I make. Maybe you feel some guilt, some conviction at some of that.

Here is where that guilt finds its answer. Jesus was destroyed, torn down, hung on a cross to pay for your and my sins of worship.

When we worship in ways that are not appropriate, in ways that are not wholehearted, when we worship the wrong thing, Jesus paid for those sins on the cross.

And he rose from the dead, conquering the ultimate penalty for your sin and mine and your shortcomings and mine. And so, brothers and sisters, Jesus has the authority to come and to clean up your worship and the way that you treat the house of the father, because without him, you have no right or ability to be here.

Without him, there is no father's house. He dictates what happens in the temple because he is the temple. And he has the power to forgive your failures in this area and every other area of your life as well.

[ 42 : 58 ] Because he's the one who died and who rose again from the dead. He is the God man, the one who can represent and then before God, the one who is the dwelling place of God with man. What a savior is this who who wounds our consciences and binds up the wounds.

Do you trust him? Do you believe this Jesus who knew his own death and resurrection were coming? Do you believe this Jesus who knows all things is going to go on and and it says many believed when they saw the signs that he was doing, but their faith was a temporary faith.

And look what he says in verse 25 needed no one to bear witness about man for he himself knew what was in man. And he's going to show that with Nicodemus in chapter three and the woman at the well at chapter four. He knows, you know what?

You can't hide from God. He knows exactly everything about you. He knows exactly what is in your heart tonight, whether you are a true worshiper of God or a pretender worshiper of God or one who is just here because your parents brought you here or one who's just here because you're going through the motions and you know you don't truly have faith.

He knows all of it. You can't hide any of it from him. It's another reason you should believe in him. He knows all things about all men, including every single one of you and me. What does he know about you tonight?

[ 44 : 19 ] Does he know you that you're a true worshiper that falls short and so you come to the cross? Does he know that you're a forgiven sinner saved by grace that you have faith in him?

If you do have faith in him, praise him today. Seek forgiveness afresh for your shortcomings and how you view access to God and his house through Christ. Come and worship him here each Lord's day.

Prepare. Give your energy and your effort and your focus. Delight in the reality of Jesus' words about his resurrection that they proved absolutely true and reliable. You worship a risen and reigning and reliable Savior.

If you put your faith in him, delight in that. Delight that there's forgiveness for your sins, for your failures, for your shortcomings, and that he deems it or that he is willing to meet with you, to be the dwelling place of God with men.

Praise God for that. And if you don't have faith in this Jesus, I pray that you will come and truly trust him. And if you do, you will find eternal life just like John writes about all through his gospel.

[ 45 : 30 ] You'll find eternal life. And if you do, you come and put faith in Jesus and find that eternal life, then you'll be glad to come and worship with his people. It won't always be easy. You'll find that there are obstacles and distractions that will have to be overcome and fought through.

But you will be glad to come and worship with the people of God. And so may God do us good by his word tonight. May he encourage us to be worshipers of him, true worshipers that view as what happens in his house, on his day with his people, as important to us as it is to Jesus.

And for some of you, may you come to see that importance for the first time and put your faith in this Savior who is worthy of your faith. Amen. Let's pray together. Our Father, we thank you for your house.

We thank you for the privilege of being in the presence of our Savior Jesus on this your day. And we pray that we would view it as important as our Savior did, that we would treat it as such.

And where we have not, we pray that you would forgive us. And we thank you for your intercession on our behalf, Jesus. We thank you that you did rise on the third day.

[ 46 : 40 ] And that you now sit at the right hand of the Father. And that you plead the merit of your sacrifice before his throne so that we can find forgiveness afresh. And so we do worship you.

We do proclaim the worth of your name in this place on this day. Glad to have been here together with the people of God. And we pray that as we go from here, you would do us good.

And that we would go through this week remembering our Savior is with us, eagerly anticipating when we will be able to gather again in the house of the Father on the next Lord's Day.

We thank you for that privilege that we have through our Savior, Jesus, in whose name we pray. Amen.