

Don't Settle for Fake Worship

John 2:12-25

Some time after the wedding in Cana (2:1-11), Jesus traveled from Cana to Capernaum and then on to Jerusalem for the Passover Feast. While in Jerusalem, he cleanses the temple and addresses the nature of true worship. Through his actions, Jesus demonstrates that *worship is not a busy, commercial activity. True worship is centered on Christ himself.*

Jesus' initial stay in Capernaum (12)

Some time after the wedding in Cana, Jesus traveled from Cana to Capernaum.

Jesus is accompanied by family members and his first disciples.

Jesus' first visit to Jerusalem (13-22)

As a Jew who obeyed the Mosaic Law, Jesus went to Jerusalem to celebrate the Passover (13). The Jewish historian, Josephus, indicated that as many as three million Jews occupied Jerusalem during the Passover Feast.

Entering the Court of the Gentiles in the temple complex, Jesus encountered the marketplace where sacrificial animals were sold and money was exchanged (14). While the practice started as a convenience for travelers, it had become a major source of income for the city and religious leaders.

Jesus did not protest the sacrificial system. He protested that “busyness” and “business” had crowded out worship (15-16).

Jesus' action demonstrated a “zeal for” the proper use of the temple and ultimately for God's glory (17). His actions recalled the Old Testament prophecies that the Messiah would come and purify the Levites (Malachi 3:1-3).

The Jewish leaders were not concerned with justice, but wanted to know what authority Jesus had to do what he did (18). They asked him to prove his authority with a sign or miracle.

Jesus gave them a sign, but not the one they wanted. They wanted an immediate demonstration. Instead, Jesus announced a miracle that would vindicate his authority after he died (19).

The Jews thought Jesus was talking about the physical temple (20). In contrast, Jesus was talking about his body and his death and resurrection (21).

It was after the resurrection that Jesus' disciples finally understood what he was saying (22).

The initial response to Jesus in Jerusalem (23-25)

Jesus performed a number of signs in Jerusalem, which convinced people to acknowledge him as God (23).

Jesus did not entrust himself to people because he knew their initial faith was based on the miracles, and would evaporate in time (24-25).

Application

True worship is not limited to a building or certain rituals.

How we worship reveals what we think about God.

Don't allow busyness to keep you from worship.

If Jesus came to our church or your life today, would he make a whip out of pew rope and clean house, or would he praise God for what is taking place?