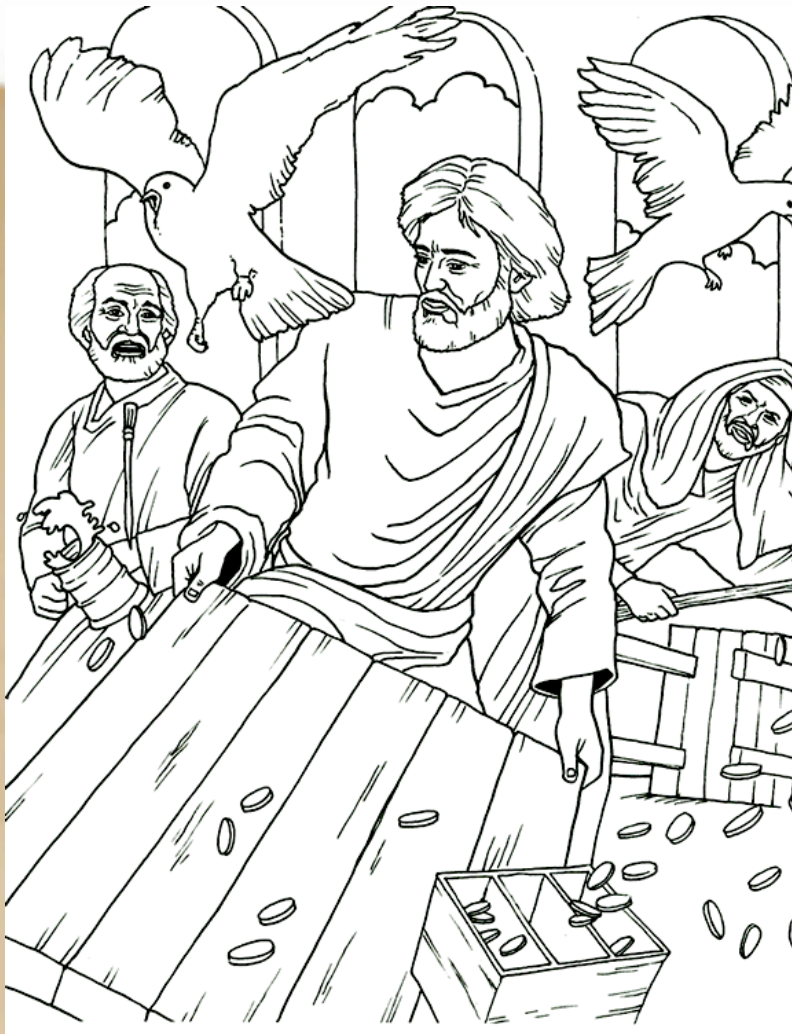


January 19, 2013

## Lesson 15: Cleansing the Temple



### John 2:13-25

The Passover of the Jews was near, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem. In the temple he found people selling cattle, sheep, and doves, and the money-changers seated at their tables. Making a whip of cords, he drove all of them out of the temple, both the sheep and the cattle. He also poured out the coins of the money-changers and overturned their tables. He told those who were selling the doves, 'Take these things out of here! Stop making my Father's house a market-place!' His disciples remembered that it was written, 'Zeal for your house will consume me.' The Jews then said to him, 'What sign can you show us for doing this?' Jesus answered them, 'Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up.' The Jews then said, 'This temple has been under construction for forty-six years, and will you raise it up in three days?' But he was speaking of the temple of his body. After 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.

When he was in Jerusalem during the Passover festival, many believed in his name because they saw the signs that he was doing. But Jesus on his part would not entrust himself to them, because he knew all people and needed no one to testify about anyone; for he himself knew what was in everyone.

# Cleansing the Temple

John 2:13-25

"But he was speaking of the temple of his body."

January 19, 2013

**The Big Story Truth:** Jesus is God's presence on earth! He is the new temple.

**About This Scripture Passage:** In Jesus' day, the temple in Jerusalem was being rebuilt. The one Solomon had built was destroyed by the Babylonians, but sometime around 19 BC the people were able to begin rebuilding the temple. In this scene today, the new temple is still under construction. Even as it is still being built, though, it is being used for worship and the day that Jesus appeared in the temple was one of the biggest worship days of the whole year. This was the time when people would have been traveling from all over to come to Jerusalem and make their required sacrifices. What was going on in the temple was absolutely necessary for fulfilling the law. They would have been traveling and needing to buy the animals for sacrifice. They would have needed to exchange their foreign currencies. Jesus

overthrowing tables is about more than injustices (although there probably was that going on too). Jesus is overturning the whole temple system. And Jesus' authority to do that is based on the fact that he is now God's presence on earth. It used to be that the temple and the ark of the covenant were where God was present with humanity. That changed though with Jesus. Jesus is the "temple" -- he is the place where God will meet humanity.



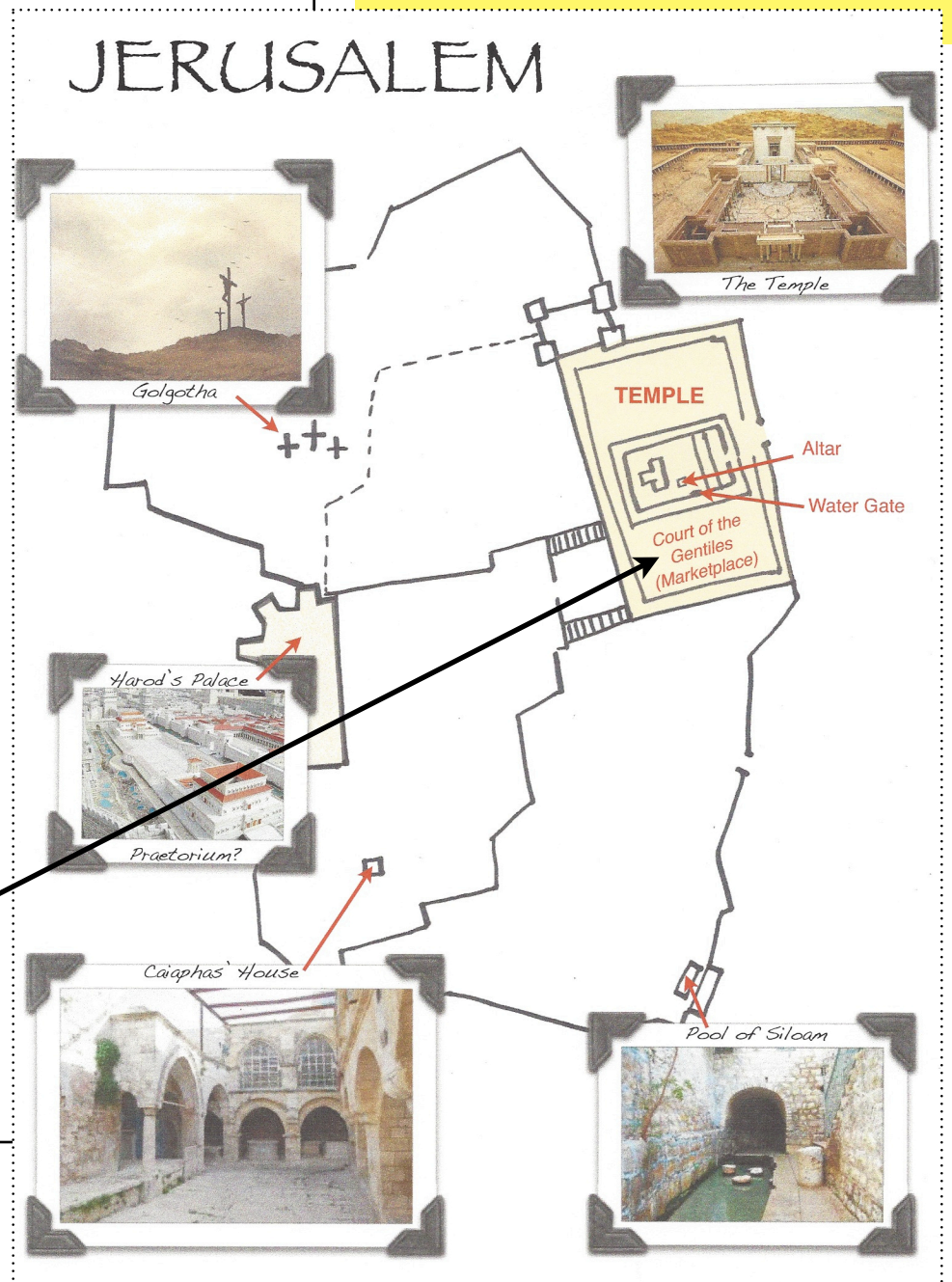


**Making the Connection:** The Greek word for house is “oikos.” Perhaps our kids will remember this word from Vacation Bible School. Jesus is announcing something big in this passage. Before Jesus, God’s house was the temple. But Jesus is announcing that he is God’s “house” or God’s home among people. Jesus is God made flesh. Jesus is God’s presence with us! This was a new concept to those who were in the temple that day! Later on in the New Testament, Paul talks about our bodies also being a “temple of God” because God has given us the gift of the Holy Spirit. Because the Holy Spirit lives in us, our bodies too are temples! What an amazing opportunity this lesson is to talk to kids about God living and breathing and moving and working in the world! God refuses to be confined to a single place or boxed into one particular spot. God is present in flesh! God is present in Jesus, and God is even present in us!

**Where in the World Are We?** The temple was in Jerusalem. The buying and selling would have been done in the outer courts (the Court of Gentiles) that everyone, even non-Jews, could access.

## For Your Reflection:

*Does hearing that your body is a temple of God change your self-image? If so, what difference does it make to you to hear these words this week? During this week and beyond, how might we encourage our children to see the holiness of their bodies?*





# *Large Group Gathering*

Say: Welcome everyone! I have a question for you before we get started this morning. Who knows what a “commotion” is? A commotion is something confusing and noisy. Today in our lesson we are going to learn about a time when Jesus made a big commotion in the temple! So we’re going to need some help from your families this morning. We need to make some instruments that will help us make a commotion of our own this morning to celebrate God’s holiness. Families, there are some supplies set up on a table in the front here for you to come up and make your instruments.

Give directions for families on how they can put a few beans or corn kernels in a plastic easter egg to make a maraca; wrap sandpaper around jello boxes to make to make their own sand block instruments; spoons on pan lids for cymbals, etc.

When each family has had a chance to make their instruments say: **We are going to learn in our lesson and in church today about Jesus’ holy commotion. In fact, we are going to help in worship today make a commotion during one of the songs. So, get your instruments because we need to practice making a big, noisy commotion during this song.**

Teach kids and their families the hymn “You Are Holy” (number 525 in the ELW hymnal). Remember to tell your pastor that the kids are up for helping with this hymn this morning!

As time allows, continue with the Family Faith 5 and then dismiss to classes.

# Family Faith 5

January 19, 2014

1. Each person shares their high and low (the best and worst things that happened this week.)

2. Read together this Bible Verse:

“But he was speaking of the temple of his body. After 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.”

3. Talk about how the Bible verse relates to your highs and lows.

4. Pray aloud for one another's highs and lows.

5. Bless one another. Make the sign of the cross on each other's heads and say these words: \_\_\_\_\_, you are God's beloved treasure!

# Preschool

## **Materials Needed:**

- Pillow case or box a child can reach into without seeing what's inside
- Toy cow
- Toy sheep
- Toy dove (or bird)
- Money
- Toy table (doll table)
- Piece of cord or rope
- Small doll (1 or more)
- Felt fabric figurines prepare ahead of time (see directions below)

## **Before the Children Arrive:**

Place the toys/dolls/money/etc. inside the pillowcase (or box) you'll call your Adventure bag or box. Make Jesus figurines for each student by tracing around a gingerbread cookie cutter to make a human shape on a piece of white felt. Cut out another piece of white felt to match. Stitch around the outside of the figurines, stuffing in a small bit of batting just before stitching the figurine closed.

## **Experiencing the Story:**

Greet children and ask them to sit in a storytelling circle on the floor or at your table. When all have entered, get out your adventure bag and say: **Good morning! I'm glad you can all be here! I need your help today telling our story! Here's how you can help. This is an adventure bag. Inside here are all the things that will help us tell our story this morning. I need you to reach in and pull out 1 thing.** Go around the circle and have each child pull out one item.

Say: Now, as I read the story, listen carefully for the part where we talk about your thing. When we say your thing, hold it up high so everyone can see it! Don't worry, I'll help you know when it's your time.

Read the story of Jesus in the Temple:

**One day, Jesus was visiting the temple. He was very surprised by what he saw there. He saw people** (raise up the doll) **selling cattle** (raise the toy cow), **sheep** (raise the toy sheep), **and doves** (raise the toy bird). **And there were people taking money** (hold up the money) **and not being being fair!** Jesus was so angry. (Have kids make an angry face and growl). **God's temple was supposed to be a place for praying and worshiping God!** Jesus was so angry that he made a big COMMOTION. Jesus turned over all the tables (hold up a toy table) and threw them to the ground. He took some cord (hold up the cord/rope) and made a whip out of it to chase everyone away. Even the sheep (hold up the toy sheep) and the cattle (hold up the toy cattle). And he told everyone who was selling stuff to get out! Some people were confused. What was going on? What made Jesus so important that he could tell everyone in the temple what to do? So the questioned Jesus. But Jesus' answer was amazing. (Say this next part with drama) Jesus said that God was still with the people... but not just living in the temple building. Jesus is God! Jesus came to be God With Us!

### Activity Options:

**Jesus Doll/Figures-** Give each student a felt figurine. Talk about how Jesus felt when he saw people buying and selling and not being fair in God's house. He was angry! Have the kids make their faces look angry. Look around. Notice what makes a face look angry. Then, have them draw a face on one side of their figurine that looks like Jesus when he was angry. After they have finished that, talk about how good it is to know that Jesus is God With Us. That's a happy feeling! Have the kids make their own faces look happy. Look around. Notice what makes a face look happy. Have kids draw the other side of the figurine looking happy. If you have time, read the story again, this time having the kids hold up their Jesus figurines looking angry during the first part of the story and turning to happy when they hear the good news that Jesus is God!

**Game: Bird-Bird-Free Bird-** Play a variation of Duck Duck Goose using the animals from today's story: bird, cow, sheep.

**Snack-** Chocolate coins and marshmallow peeps in the shape of birds.



# *Early Elementary*

## **Materials Needed:**

- Pillow case or box a child can reach into without seeing what's inside
- Toy cow
- Toy sheep
- Toy dove (or bird)
- Money
- Toy table (doll table)
- Piece of cord or rope
- Small doll (1 or more)
- Unsharpened pencil with eraser (1 per student)
- Thumbtack (1 per student)
- 1 and 1/2 inch by 16 inch strip of thin cardboard (1 per student)
- Markers or crayons

## **Before the Students Arrive:**

Place the toys/dolls/money/etc. inside the pillowcase (or box) you'll call your Adventure bag or box.

## **Experiencing the Story:**

Greet children and ask them to sit in a storytelling circle on the floor or at your table. When all have entered, get out your adventure bag and say: **Good morning! I'm glad you can all be here! I need your help today telling our story! Here's how you can help. This is an adventure bag. Inside here are all the things that will help us tell our story this morning. I need you to reach in and pull out 1 thing.** Go around the circle and have each child pull out one item.

Say: Now, as I read the story, listen carefully for the part where we talk about your thing. When we say your thing, hold it up high so everyone can see it! Don't worry, I'll help you know when it's your time.

Read the story of Jesus in the Temple:

**One day, Jesus was visiting the temple. He was very surprised by what he saw there. He saw people (raise up the doll) selling cattle (raise the toy cow), sheep (raise the toy sheep), and doves (raise the toy bird). And there were people taking money (hold up the money) and not being being fair! Jesus was so angry. (Have kids make an angry face and growl). God's temple was supposed to be a place for praying and worshiping God! Jesus was so angry that he made a big COMMOTION. Jesus turned over all the tables (hold up a toy table) and threw them to the ground. He took some cord (hold up the cord/rope) and made a whip out of it to chase everyone away. Even the sheep (hold up the toy sheep) and the cattle (hold up the toy cattle). And he told everyone who was selling stuff to get out! Some people were confused. What was going on? What made Jesus so important that he could tell everyone in the temple what to do? So the questioned Jesus. But Jesus' answer was amazing. (Say this next part with drama) Jesus said that God was still with the people... but not just living in the temple building. Jesus is God! Jesus came to be God With Us!**

### Activity:

Say: Today for our activity, we are going to make some whirly birds as a reminder of Jesus going into the temple and setting the birds and all the other animals free. But even better than that is the reminder that what Jesus said in the temple about him being God With Us means that we are free too! So what we need to do first is to write the good news on this strip of cardboard. Let's write: "God is with us!" Kids can decorate their cardboard strips. Then show the kids how to make their own whirly birds by putting the center of the cardboard to the top of the pencil eraser. Bend the ends of the cardboard strip up to form a "V" shape. Launch the whirly birds by rolling the pencil between your hands and releasing it.

With any extra time, practice the Apostle's Creed. Tell your kids they might get to help with opening next week leading everyone in learning the part about Jesus!

# *Upper Elementary Middle School & High School*

## **Materials Needed:**

- Ark of the Covenant that the students made on week 8
- Spark NRSV Bibles
- Flip Books (available in the drawing section of craft stores like Hobby Lobby)
- Pencils, colored pencils, markers, crayons

## **Before the Students Arrive:**

Set out the Ark of the Covenant so that it is on the table when the students arrive.

## **Experiencing the Story:**

Welcome students as they arrive. Say: **Okay, I bet you recognize this thing. You worked really hard on this. So what do you remember about this thing? What's it called? What's in it? Where was it kept? Do you remember what happened if you touched it? (If anyone touched it they died!) Why would a person die if they touched the ark? The person would die because God's holiness was there and a person couldn't be in the holiness of God and live. God's presence is that powerful. God is that holy. So the ark and the temple and God's presence there was a big deal. That's why the story we're about to read today caused such a commotion- not just a commotion among the people who were in the temple that day Jesus came in but for everyone who heard the story and who wondered about who this Jesus really was. Let's read the story together.**

Read John 2:13-25.

Say: **Jesus caused such a commotion among the people because he was claiming to be God and he was saying that God's presence was now in him rather than locked in the temple. Think back to what you know about how the temple was constructed and how carefully it was planned and built. How do you think people felt about Jesus suggesting that the temple would be torn down? What reactions can you imagine? In fact, people were so angry**

about what Jesus said, that he was killed. Jesus was challenging everything the people thought they knew about God and God's holiness. What do you think Jesus meant by the temple being torn down and built up in three days? What does it mean to you that Jesus' is calling his body the temple? Later in scripture even our bodies are called the temple of God. Look it up in 1 Corinthians 6:19-20. What does it mean to you that our bodies are God's temple?

**Activity:** Flip Books

Ask if anyone is familiar with how flip books work. Directions included with the packet will describe how scenes drawn on each page can be flipped through quickly to look like moving action. Have kids draw their own animated stories of Jesus' temple commotion!