



**Scripture Story:** John 2:12-22.

**Commentary:** *The Desire of Ages*, chapter 16.

## get out of my house!



Photo by Jacqui Janetzko

### flashlight

“God designed that the temple at Jerusalem should be a continual witness to the high destiny open to every soul. But the Jews had not understood the significance of the building they regarded with so much pride. They did not yield themselves as holy temples for the Divine Spirit. The courts of the temple at Jerusalem, filled with the tumult of unholy traffic, represented all too truly the temple of the heart, defiled by the presence of sensual passion and unholy thoughts” (*The Desire of Ages*, p. 161).

### keytext

“When it was almost time for the Jewish Passover, Jesus went up to Jerusalem. In the temple courts he found men selling cattle, sheep and doves, and others sitting at tables exchanging money. . . . To those who sold doves he said, ‘Get these out of here! How dare you turn my Father’s house into a market!’”

(John 2:13-16, NIV)

# what do you think?

If you were to come to church on Sabbath and find that the sanctuary was being used as a market, with different tables set up and people selling their goods, how do you think you would react?

Define the word "materialism."

Write down five different materialistic traits people can have.

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2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_

## did you know?

**H**erod's Temple was built as a sacred place of worship and sacrifice. For centuries it was one of the most holy places in the Jewish religion. Jews from all over the world came to worship there. It was one of the largest and most monumental construction projects of the first century B.C. It all started with the building of enormous underground vaults, upon which the Temple was to be built. The white marble that it was built with was visible from outside the city for miles around. The place was so immac-

ulately structured and furnished that no one is sure about precisely how long it took for them to build it completely. Seeing as it was the most holy place in Judaism, where the Lord was present, it was treated with uttermost reverence and respect. But when some folks corrupted it, the holiness and purity of worship were gone. The sacred Temple had been turned into a place of greed and materialism. No wonder when Jesus came, He had to cleanse this holy place from defilement.

## INTO THE STORY

**"After this he went down to Capernaum with his mother and brothers and his disciples. There they stayed for a few days. When it was almost time for the Jewish Passover, Jesus went up to Jerusalem.**

"Then the Jews demanded of him, 'What miraculous sign can you show us to prove your authority to do all this?' Jesus answered them, 'Destroy this temple, and I will raise it again in three days.' The Jews replied, 'It has taken forty-six years to build this temple, and you are going to raise it in three days?'

"But the temple he had spoken of was his body.

"After he was raised from the dead, his disciples recalled what he had said. Then they believed the Scripture and the words that Jesus had spoken."

(John 2:12-22, NIV)

"In the temple courts he found men selling cattle, sheep and doves, and others sitting at tables exchanging money. So he made a whip out of cords, and drove all from the temple area, both sheep and cattle; he scattered the coins of the money changers and overturned their tables. To those who sold doves he said, 'Get these out of here! How dare you turn my Father's house into a market!'

"His disciples remembered that it is written: 'Zeal for your house will consume me.'



# OUT OF THE STORY

Was greed a factor in this story? Explain.

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What do you think Jesus meant when He said “Destroy this temple, and I will raise it again in three days”?

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Why do you think the Jews reacted as they did to Jesus’ actions?

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When Jesus made a whip out of cords, were you surprised to see Him demonstrate anger? Why or why not?

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In what ways did the people demonstrate materialism?

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What do you think Jesus was thinking when He saw the most holy place turned into a place of business and profit?

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In our materialistic world in which we live today, how can we refrain from becoming immersed in it?

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Define the word “reverence.”

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Think of how easy it could have been for these people in the Temple to justify their materialism and greed in the name of God and religion. In what ways can we be in danger of doing the same thing?

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## punch lines

“**Since we have these promises**, dear friends, let us purify ourselves from everything that contaminates body and spirit, perfecting holiness out of reverence for God” (2 Corinthians 7:1, NIV).

“**Therefore, since we are receiving** a kingdom that cannot be shaken, let us be thankful, and so worship God acceptably with reverence and awe” (Hebrews 12:28).

“**Observe my Sabbaths** and have reverence for my sanctuary. I am the Lord” (Leviticus 19:30, NIV).

“**Humility and the fear of the Lord** bring wealth and honor and life” (Proverbs 22:4, NIV).

“**To fear the Lord is to hate evil**; I hate pride and arrogance, evil behavior and perverse speech” (Proverbs 8:13, NIV).

## other eyes

“**Increase of material comforts, it may be generally laid down, does not in any way whatsoever conduce to moral growth.**”—

Mahatma Gandhi, 20th-century Indian political and spiritual leader.

“**It is preoccupation with possessions, more than anything else, that prevents men from living freely and nobly.**”—Henry David Thoreau, 19th-century U.S.

author.

“**As there is no worldly gain without some loss so there is no worldly loss without some gain.**”

—Francis Quarles, 17th-century English metaphysical poet.

# making it real

## Sabbath

Take a few moments to write down a few ways in which you can slowly eliminate materialism from your life.

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After writing everything down, read through today's lesson of John 2:12-22 and *highlight* the parts from which you think you can learn the most.

## Sunday

When you realize how big God is in contrast to how small we are, we should realize that the things of this world don't matter much. Remember that God is your Creator and He created you in His own image. Realize that such a great love should call for reverence. Go about your day trying to think of different ways in which you could show your reverence, respect, and love for God. Remember, everything in your life, whether insignificant or monumental, means something to God. You may think the little things you do don't make a difference, but they do. God sees all things; He sees your small sacrifices as well as your large ones. Read through Psalm 104. Remember that if God can set the earth on its foundations, He can surely hear every little prayer, and see every secret thing. He will never forget you.

## Monday

Believe it or not, just as it was mentioned in the *Key Text*, there are still many examples of materialism inside church leaders today. You hear stories about church leaders stealing money from their flocks. People sometimes can't comprehend the ways in which their irreverence shows disrespect to their Creator. In the Temple Jesus showed His anger in His attempt to get the

people to understand that all the sacrifices were sacred and were pointing to His great one on the cross. Think of what went through His mind when He saw people turning their place of worship into a place of thievery, materialism, and corruption. How can this story make us more aware of how we should show reverence to our Creator and Savior?

## Tuesday

One day you might be in a situation in which you must choose between a materialistic life or one in which money isn't so supreme. God knows where each choice you make is going to lead you, even if it seems innocent and worthy. Always remember that in every choice we make, we are temples of God's Spirit, and God should be present. Don't think that praying over the little things won't make a difference. Before taking any steps forward, pray and seek God's will. Write down three different situations that can seem harmless, yet could also possibly end in irreverence to God.

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_

## Wednesday

Remember that many people in this world have lost much and suffer immensely. Some don't have enough food to eat and/or can't even afford to put clothes on their backs. In our society, many of us may not be considered rich compared to many famous people, yet if we were to visit some of these countries, we would be seen as having the wealth of kings and queens. We should remember how blessed we are and realize how much we really have compared to so many others.

## Thursday

In the *Other Eyes* section we saw the quote from Gandhi about how an increase in wealth doesn't mean an increase in morals. Think about some rich people you hear about in the news (or maybe even know) who seem to live very immoral lives. In fact, there have been stories about hard-working, honest people who after gaining wealth get greedy, nasty, and hateful. Their money made them worse people!

Why do you think that is so? Why does money sometimes do that to people? How can tithing and giving away money to charity and other causes help to prevent money from ruining people morally?

## Friday

Many wealthy people, including celebrities, are so rich and yet are so miserable. Many people think that money will make them happy; they think that if they become famous and rich all of their problems will be solved. Yet many of the rich and the famous have been immersed in suffering and misery. Remember how Solomon acquired so much wealth that it eventually started to steer him away from God. We should remember that no matter how much material things we can acquire on this earth, they don't guarantee happiness.

\*A special adaptation of *The Desire of Ages* has been created just for you by the White Estate and the Pacific Press Publishing Association. Get more info about it at: [www.cornerstoneconnections.net](http://www.cornerstoneconnections.net).

## this week's reading\*

*The Desire of Ages*, chapter 16.

\*By following this plan you will read at least one book of the Conflict of the Ages Series each year.