

I love how these stories we've studied these past few sessions really stretched our thinking about how we think of Jesus. Last time we saw how He didn't fit the stereotype of the far off aesthetic that lived disconnected from people and everyday life. He went to social functions like weddings. He met people where they were and He didn't even mind providing the refreshments! So we see an often overlooked facet of Jesus' life: Jesus had fun!

And this time we are going to look at another often overlooked fact about Jesus: He got angry.!

There was a meme on Facebook that said "Next time someone asks you 'What would Jesus Do?' Remind them that turning over tables and chasing people with whips is within the realm of possibility!"

You can tell a lot about a person by looking at what makes them angry. It says a lot about the person's priorities. If you never get angry, it shows that you have no passion. I once heard about a preacher who told his congregation "Tonight millions of children will go to bed hungry and most of you don't give a ----. The sad thing is that most of you are more upset about me using that word than you are about millions of children going to bed hungry! "

I'm going to challenge another sacred cow and you've probably noticed by now that I really enjoy doing that. After all, sacred cows make the best steaks, amen? But listen carefully to what I'm about to tell you: Jesus never called us to be "nice." Kind? Yes. Compassionate? Yes. Forgiving? Yes. But never "nice." I consider myself to be a "recovering nice guy."

Pastor Tim Keller insightfully pointed out that Jesus wasn't crucified for being a nice guy doing nice things. He was crucified because the establishment saw Him as a threat to their power! Even some of Jesus' greatest acts of mercy and compassion were done in a vary "in your face" manner to His critics. In fact, He made a point of that from the very beginning!

This was Jesus' first public appearance in Jerusalem and He made sure it was an eventful one. It was time for the great holiday of Passover in which countless Jews would make the pilgrimage to Jerusalem with their families. For the city officials, this was one of their biggest events of the year and they made every effort to present the city in all of its splendor.

In the Temple area Jesus sees Merchants selling sacrificial animals and exchanging money. This was a problem on one hand because the animals that were used in sacrifices were to have been raised by the person offering the animal.

But at the same time, the original intent of selling the animals might not have necessarily come from bad motivations. Many of the people had traveled a very long way and this may have simply started as a convenience. But as you know, anytime there are large crowds of people, price gouging and price inflation are almost inevitable. If you've ever been to a ball game or an amusement park and had to pay \$5 or more for a watered down flat soft drink you know exactly what I mean!

So when Jesus sees this, He takes some ropes or cords and makes them into a crude whip. He chases the merchants and their animals out of the Temple, turns over their tables and throws their money all over the floor! He orders them to "Get these things out of here" and not to turn the Father's house into a shopping center!

But of course the Jewish leaders were not happy with what Jesus has done "Who do you think you are? If you have some sort of God given right to do something like this, you'd better show us a sign to prove it." Jesus says. "OK destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up again ." Obviously, the religious leaders were totally caught off guard by what Jesus said. since the Temple had taken 46 years to build. But what they didn't understand that the "temple" Jesus was referring to was His body. His disciples would remember that later after He rose from the dead and that would be a powerful affirmation of faith for them.

Earlier I stated that lack of anger means a lack of passion. And passion was something Jesus had in abundance! And What was He passionate about? His Father's glory and the pain of hurting people. When He saw these things be

ing exploited for people's greed, His anger was perfectly understandable, especially when that exploitation is done in the name of religion. And if you've spent any time watching "Christian" television, you know that this is a bigger problem today than it has ever been!

Religion has nothing to do with Jesus. Religion is, and always has been one of Jesus' greatest enemies. He was crucified by religious people. Be sure to join us next time when He confronts this evil enemy known as religion even further. In the mean time, be sure to keep it real just like Jesus did!