

# “A House for Prayer”


(sermon based on John 2:13-25)

by Pastor Chris Matthis


Lent 3, Series B

March 3<sup>rd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup>, 2018

- I. Introduction – YIKES!
  - A. Jesus getting *angry*?
  - B. Whip of cords!
  - C. Why was he cleansing the Temple?

 **“Take these things away, and do not make my Father’s house a house of trade [*emporium*]” (John 2:16).**

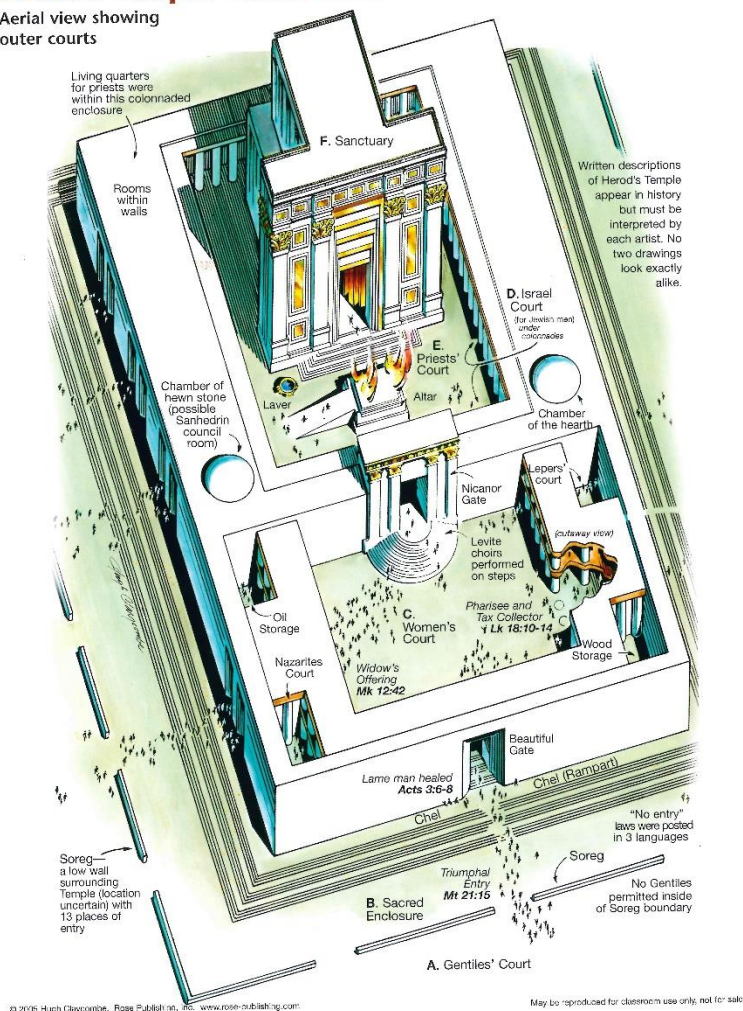
- II. Does that mean it’s wrong to sell stuff in church?
  - LWML Card shop?
  - Ladies bake sale?
  - Youth fundraiser?
  - Pastor’s sermon books?!?!?
  - NO!!!

 **“Is it not written, ‘My house shall be called a house of prayer for all the nations’? But you have made it a den of robbers” (Mark 11:17).**

- III. Two issues:
  - A. Cheating people (exchange rate and cost of animals)
  - B. Getting in the way of people worshiping God.

## Herod's Temple – 20 BC–AD 70

Aerial view showing  
outer courts



### BEGIN FIELD TRIP!!

1. Move congregation to parking lot outside and discuss **Court of the Gentiles**, including the penalty of death for trespassing and the sounds and smells that were getting in the way of worship. The Greek word for "temple" in v. 14 is *hieron* (temple complex).

2. Enter the narthex and discuss **Court of the Women**. Mention how Jewish men used to wake up in the morning and praise God that they were not born as Gentiles, women, or slaves.
3. Enter the sanctuary and discuss the **Court of the Israelites**. Let everyone sit down after
4. Enter the Chancel and discuss the **Court of the Priests** and **The Most Holy Place**. Mention how the Most Holy Place (Holy of Holies) could only be entered once per year on Day of Atonement (Yom Kippur) by High Priest and how he had to wear bells and tie a rope around his ankle in case he died.

Jesus was angry that the religious establishment was allowing the people of God to be swindled and cheated at the very place where they tried to worship God and connect with him. Jesus was also angry that the ONLY place where the Gentiles could worship was taken over by commerce and entirely unsuited for prayer because of the buying and selling of animals.

☛ **What gets in the way of people worshiping at *our* church?**  
(Field answers)


☛ **What kind of people do we check, threaten, or warn at the door?** (Field answers)


☛ **What do you think Jesus thinks about the barriers we put in place, intentionally or unintentionally, for other people to worship God?**


### **WHAT ABOUT THE GOOD NEWS!?!?!**

📖 “Jesus answered them, ‘Destroy this temple [*naos*], and in three days I will raise it up...’ But he was speaking about the temple of his body” (John 2:19, 21).

The *Good News* is that Jesus is the True Temple. In his body, God and man come together. He bridges the gap between heaven and earth and reconciles us to God in his flesh. In Jesus Christ, *all people* have access to God the Father for worship, prayer, and relationship.

 **“But the hour is coming, and is now here, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for the Father is seeking such people to worship him” (John 4:23).**

 **“And Jesus uttered a loud cry and breathed his last. And the curtain of the temple was torn in two, from top to bottom” (Mark 15:37-38).**

 **“There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is no male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus” (Galatians 3:28).**

 **Ephesians 2:11-17**

Do we want to be known as...a friendly church?

...a welcoming church?

...an inviting church?