

Scripture: John 2:13-25

Sermon Summary: In John 2:13–25, Passover brings Jesus into the temple, where worship is functioning but distorted, with commerce and gatekeeping taking up space that should be set apart for the holy. Jesus does not merely critique the presence of animals or procedure, but he confronts what happens when access to God is managed like a transaction, pouring out coins, overturning tables, and naming the offense clearly: “Stop making my Father’s house a marketplace,” an act driven by zeal that is love refusing to watch the holy be hollowed out. The confrontation deepens when Jesus speaks of raising the temple in three days, reframing the true dwelling place of God as his own body, meaning this moment is a sign that God will not be controlled by marketplaces or systems that benefit gatekeepers.

When looking at our own lives, we have temples too. "Toxic temples" and "marketplace logic" set up tables inside us through fear, image management, resentment, power, the need to win, etc. Alongside this, in our lived experience, we see this show up wherever the holy is treated as a commodity and people are priced out or pushed out. The call is to examine what has taken up residence, turn with real repentance because some tables do not leave politely, and push back with disciplined acts which aims at repair rather than humiliation. All the while, trusting that the one (Jesus) who overturns tables is also the one who gives himself to make room again for holiness, prayer, justice, and the living God.