

# The First Cleansing of the Temple John 2:13-25

by R.A. Torrey

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*Jesus Christ is the Messiah who came to cleanse the temple of defilement, raise it from the dead, and demonstrate His power and deity.*

**Scripture:** John 2:13

**Topics:** "Cleansing of the Temple", "True Faith in Jesus"

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## Description

R.A. Torrey explores the significance of Jesus cleansing the temple, emphasizing that while the temple was defiled by human actions, it was restored by Christ's authority. He highlights the contrast between the temporary reforms of man and the eternal nature of Jesus' mission, pointing out that true faith in Him goes beyond mere belief in miracles. Torrey also discusses the misunderstanding of Jesus' identity by the Jewish leaders and the disciples' eventual recognition of Him as the Messiah. The sermon concludes with a reflection on the nature of faith and the importance of committing oneself to Jesus, who knows the hearts of men.

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## Transcript

### DISCOVERY OF THE FACTS

1. The Temple Defiled by Man, But Cleansed by Jesus, vv. 13-17 Why did Jesus go so often up to Jerusalem at the time of the Passover? (Deut. 16:16; Luke 2:41; John 6:4; 11:55.) What did He find in the house of God? For what were the oxen and sheep, etc., needed? (Deut. 14:26.) Was Jesus pleased to see them there? If He should visit the house of God in our land, would He find anything like that? Would it please Him? For which is there a better excuse, for these Jews or for us?

What did Jesus do? Was it the force in the scourge of cords or the display of muscular energy on the part of Jesus that drove these defilers of the temple out? (See 18:6; Zech. 4:6, 11; 2 Cor. 10:4.) Did this purification of the temple prove permanent? (Matt. 21:12.) Does it follow that because a reformation is not permanent that it is not of God? Why is it that all reforms wrought among men are of so transient a character? (Jer. 17:9; Gen. 6:5; Ro. 8:7.) Did He drive out them that sold doves?

Why not? What did He do? In what ways is God's house nowadays made "a house of merchandise"? Was there any hint or prophecy of this in the Old Testament? (Is. 56:11; Jer. 7:11.) When Jesus purged the temple the first time, what did He say they had made it? When He purged it the second time, what did He say they had made it? (Luke 19:45-46.) Which is the worse? Is there any lesson in this? (Matt. 12:43, 45.)

How does Jesus speak of God? (See 5:17; 8:49; 10:29; Luke 2:49.) Why did He not say "Your Father" or "Our Father"? (John 3:16.)

When did He say "Your Father"? (John 20:17.) How does God become "our" Father? (John 1:12; Gal. 3:26.) Until we believe on Jesus, what are we? (1 John 3:10.) What did this action of Jesus call to the disciples' mind? What ought all the events of life to call to mind? Why did the Scripture come so readily to the minds of the disciples? Why does it not come more readily to our minds? Of whom was this Scripture written? What then did the disciples, by this act, see Jesus to be? 2.

The Temple Destroyed by Man, But Raised Again by Jesus, vv. 18-22 Who else recognized in this action of Jesus a claim to be the Messiah? What difference was there between the recognition of this fact on the part of the disciples and on the part of the Jewish leaders? What demand did they make? What similar demand did they make on the occasion of the second cleansing of the temple? (Matt. 21:33.) Do men nowadays ever try to stop faithful servants of God who are doing what they themselves ought but will not, do, by asking: "By what authority doest thou these things"?

What is all the authority a man needs for doing right? (Acts 5:28, 29.) Did these Jews really wish a sign? (Matt. 12:38, 39.) Do men who today are asking for the proof that Jesus is the Son of God really wish proof? Did these men accept the sign when it was really given them? (Matt. 28:11-13.) What sign did Jesus propose to them? What was the sign to which Jesus always pointed them? (Matt. 12:38, 40; 16:1, 4.) What is the great proof that declares Jesus to be "the Son of God with power"? (Ro. 1:4.)

In these words--"Destroy this temple and in three days I will raise it up"--of what two great events was there a prophecy? In the shadow of what then did Jesus conduct His ministry from the very outset? How was that shadow illuminated? Who did Jesus say would raise up the temple? Did Jesus raise Himself from the dead? (John 10:17, 18; Mark 8:31; Acts 3:26; Ro. 4:24; 8:11; 1 Cor. 15:3, 4, 12.) Was Jesus understood by those who heard? Why not? What use of this saying of Jesus was made at a later day? (Matt. 26:60, 61; 27:40.)

Of what temple was He speaking? Wherein lay the propriety of calling His body a temple? (John 1:14, R. V. margin; Col. 1:19; 2:9.) What was the relation of the other temples to this? (1 Kings 8:27; see Col. 2:9.) In killing Jesus, what did the Jews destroy? Was this a serious offence? Is there any way in which we too can defile and destroy this temple of God? (1 Cor. 6:19; 3:16, 17, R. V.) When did the disciples remember and understand these words of Jesus? How did they come to remember them? (John 14:26; 16:4; Luke 24:7, 8.)

What was the effect upon them when they remembered these words? What Scripture did they remember? (John 20:8, 9; Ps. 16:10; Is. 53:10.) Was theirs a saving faith? What was the basis of it? 3. Men Believing in Jesus, But Jesus Not Believing in Men, vv. 23-25 What was the effect of Jesus' miracles upon those who saw them? Who is the first recorded illustration of those who were convinced through Christ's miracles? (John 3:1, 2; 6:14; 7:31.) Was it a saving faith that most of these men had?

What are the characteristics of saving faith? (Ro. 10:10; John 1:12; Gal. 5:6; Eph. 3:16, 17; Jas. 2:14, R. V.) Did Jesus believe in those who believed in Him? (In the Greek, "believe" in verse 23 and "commit" in verse 24 are the same word. This also illustrates what real faith in Jesus is. It is "committing" one's self unto Him. See 2 Tim. 1:12.) Is it wise to trust in man? (Jer. 17:5.) Why did Jesus not believe in these men? How deep was Jesus' knowledge of men? (John 1:42, 46, 47; 5:42; 6:64; 16:19, 30; 21:17.) What did this knowledge of men show Jesus to be? (Jer. 17:9, 10; 2 Chron. 6:30.) How alone can we know men? (Acts

## 13:9-11.) CLASSIFICATION OF TEACHINGS

### 1. Jesus Christ

His deity: consciousness of Sonship, 16; divine knowledge, 24, 25 (2 Chron. 6:30); divine foresight of His own death and resurrection, 19; divine power to raise from the dead, 19; divine fullness, 21 (Col. 2:19); deity proved by His resurrection, 19 (Ro. 1:4).

His humanity, subject to death, 19.

The Messiah, 17 (Ps. 69:9).

The subject of prophecy, 17, 22.

The substance of whom Old Testament types were the shadow, 21.

Obedied the law, followed parental example, sought needy multitudes, 13.

Displeased with the degradation of His Father's house into a place of gain, drove the polluters out of it, 15.

### 2. Man

Unworthy of confidence, 24; misunderstands Christ, 20; turns godliness into gain, 14; tries to hinder Jesus' work, 18; heart fully set to do evil, his reform transient, goes from bad to worse, 15, 16 (Luke 19:45, 46).

### 3. The Disciples and the Word

Studied, remembered, believed, were saved through the Word, 17, 22 (John 5:24).

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