**Matthew 21: 12-16 Then Jesus went into the temple of God and drove out all those who bought and sold in the temple, and overturned the tables of the money changers and the seats of those who sold doves. 13And He said to them, “It is written, ‘My house shall be called a house of prayer,’ but you have made it a ‘den of thieves.’ ” 14Then the blind and the lame came to Him in the temple, and He healed them. 15But when the chief priests and scribes saw the wonderful things that He did, and the children crying out in the temple and saying, “Hosanna to the Son of David!” they were indignant 16and said to Him, “Do You hear what these are saying?”**

We are the Temple of the Holy Spirit, the very dwelling place of God. The church is the body of Christ. We started several weeks ago with a verse that asks a question, 1 Corinthians 3:16 - *Do you not know that you are the temple of God and that the Spirit of God dwells in you?* The “you” in this verse is understood as plural – but we understand that there cannot be any group of you’s without there being individuals making up that group. There can be no group faith without there being individual faith. Do you not know? You have to know. You cannot receive until you believe. Do you believe?

Our verses this morning are very similar to the verses from John 2. John 2 happened as Jesus’ ministry started and Matthew 21 is happening as He is drawing near to crucifixion. Jesus finds noise and confusion, what He cleansed has been allowed to return to desecration. The oxen and the sheep and the doves and the moneychangers are back. How did they return? Someone unlocked the door and they walked back in.

We are God’s Temple. Jesus says in Revelation 3:20 *Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and dine with him, and he with Me.* When the things of this world begin to crowd out Jesus, we know one thing for certain… we opened the door and let these things in, welcomed the clutter, stood by while the chaos took over. No one else has a key – it had to be me...

Verse 12 - *Then Jesus went into the temple of God and drove out all those who bought and sold in the temple, and overturned the tables of the money changers and the seats of those who sold doves.* Jesus is cleansing, making room. Worthwhile things are on the way, but only if the worthless things are gone. There is only so much room. In order for the God things to grow, some of the good, but not God things had to go. Is that true of your temple this morning? Good things are not always God things, but God things are always good things. What needs driving out? What needs overturning? Greed? Lust? Pride? What needs to be shown the door that’s been tying up the space in our hearts that God has earmarked for other purposes?

Verse 13 *And He said to them, “It is written, ‘My house shall be called a house of prayer, but you have made it a ‘den of thieves.’”* Jesus uses Isaiah 56:7 and Jeremiah 7:11. Our souls are to be a house of prayer, praying without ceasing, through focus on the One true vine, apart from which we can do nothing. How do we become separated? Through focus on the world.

Verse 14 *Then the blind and the lame came to Him in the temple, and He healed them.* Jesus has cleansed the temple and the blind and lame come to be healed. The chaos has been cast out and true need is being addressed, miracles are taking place. The Son of God focuses on restoring wholeness instead of filling emptiness. It was true there that day. It’s true when He cleanses our Temples today. He brings back to sight the Truth that became dim. He restores our ability to walk with Him in Faith. Such is His top priority once He enters in.

Verses 15-16 *But when the chief priests and scribes saw the wonderful things that He did, and the children crying out in the temple and saying, “Hosanna to the Son of David!” they were indignant and said to Him, “Do You hear what these are saying?”* Two things we shouldn’t miss here: first, those charged with caring for the temple clearly saw the blind see and the lame walk and the revival of hope in the people. And second, how did they react? They were indignant. Why? Because it threatened their position, their prosperity, and highlighted their sin. Be prepared for the same when Jesus clears your temple, when you see Him again, walk with Him again, and feel Hope in Him again. Be prepared for the challengers and the naysayers and the discouragers and those who would have you remain in that place of chaos and confusion. They will come out of the woodwork, as my father used to say. They won’t see the wonderful change Jesus has made in you… they will be indignant that there has been a change made in you. Not all of these naysayers will be someone else… often, the loudest voice for returning to Egypt comes from inside our own Temple.

Every morning, wake up and realize you are the Temple of the Living God. What has filled you up? The Holy Spirit, the Word of God… do the walls of your Temple echo with prayers that never cease? Or do we need to answer the knock at the door and welcome Jesus back to cleanse and heal? Only you, only I can know that very personal answer. He stands at the door and knocks. Will we trust Him to clear the things that no longer belong? No matter how good they are, if they are not God things, they simply don’t belong and must be removed.