

LESSON 8

# Jesus Cleanses the Temple

JOHN 2:13-25



BIBLE TRUTH

GOD DESIRES PEOPLE WHO WORSHIP FROM THEIR HEARTS

**LESSON SNAPSHOT**

**1. OPENING REVIEW . . . . . 5 MIN**

Use last week’s lesson outline to review with the children what they learned.

**2. BIBLE STORY . . . . . 10 MIN**

Read John 2:13–25 from the Scriptures or read story 86, “Jesus Cleanses the Temple,” from *The Gospel Story Bible*.

**3. OBJECT LESSON 1 . . . . . 10 MIN**

**Turn Over the Tables**

**SUPPLIES:**

- ✓ small table (You are going to overturn the table so it should be strong enough to take abuse but small enough to overturn. You can use a cardboard box covered with a tablecloth.)
- ✓ a jar or plastic bag full of miscellaneous coins
- ✓ rope for a whip

**4. TEACHING/DISCUSSION . . . . . 10 MIN**

Using the teaching points, teach through the lesson for today.

**5. OBJECT LESSON 2 . . . . . 10 MIN**

**True Faith Is in the Heart**

**6. SWORD BIBLE MEMORY . . . . . 5 MIN**

**7. ACTIVITY TIME . . . . . 10 MIN**

**Color a Picture**

**SUPPLIES:**

- ✓ coloring page for NT Lesson 8—one for each child
- ✓ markers or crayons

**8. CLOSING PRAYER . . . . . 5 MIN**

**9. BONUS OBJECT LESSON . . . . . 10 MIN**

**All Confused about the Temple**

**TOTAL 75 MIN**

PREPARING TO TEACH

TEACHING POINTS

**God’s house is for worship alone**—The Passover was at hand, and many Israelites needed to purchase animals for sacrifices. Those with foreign currency needed to change their money. The moneychangers and merchants set up shop right in the temple. The temple was the center of Jewish life. It was the place where God’s presence lived among the people. These shopkeepers were more interested in making money than worshiping God. When Jesus arrived at the temple and saw that it was now a marketplace, he became righteously angry. To help the people see their sin, he made a whip of cords, drove the shopkeepers and their animals away, and overturned the tables of the moneychangers. He was trying to help them see that God’s house was not a marketplace. Just being in the temple didn’t mean you were praising God.

**The Jews demanded a sign**—The Jews demanded a sign from Jesus to prove his authority for clearing out the temple. Jesus answered them by saying that if they destroyed the temple, he would raise it up in three days. It had taken forty-six years to build the temple, and it wasn’t yet finished! It wasn’t until after the resurrection that the disciples realized Jesus was talking about the temple of his body. Even though the Jews of that time had Jesus right in front of them, they still rejected him. And what greater sign could one ask for than to see Jesus, the King of Glory and Savior of the world?

**Jesus could see the motive of their hearts**—When Jesus drove the merchants and moneychangers out of the temple, he called it his “Father’s house.” The Jews demanded a sign of his authority to do this. After cleansing the temple, Jesus remained in Jerusalem for the Passover. In Jerusalem he performed signs, and many believed in his name, but Jesus did not entrust himself to them because he knew their hearts. Just because you say you believe, doesn’t mean you are trusting God in your heart. Though the people said they believed, Christ knew their hearts were cold toward him.

## Where Is the Gospel? \_\_\_\_\_

How does today's Bible story fit into God's greater plan of redemption?

Only after his resurrection did Jesus' disciples understand what he was talking about when he told the Jews that he could rebuild the temple in three days (John 2:22). People hurled insults at Jesus during his crucifixion, mocking what he said about the temple (Matthew 27:39–40).

Jesus' resurrection validates his ministry claims. His resurrection ultimately proves he is Lord over all, including life and death. The resurrection proves that Jesus was the Son of God and that his sacrificial death on the cross broke the curse of death and sin for all who put their faith in him (Romans 6:4; 8:11).

### THE LESSON

#### OPENING REVIEW . . . . . 5 MIN

Use last week's lesson outline to review with the children what they learned.

#### BIBLE STORY . . . . . 10 MIN

Read John 2:13–25 from the Scriptures or read story 86, "Jesus Cleanses the Temple," from *The Gospel Story Bible*.

#### OBJECT LESSON 1 . . . . . 10 MIN

##### Turn Over the Tables

**SUPPLIES:**

- ✓ small table (You are going to overturn the table so it should be strong enough to take abuse but small enough to overturn. You can use a cardboard box covered with a tablecloth.)
- ✓ a jar or plastic bag full of miscellaneous coins
- ✓ rope for a whip

Prior to class stack up the money on the table. When you read the story to the class, crack your whip on a few things, dramatizing the chasing of the livestock, then sharply overturn the table with the money. The drama will surely get the children’s attention. Then share the rest of the story. Ask the children how they think the merchants and moneychangers would have felt when Jesus overturned their tables and sent their animals heading for the exits. Talk about why Jesus did what he did, and point out the importance of really believing—of not just looking religious on the outside but being changed by the Holy Spirit on the inside.

**TEACHING/DISCUSSION . . . . . 10 MIN**

Using the teaching points, teach through the lesson for today.

**OBJECT LESSON 2 . . . . . 10 MIN**

**True Faith Is in the Heart**

Tell the story of Blondin, who repeatedly crossed Niagara Falls on a tightrope. (Look up Blondin on the Internet for more information and to download photos to show the class [<http://www.notablebiographies.com/supp/Supplement-A-Bu-and-Obituaries/Blondin-Charles.html>].)

Blondin would draw crowds to watch his amazing death-defying feats in walking on a tightrope across Niagara Falls. Often he would carry various objects and do different tricks. One day he pointed to the crowd and asked them, “Who here believes I can go across the falls with a man on my back?” All the people cheered, saying, “Yes, we believe!”

Blondin turned to the crowd and then asked the more difficult question, “Who is willing to get on my back?” Of course the people who were so quick to believe refused to get on Blondin’s back. You see, they said they believed but they didn’t believe enough to trust their lives to him.

In the same way, we can say we believe in Jesus but not really live for Christ. That’s what happened in John 2:23. When the crowd saw Jesus’ amazing feats they cheered, “We believe.” It was easy for them to say they believed, just like the crowds cheered Blondin on. But they were not ready to follow and obey Jesus. That is why Jesus did not entrust himself to them. Jesus knew that his journey was leading to death on the cross and these folks would be unwilling to follow him. It is much easier to say we believe in Jesus than it is to dedicate our lives to obeying and following him.

- How do we know if we truly believe?  
*(If we are true followers of Jesus our lives will match our words.)*
- What kind of actions does a follower of Christ demonstrate?  
*(A follower of Jesus Christ loves Jesus. This is demonstrated by a love for his Word, a love for worship, a love for other Christians, and a desire to obey his commands.)*

**SWORD BIBLE MEMORY . . . . . 5 MIN**

Take time during the class to review the SWORD Bible Memory verses with the class. Provide the opportunity for each child to recite the verses to an adult worker.

**ACTIVITY TIME . . . . . 10 MIN**

**Color a Picture**

**SUPPLIES:**

- ✓ coloring page for NT Lesson 8—one for each child
- ✓ markers or crayons

While the children are coloring, engage them by asking the following questions:

- What is happening in the picture?  
*(Jesus is coming out of the tomb after his resurrection.)*
- Do you think the Jews would be surprised to hear that Jesus could raise the temple in three days if it were torn down?  
*(Yes, they were surprised. They didn't believe that Jesus was telling the truth.)*
- When Jesus said he could rebuild the temple in three days, what was he talking about?  
*(He didn't mean the temple made of stones. Jesus was talking about his body; Jesus knew that he was going to rise from the dead on the third day after they crucified him.)*

**CLOSING PRAYER . . . . . 5 MIN**

Pick several children to pray prayers based on the day's Scripture passages.

**BONUS OBJECT LESSON . . . . . 10 MIN**

**All Confused about the Temple**

This is an ad-lib skit between two teachers.

Teacher 1 begins to teach the class and explains that we don't have the temple anymore. Now we have the church. She goes on to say that Jesus is building the church and that if anyone were to come and tear down our church, Jesus would come and rebuild it, and that it would only take three days. Teacher 2 should object, saying that those words are not in the Bible. Teacher 1 should then quote John 2:19 and then confidently go on with the lesson.

Teacher 2 objects again and tells Teacher 1 that you just can't yank a verse out of the Bible, you have to read the whole story to get the real meaning. Teacher 2 then asks Teacher 1 to read the whole story.

Teacher 1 complies and then feels foolish when she reads that Jesus was talking about his body, not the building.

Teacher 2 should then take over the lesson and talk about how everyone was fooled and didn't realize what Jesus was talking about.

**PLEASE NOTE:** The coloring sheet for this lesson is designed to show Jesus' resurrection as a foreshadowing of what Jesus was referring to when he said to the moneychangers, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up" (John 2:19).

LESSON 8 - JESUS CLEANSSES THE TEMPLE

