

Leader's Guide - Small Group Questions – Feb 7/21 - Read John 2:13-22

1. Why do you think Jesus chose the moments of feasting, parties, and religious holidays to disclose His identity as the Messiah?

*Occasions of joy and celebration have their deeper meaning and fulfillment in Jesus Christ. Particularly the Jewish festivals and seasons, they are shadows of the greater light, which is illuminated in the Person of Christ. While not all current and modern holidays or seasons have deeper spiritual or Christian significance, they represent the human propensity to express our longing and desire for order, harmony, joy, recreation, satisfaction, etc., which are altogether realised and fulfilled in Jesus Christ. And so, Jesus chose to interpret and translate in His days in ancient Palestine the Jewish ceremonies, feasts, and even the human institution of marriage in the wedding feast, to point to Himself -- the Lord of all celebration and joy.*

2. In what ways today would Jesus find our "temples", houses of worship, religious institutions, or churches in disrepair, corrupt, unfit, hypocritical, or apostate?

*Answers will vary and will likely include institutional crimes such as genocide, residential schools, financial fraud and embezzlement, celebrity pastor culture, profiting from the prosperity gospel, exploitation of the poor and desperate, etc. These are all abominations before God and segments of the Church, including ourselves, must repent and turn away from such evil practices.*

3. What are the implications on how we view or treat our bodies when Jesus equated the Temple with His own body?

*The question may raise more questions and controversy, but that is fine as long as it generates fruitful conversation and that everyone is being heard and understood even despite differences. The Apostle Paul elsewhere called the human body the Temple of the Holy Spirit where the infinite God resides. We do not then worship God in church buildings. We worship God wherever and however and whenever we are at present, in our own bodies, and with how we treat other human bodies. And so, it matters what we do and do not do with our own and others' bodies. Of course, there is much debate on what profanes the body and what honours the body. There are divergent views and opinions among Christians as to what is permissible or disallowed, what can be consumed, partaken, participated, put on the body, etc. And there is even the modern controversy of human sexuality and gender. Regardless, the foundational point is that the worship of God is located in the Person and Body of Jesus Christ, and His death and resurrection opened up access to God for all people, no longer just for the Jews or just for the Jewish Temple.*

4. How could we today display or demonstrate our Christian "zeal" for the Name of Jesus Christ?

*Answers may again vary but we can join together with Jesus in His zeal to magnify God in our deeds of love and faith, in our words of courage and honesty and truth-*

*telling, in our thoughts and emotions that are freely and generously shared for the building up of others, in our service and sacrifice not only for the general good of people but particularly to declare the Gospel and call others to repent of sin and to turn to Jesus Christ.*