

ZEAL FOR THE FATHERS HOUSE

John 2:13–17

Illus: Pastor Greg has said “church is an atmosphere”

Theme: Critical dimension for disciples - developing spiritual discernment

When you pastor your own church someday - in many ways you determine what the spiritual atmosphere of your church will be - knowing that requires spiritual sensitivity and discernment

Our text the disciples connect Jesus actions with this - “Zeal for my fathers house consumes me.” What had led Jesus to flipping over money changers tables and running them out of the temple was zeal - because of spiritual discernment he was deciding what the atmosphere of the church would become.

John 2:13–17 *It was nearly time for the Jewish Passover celebration, so Jesus went to Jerusalem. 14 In the Temple area he saw merchants selling cattle, sheep, and doves for sacrifices; he also saw dealers at tables exchanging foreign money. 15 Jesus made a whip from some ropes and chased them all out of the Temple. He drove out the sheep and cattle, scattered the money changers' coins over the floor, and turned over their tables. 16 Then, going over to the people who sold doves, he told them, “Get these things out of here. Stop turning my Father's house into a marketplace!” 17 Then his disciples remembered this prophecy from the Scriptures: “Passion for God's house will consume me.”*

I. THE NEED FOR DISCERNMENT

A. Relationship with Jesus is not mechanical but spiritual

1. Events and circumstances in life that are beyond the natural - what's easily seen

Ephesians 6:12–13 *For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places. 13 Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.*

a) Often this is how men respond in life - simply in the natural / just life / just stuff happening around me

2. In Ministry — Mistake men make in ministry is assuming everything is simply tasks that needs doing

a) Check lists - preach an altar call - check / plan an outreach - check

3. Context and background - Passover - the most significant Jewish feast / commemorating deliverance from Egypt - 100's of thousands would make a pilgrimage to Jerusalem to offer sacrifices

a) What the temple became was simply a market for commerce - something ordinary and common
b) Going through the motions “doing” all the right things but spiritually missing the point completely

B. The job of every disciple is to develop **spiritual discernment**

1. Discernment - discern - to perceive or recognize / to tell the difference between two things

a) Critically important - being able to see with spiritual eyes at what's happening around you

John 2:13 *It was nearly time for the Jewish Passover celebration, so Jesus went to Jerusalem. 14 In the Temple area he saw merchants selling cattle, sheep, and doves for sacrifices; he also saw dealers at tables exchanging foreign money.*

b) Jesus and the Disciples both saw the exact same thing in the natural / reactions were very different

2. Man of God - can you recognize when something is off spiritually

a) When you're a pastor some day what the spiritual atmosphere of your church is must be identified and correct by you.

C. What a lack of discernment looks like in a man of God

1. Unable to recognize or see spiritual shifts

a) Our text - money changers and merchants profiting in the temple - wasn't something that just happened over night / something had shifted - what was once holy and sacred was now brought low

2. What bothers your spiritual leaders doesn't bother you / you're unaware

a) The way this text reads is that Jesus went through the temple by himself and the disciples simply observed what was happening

(1) Made a whip / drove livestock and people out of the temple / flipped over tables - would have been intense / often times your pastor will see and feel things in the spirit realm we can miss!

As a young disciple I remember Pastor Greg teaching a serious mens class and he told of an conversation he had with a disciple - “Great concert last night huh pastor?” PG what was good about it? No one got saved, no visitors / up until that moment I had never even considered that as a problem

3. Struggling with the same issues over and over again

a) Failure to connect the dots - the physical problem I am having is profoundly spiritual
(1) Lack of dominion/ lack of fruitfulness / lack of finances

II. DECIDING ATMOSPHERE

A. Protecting what's valuable and important Context - Jesus enter the temple / For us that's a picture of the Church today

1. The Church is Gods instrument for the Gospel to reach the nations
2. The Church is a training ground for disciples to be equipped for Gods plan
3. The Church is an arena where people can have an encounter with the living God

B. Identifying the wrong atmosphere - Jesus makes a judgment - **some things don't belong in church**

John 2:15-16 Jesus made a whip from some ropes and chased them all out of the Temple. He drove out the sheep and cattle, scattered the money changers' coins over the floor, and turned over their tables. **16** Then, going over to the people who sold doves, he told them, "Get these things out of here. Stop turning my Father's house into a marketplace!"

1. Begins with knowing what Gods Word says
 - a) If you don't what we should be seeing - you wont know when something is off
- Luke 19:45-46** Then He went into the temple and began to drive out those who bought and sold in it, **46** saying to them, "It is written, 'My house is a house of prayer,' but you have made it a 'den of thieves.'"
 - b) First time Jesus did this - John 2/ second time he did this was in Luke 19, Matt 21 and mark 11
 - (1) What this matters - Jesus wasn't just having a bad day - He was making a point - Gods word defines expectation // famous statement from PG - This is unacceptable- rooted in Gods word
 2. For disciples - that want to preach some day - you have to be able to sense the atmosphere
 - a) there are people in church that will hurt atmosphere / spiritual forces that must be challenged and removed
 - (1) Religious people / psychos / dangerous people - we are not in charge of their salvation but as a pastor you are shepherd - spiritual gate keeper of your church
 - (2) Too often I see men holding onto people that have no revelation or desire to live for God simply for the sake of numbers - *see who I brought to church / see how many people I had in service*
 - b) Have to see what's happening in your church
 - (1) Our text Jesus immediately identified people in the temple that did not belong there
 - c) Future pastors - there will be people that want to come into your church and do damage to what you are trying to do
 - (1) Dealing with religious people / funky people - identify quickly - and strategically move them along
 3. In One80 and on outreach
 - a) there will be times when you feel the presence and anointing of God come down
 - (1) *Can remember many times as a disciple and concert director / one of the altar call preachers or myself would have a sense and feel - pull the altar call early / many times the result would be hands lifted immediately - other times I would talk to other preachers and get their feed back and they would confirm - yes I feel that too!*
 - b) Other times where you will feel when something is wrong
 - (1) Prayer meeting before is completely dead - can hear two or three people praying outloud
 - (2) Each disciple is responsible for the spiritual atmosphere they create

Acts 16:16-18 Now it happened, as we went to prayer, that a certain slave girl possessed with a spirit of divination met us, who brought her masters much profit by fortune-telling. **17** This girl followed Paul and us, and cried out, saying, "These men are the servants of the Most High God, who proclaim to us the way of salvation." **18** And this she did for many days. But Paul, greatly annoyed, turned and said to the spirit, "I command you in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her." And he came out that very hour.

4. In the Home — Husbands / you determine the spiritual atmosphere of your home
 - a) There are attitudes and spirits that can enter you home that have to be judged
 - b) Unusual strife/ contention in the home - everyone fighting (more than normal)

III. **ZEAL FOR THE FATHERS HOUSE**

- A. Discernment that leads to zeal - Jesus shows us what happens when we have discernment
 1. You develop a passion for what God loves
 - a) Zeal is defined has fierce, wild, savage - cannot be tamed - Zeal is a spiritual posture
 - b) Something that rises up in the heart of a man that is on fire and passionate about Gods house
 2. Zeal is not chaotic but **intentional** and **focused**
 - a) Settled conviction and expectation for what we should be experiencing
- B. Jesus declares what atmosphere should be at work in His house - House of prayer
 1. You can pray - ask God for discernment and zeal "*God I want to love what you love and hate what you hate*".
- C. The Outflow of Zeal
 1. Zeal is contagious
 - a) Nature of fire is that is is not confined or controlled to just one area or location - it spreads
 - b) When you get around a man who has a zeal or passion for the things of God that should inspire you
 2. Zeal is noticed
 - a) Our text the disciples make the connection - later we read of passion and zeal at work in the disciples
 3. Zeal is protective
 - a) It Guards atmosphere / defines expectation / releases Gods blessing