**Transcript March 7th**

**Theme: Jesus’s righteous anger, and ours - Lent 3**

**Welcome and Blessing -** Mark Poole

**WELCOME**

This is the day that the Lord has made, let us rejoice and be glad in it!

A very warm welcome to you all from near and far to us here in the benefice of Rural East York. We serve the communities of Dunnington, Holtby, Warthill and Stockton on the Forest. My name is Mark Poole, and I am the curate here serving alongside our Rector Nick Bird.

We are delighted you have tuned in to share with us, may this time be one of blessing, encouragement, and refreshment.

**Let us pray,**

Awaken us, Lord to your light. Open our eyes to your presence.

Awaken us, Lord to your love. Open our hearts to your indwelling.

Awaken us, Lord to your life. Open our minds to your abiding.

Awaken us, Lord to your purpose. Open our wills to your guiding.

**Amen**

**Song:** All Heaven declares

1. All Heaven declares

The glory of the risen Lord

Who can compare

With the beauty of the Lord

1. Forever He will be

The lamb upon the throne

I gladly bow the knee

And worship Him alone

1. I will proclaim

The glory of the risen Lord

Who once was slain

To reconcile us all to God

1. Forever You will be

The lamb upon the throne

I gladly bow the knee

And worship You alone

**Confession & Absolution:**

**Almighty God,**

**Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,**

**maker of all things, judge of all people,**

**we acknowledge and lament our many sins**

**and the wickedness we have committed time after time,**

**by thought, word and deed against your divine majesty.**

**We have provoked your righteous anger**

**and your indignation against us.**

**We earnestly repent,**

**and are deeply sorry for these our wrongdoings;**

**the memory of them weighs us down,**

**the burden of them is too great for us to bear.**

**Have mercy upon us,**

**have mercy upon us, most merciful Father.**

**For your Son our Lord Jesus Christ’s sake,**

**forgive us all that is past;**

**and grant that from this time forward**

**we may always serve and please you in newness of life,**

**to the honour and glory of your name;**

**through Jesus Christ our Lord.**

**Amen.**

Almighty God, our heavenly Father,

who in his great mercy

has promised forgiveness of sins

to all those who with heartfelt repentance and true faith

turn to him:

have mercy on us,

pardon and deliver us from all our sins,

confirm and strengthen us in all goodness,

and bring us to everlasting life,

through Jesus Christ our Lord.

**Amen.**

# **Reading: John 2.13-22**

***Tear Down This Temple . . .***

When the Passover Feast, celebrated each spring by the Jews, was about to take place, Jesus traveled up to Jerusalem. He found the Temple teeming with people selling cattle and sheep and doves. The loan sharks were also there in full strength.

Jesus put together a whip out of strips of leather and chased them out of the Temple, stampeding the sheep and cattle, upending the tables of the loan sharks, spilling coins left and right. He told the dove merchants, “Get your things out of here! Stop turning my Father’s house into a shopping mall!” That’s when his disciples remembered the Scripture, “Zeal for your house consumes me.”

But the Jews were upset. They asked, “What credentials can you present to justify this?” Jesus answered, “Tear down this Temple and in three days I’ll put it back together.”

They were indignant: “It took forty-six years to build this Temple, and you’re going to rebuild it in three days?” But Jesus was talking about his body as the Temple. Later, after he was raised from the dead, his disciples remembered he had said this. They then put two and two together and believed both what was written in Scripture and what Jesus had said.

**Homily** given by Rev Terry Joyce

**Cleaning up!**

Well, we’ve got a bit of action in our Gospel reading today!

This is one occasion when we didn’t quite expect Jesus to do what he did – causing chaos among the traders & money-sellers!

It sound’s like mayhem! The temple precincts were vast and the scene would have been a bit like a Sunday market, made more livelier by the presence of the animals.

I wonder how you respond to this account? How does it make you feel? Does it jar on you and make you feel uncomfortable?

Well, I want to share with you that I quite like this being in the Gospels. It brings a bit of grittiness and real life to them. – and certainly challenges the ‘Jesus meek & mild image’. What we see is Jesus getting cross – and for everyone who gets angry, this passage should be a help!

What wound Jesus up was that the temple system had become corrupt – and was preventing people from worshipping God. So

What was supposed to facilitate the worship and reverence of God was nothing more than a common marketplace – which cheated people.

What I want to draw from this passage are some thoughts about anger and how Jesus moves on to talk about Spring Cleaning.

**Insights on anger**

This passage doesn’t call it anger – but it was. I think that’s because anger is often assumed to be sinful, and we know that Jesus didn’t commit a sin, so it avoids the potential confusion.

But anger, in itself is not a sin, even if it can potentially lead us into it.

William Barclay, the great bible commentator said “selfish anger is always a sin; but **selfless** anger can be one of the great moral dynamics of the world”.

Can you imagine a world without anger and frustration – without the ability to feel deeply and passionately? It’s very hard to imagine. Perhaps we need to acknowledge that the world needs anger – and some things happen when we aren’t angry enough.

Another commentator said “a person that doesn’t know how to be angry doesn’t know how to be good – now and again we should be shaken to the core with indignation over things that are wrong”.

St. Augustine wrote that Hope has two beautiful daughters: Anger, so that what must not be cannot be; and Courage, so that what can be, will be.

I said earlier that Jesus was cross! I’m sure that in his mind was the ultimate human sacrifice he was to make **on the cross**, a supreme act of love – and he of all people didn’t want himself or God represented in the way the traders were suggesting. It had to change. It was time to clean up!

Anger here was potentially energy for change. Our anger, rightly expressed, shows what we really care about.

Some people bear anger within them, sometimes with good reason but it eats away at them and becomes destructive. That is never what God wants.

There is a difference between destructive anger that can screw up people’s lives and constructive anger that, through God’s grace can be limited and channelled.

Jesus anger on this occasion didn’t cause a block to people understanding him. We’re told in v.23 that his actions were seen as a sign - “they saw the signs that he was doing”

**So to Jesus and Spring Cleaning?**

The temple precincts had been allowed to go rotten.

But then Jesus goes on to talk enigmatically about a different kind of temple: not huge impressive edifices of stone, but of himself. It took some time for that meaning to register.

This is a bit complex, because it is John’s gospel and there’s loads of different threads making the picture – but let’s keep it simple!

The temple was to live inside him, from that point on. From the third day (after his crucifixion) it was to be about him, not buildings, however impressive they could be; and not just about him, but about **people**, not buildings.

It would be in people that God would reside. All that was necessary for worshipping God and offering sacrifices would be within us.

That’s why Paul in 1 Cor 3:9 writes that “we are God’s servants, working together; you are God’s field, God’s building” – and then a few verses on –(v.16) “Do you not know that you are God’s temple and that God’s spirit dwells in you? For God’s temple is holy and you are that temple.

That puts our anger into context – it has a place within the temple of our bodies when we are honouring and glorifying God – when people can see something of God’s purposes working out in our lives.

When it and other impulses aren’t like that we need to lay them down as sacrifices, in sorrow, that Jesus may come in and cleanse our insides like he did the temple precincts – that God may turn them from vices to virtues that can help us to be built as God’s temples.

So, a couple of thoughts to leave you with on this 3rd Sunday of Lent:

Firstly, we need to ask how are we like those money-changers in the temple? How have we cheapened the precious gifts of God? How, as a result, do we grieve God?

And secondly, Lent is a time for each of us to give our temples a really thorough spring clean – sorting out the temple that God has given us, rededicating it to his service.

When we can get back in our church buildings to worship, we’ll naturally want to make sure that they are cleaned, polished and fit for purpose. So why not the same with the temples of our bodies?

What’s our relationship with God like? Are we in continuous conversation with God or have we drifted a bit? What weaknesses can we isolate and eliminate? What strengths can we build on? All these things we can ask Jesus to lend a hand with… clearing away the guilt, polishing up the joy, making room for love. … that’s what Jesus was doing in the temple and that’s what Lent is for.

**Song**: ‘Jesus Christ is Waiting’

1. Jesus Christ is waiting,

waiting in the streets:

no one is his neighbour,

all alone he eats.

Listen, Lord Jesus,

I am lonely too;

make me, friend or stranger,

fit to wait on you

1. Jesus Christ is raging,

raging in the streets

where injustice spirals

and all hope retreats.

Listen, Lord Jesus,

I am angry too;

in the Kingdom’s causes

let me rage with you.

1. Jesus Christ is healing,

healing in the streets;

curing those who suffer,

touching those he greets.

Listen, Lord Jesus,

I have pity too;

let my care be active,

healing just like you.

1. Jesus Christ is dancing,

dancing in the streets,

where each sign of hatred

His strong love defeats.

Listen, Lord Jesus,

I feel triumph too;

on suspicion’s graveyard,

let me dance with you.

1. Jesus Christ is calling,

calling in the streets,

‘Come and walk faith’s tightrope,

` I will guide your feet.’

Listen, Lord Jesus,

let my fears be few;

walk one step before me,

I will follow you.

**Intercessions & Lord’s prayer**

Our Father and Friend

We thank you for being with us through all the experiences of our lives, in disturbing, and troubling times you hold us in your arms when we cannot have human contact, you speak words of consolation when others cannot be heard and in a time when we must cover our faces, you show your face, in the face of your son.

In a time when human faces must be hidden

Let your face shine on all those who need your blessing

We are grateful as hope grows like the flowers of spring. We give thanks for those whose intelligence, skills and perseverance, design, produce and deliver the vaccine. But we remember there are places in the world where covid may be the least of worries.

We remember those are imprisoned or live in constant fear of violence because of their faith or ethnicity.

We bring before you those places where war continues to cause hunger, pain, loss and death.

We think of those in a political struggle to bring democracy, fairness and peace where they live.

We pray that in these places, those who have the means, the skill or the power to make changes will somehow feel your presence in their decisions and actions.

In a time when human faces must be hidden

Let your face shine on all those who need your blessing

For our own country, and her leaders we ask for wisdom and discernment, the ability to understand, and interpret data and to apply that knowledge for the good of all, not just the few. We pray for those communities where losses have been greatest, in lives, livelihoods and welfare and for those who have the ability to improve the situation. We pray that our leaders can take into account the needs of the wider world and that the vaccine can be shared fairly.

In a time when human faces must be hidden

Let your face shine on all those who need your blessing

We remember that many people face situations, which even in normal circumstances would be difficult, but which in a pandemic are particularly hard to bear.

Let us bring before you those we know who are dealing with bereavement.

And those who are sick or in hospital

In a time when human faces must be hidden

Let your face shine on all those who need your blessing

Help all those who work tirelessly to assist those in need, our NHS and care workers, and our Clergy.

We think especially of our youngest children who will return to school this week, and of their teachers who will be helping them to feel safe and happy in times of change. And of our older children and young people who still cannot fully engage with their peers, for the happy times and relationships that they will be missing.

In a time when human faces must be hidden

Let your face shine on all those who need your blessing

Dear Father and Friend

Help us all this week to do something to help someone near to us. We do not all have the means or the power to make changes to a world in crisis, but we are taught that whatever we can do for others we are doing for you, no matter how small the task. In this, and for all we have asked, we seek your guidance and blessing. **Amen**

**The Lord’s Prayer**

**Our Father in heaven,**

**hallowed be your name,**

**your kingdom come,**

**your will be done,**

**on earth as in heaven.**

**Give us today our daily bread.**

**Forgive us our sins**

**as we forgive those who sin against us.**

**Lead us not into temptation**

**but deliver us from evil.**

**For the kingdom, the power,**

**and the glory are yours**

**now and for ever.**

**Amen.**

**Song:** You are worthy of my praise (I will worship) by David Ruis

1. I will worship (I will worship)

With all of my heart (with all of my heart)

I will praise You (I will praise You)

With all of my strength (all my strength)

I will seek You (I will seek You)

All of my days (all of my days)

I will follow (I will follow)

All of Your ways (all Your ways)

***Refrain***

*I will give You all my worship*

*I will give You all my praise*

*You alone I long to worship*

*You alone are worthy of my praise*

1. I will bow down (I will bow down)

Hail You as King (hail You ask King)

I will serve You (I will serve You)

Give You everything (give You everything)

I will lift up (I will lift up)

My eyes to Your throne (my eyes to Your throne)

I will trust You (I will trust You)

Trust You alone (trust in You alone)

***Refrain x 3***

**Thanks**

Thank you to all who have participated, contributed and produced our act of worship today. And thank you for sending in photos, please keep them coming.

If you have not been able to attend our Lent course via zoom each Thursday evening, then we are recording the short talks and uploading them to youtube, so you can find them at your leisure.

I wish you a good week as you continue your journey through Lent, and hope you will join us next time as we celebrate Mothering Sunday.

Let us pray:

**Collect**

Almighty God,

whose most dear Son went not up to joy but first he suffered pain,

and entered not into glory before he was crucified:

mercifully grant that we, walking in the way of the cross,

may find it none other than the way of life and peace;

through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord,

who is alive and reigns with you,

in the unity of the Holy Spirit,

one God, now and for ever.

**Amen**

**Blessing**

So let us ask for God's blessing as we begin this new week.

May the Good Lord lavish you with the graces that you need this week.

May he gift you where you know yourself to be lacking.

May you be overwhelmed with a sense of the presence of the Divine

if your heart is ever tilting toward despair.

May Jesus disturb you if he finds you dealing in comfortable easy religion.

And may he comfort you if he finds you disturbed by the world.

May your heart be enlarged by the troubles of those around you.

And may you know yourself to be both loved and lovable

in the very depths of your being.

And may the blessing of God almighty,

Creator, Redeemer and Sustainer,

be with you and with those whom you love and pray for,

today and always. **Amen**.

**Go in the peace of Christ.**

**Thanks be to God.**