

March 7, 2021, THIRD SUNDAY OF LENT, SUNDAY SERVICE & SERMON
Pastor Tom Olson; Minnesota Valley Free Lutheran Church

PRELUDE: Ray Holmberg (Fugleberg)

CALL TO WORSHIP:

HYMN #134 "Holy, Holy, Holy" 9 AM: #176 OVH (#20 AH) "Holy, Holy, Holy"

CONFESSION OF SIN: Psalm 51:1-7 Have mercy on me. O God, according to your unfailing love; according to your great compassion blot out my transgressions. Wash away all my iniquity and cleanse me from my sin. For I know my transgressions, and my sin is always before me. Against you, you only, have I sinned and done what is evil in your sight, so that you are proved right when you speak and justified when you judge. Surely I was sinful at birth, sinful from the time my mother conceived me. Surely you desire truth in the inner parts; you teach me wisdom in the inmost place. Cleanse me with hyssop, and I will be clean; wash me, and I will be whiter than snow.

CHILDREN'S SERMON: A well needed spanking. John 2:15

OLD TESTAMENT LESSON: *Exodus 20:1-17*

1 And God spoke all these words:

2 "I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of Egypt, out of the land of slavery.

3 "You shall have no other gods before me.

4 "You shall not make for yourself an idol in the form of anything in heaven above or on the earth beneath or in the waters below. 5 You shall not bow down to them or worship them; for I, the LORD your God, am a jealous God, punishing the children for the sin of the fathers to the third and fourth generation of those who hate me, 6 but showing love to a thousand [generations] of those who love me and keep my commandments.

7 "You shall not misuse the name of the LORD your God, for the LORD will not hold anyone guiltless who misuses his name.

8 "Remember the Sabbath day by keeping it holy. 9 Six days you shall labor and do all your work, 10 but the seventh day is a Sabbath to the LORD your God. On it you shall not do any work, neither you, nor your son or daughter, nor your manservant or maidservant, nor your animals, nor the alien within your gates. 11 For in six days the LORD made the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that is in them, but he rested on the seventh day. Therefore the LORD blessed the Sabbath day and made it holy.

12 "Honor your father and your mother, so that you may live long in the land the LORD your God is giving you.

13 "You shall not murder.

14 "You shall not commit adultery.

15 "You shall not steal.

16 "You shall not give false testimony against your neighbor.

17 "You shall not covet your neighbor's house. You shall not covet your neighbor's wife, or his manservant or maidservant, his ox or donkey, or anything that belongs to your neighbor."

EPISTLE LESSON: *1 Corinthians 1:18-31*

18 For the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God. 19 For it is written: "I will destroy the wisdom of the wise; the intelligence of the intelligent I will frustrate." 20 Where is the wise man? Where is the scholar? Where is the philosopher of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of the world? 21 For since in the wisdom of God the world through its wisdom did not know him, God was pleased through the foolishness of what was preached to save those who believe. 22 Jews demand miraculous signs and Greeks look for wisdom, 23 but we preach Christ crucified: a stumbling block to Jews and foolishness to Gentiles, 24 but to those whom God has called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God. 25 For the foolishness of God is wiser than man's wisdom, and the weakness of God is stronger than man's strength.

26 Brothers, think of what you were when you were called. Not many of you were wise by human standards; not many were influential; not many were of noble birth. 27 But God chose the foolish things of the world to shame the wise; God chose the weak things of the world to shame the strong. 28 He chose the lowly things of this world and the despised things—and the things that are not—to nullify the things that are, 29 so that no one may boast before him. 30 It is because of him that you are in Christ Jesus, who has become for us wisdom from God—that is, our righteousness, holiness and redemption. 31 Therefore, as it is written: "Let him who boasts boast in the Lord."

PASTOR: Here ends the reading of God's Word.

CONGREGATION SINGS: God be praised, for His glad Tidings!

CONFESSION OF FAITH: *I believe in one God, the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth, And of all things visible and invisible.*

And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of God, Begotten of His Father before all worlds, God of God, Light of Light, Very God of very God, Begotten, not made, Being of one substance with the Father, By whom all things were made; Who for us, and for our salvation, came down from heaven, And was incarnate by the Holy Spirit of the virgin Mary, And was made man; And was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate, He suffered and was buried; And the third day He rose again according to the Scriptures, And ascended into heaven, And is seated on the right hand of the Father, And He shall come again with glory to judge both the living and the dead; Whose kingdom shall have no end.

And I believe in the Holy Spirit, The Lord and Giver of Life, Who proceeds from the Father and the Son, Who with the Father and the Son together is worshiped and glorified, Who spoke by the Prophets. And I believe one holy Christian and apostolic Church, I acknowledge one Baptism for the remission of sins. And I look for the Resurrection of the dead, And the Life of the world to come. Amen

GLORIA PATRI: **Ambassador Hymnal p. 4 (please put on screen)** *Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost; As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen, Amen.*

ANNOUNCEMENTS AND PRAYER FOR OFFERING

HYMN #82 (vs 1-3) "O What Precious Balm and Healing"

**SERMON TITLE: "A CLEANSED TEMPLE"
John 2:13-22; Pastor Tom Olson; March 7, 2021**

Grace be to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. Amen

CLEANING: I was talking with someone on the phone who is on quarantine because someone they work with had Covid. The one I talked to doesn't have it but still company rules for him to stay home. I asked him what he is going to do and he said "Some very needed house cleaning."

TEMPLE: Jesus also did some real house cleaning. After Jesus was baptized, he went in to the wilderness to be tempted, then he chose his disciples and had his first public miracle of turning the water into wine, all in the Galilee region. To the best of our knowledge, he was unknown in Jerusalem. The last recorded time in Jerusalem was 20 years earlier when he was 12 years old, talking with the teachers in the temple. He now is doing his appointed ministry and he goes directly to the temple again and finds it filled with corrupt buying and selling of merchandise, rather than people praying and seeking God. He became consumed with Holy Zeal for the house of God. Let's talk about it and see how it applies to our own lives.

I. THE CLEANSING OF THE OLD TEMPLE

John 2:13-22 When it was almost time for the Jewish Passover, Jesus went up to Jerusalem. 14 In the temple courts he found men selling cattle, sheep and doves, and others sitting at tables exchanging money. 15 So he made a whip out of cords, and drove all from the temple area, both sheep and cattle; he scattered the coins of

the money changers and overturned their tables. 16 To those who sold doves he said, "Get these out of here! How dare you turn my Father's house into a market!"

FIRST: It is very important to note that the first order of business for Jesus upon entering Jerusalem is the cleansing of the temple. He made a whip and drove out the corrupt businessmen. He overturned their tables and scattered their coins. He rebuked them for making "His Father's" house into a market.

PRIORITIES: What does this tell us about his priorities? This is a powerful reminder that Jesus wants the "temple of God" to be clean. He wants it to be used for high purposes. He wants it to be a place where the Holy Spirit is pleased to dwell.

RETREAT: I spent a couple of days with a parishioner from a congregation I used to serve. We talked, we prayed, we sought the Lord earnestly on behalf of his children and his health. He had vicious cancer and has lost 75 pounds. He is concerned about his children like most of us are. His wife has gotten serious food allergies and has lost a lot of weight. It seems like they are under some kind of spiritual attack so we wanted to "cleanses our temples" and press into the presence of God.

DETESTIBLE: The Bible tells us that in the last days a lot of detestable things will come into the temple of God. You must have noticed that three men are married to each other and they just adopted children. They call themselves a throuple instead of a couple. This is detestable. The fact that there is not a national uproar shows how far our nation has backslidden. Also a famous evangelist and apologist died and we have not found out that he was living a very double life of outward ministry and secret sexual advanced toward women he was counseling. The whole ministry has about been destroyed.

BRIDE: God wants a clean temple. Jesus is coming back for a pure bride...not merely forgiven by grace but also sanctified by the cleansing power of the Holy Spirit. Ephesians 5:25-27 has a good word for both marriages and for the church on this topic: ***Ephesians 5:25-27 "Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her 26 to make her holy, cleansing her by the washing with water through the word, 27 and to present her to himself as a radiant church, without stain or wrinkle or any other blemish, but holy and blameless."*** The priority of cleansing the temple as his first ministerial act in Jerusalem should really help us see how important the repentance of sin is in the nation, church and home.

II. THE CLEANSER OF THE TEMPLE

John 2:17 His disciples remembered that it is written: "Zeal for your house will consume me."

ZEALOUS: Jesus is the cleanser. He is a zealous cleanser. He puts all his energies into purifying the temple of God. Jesus doesn't just give orders, He gives himself. He lays himself on the line for the sake of a temple that is pleasing to the Holy Spirit.

GIVING: Jesus gave himself continually. He had no home. He was often disowned by family members. The church that was meant to receive him, rejected him. But He didn't quit. He is ***"the lamb of God who takes away the sins of the whole world."*** John the Baptist announced him as the "lamb of God." The lamb gives his innocent life to pay for the sins of the family offering him. Jesus went to the cross so we could be cleansed from sin.

SONG: One song puts it this way so well...

Oh, how He loves you and me.

He gave His life, what more could He give;
Oh, how He loves you and me.

Jesus to Calv'ry did go,
His love for mankind to show.
What He did there, brought hope from despair.
Oh, how He loves you and me.

WORD: Jesus cleanses us with His blood. Jesus cleanses us with His Word. Did you notice Ephesian 5:26 says this: ***"cleansing her by the washing with water through the word."*** When we read the Word of God is washes us clean. I was driving yesterday and listening to John 1-4 on CD over and over and it was washing my heart and soul clean. Holy Communion also washes us with the Word of God even through sight, taste and touch. We are washed by God's Word by baptism, by Holy Communion. God is using these means to reach our hearts and bring us into an intimate relationship with Him. Jesus is the one who does it. ***Romans 10:13 "Whosoever calls upon the Name of the Lord shall be saved."*** THE CLEANSING OF THE TEMPLE IS A PRIORITY, THE CLEANSER OF THE TEMPLE IS JESUS...and finally...

III. THE CLEAN NEW TEMPLE

John 2:18-22 Then the Jews demanded of him, "What miraculous sign can you show us to prove your authority to do all this?" 19 Jesus answered them, "Destroy this temple, and I will raise it again in three days." 20 The Jews replied, "It has taken forty-six years to build this temple, and you are going to raise it in three days?" 21 But the temple he had spoken of was his body. 22 After he was raised from the dead, his disciples recalled what he had said. Then they believed the Scripture and the words that Jesus had spoken.

REFUGE: Ultimately the clean temple is Christ's body, nailed to the cross with our sins. Died and preached to the souls in prison. Rose the third day, victorious. Jesus is our city of refuge. He is our shelter in the time of storm. He is our righteousness. He is our holy temple. To know him is to know eternal life and to see the Father.

VICTOR: Don't be discouraged. Jesus is seated at the right hand of the Father ***"far above all earthly power."*** His is coming in glory to judge the living and the dead. His kingdom has no end. ***Romans 10:11 The scripture says, "Whoever believes in him will not be disappointed."***

INVITATION: God invites you to his table where he gives us himself as heavenly food. ***Psalm 34:8 Oh, taste and see that the LORD is good! Blessed is the man who takes refuge in him!*** Christ himself is the clean new temple who makes us pure when He dwells in our hearts.

*Come in poverty and meanness,
Come defiled without, within,
From infection and uncleanness,
From the leprosy of sin.
Wash your robes and make them white,
Ye shall walk with God in light!*

Jesus invites you to come. Amen ***And now may the peace of God that surpasses all human comprehension guard your hearts and minds through faith in Christ Jesus. Amen***

HYMN #448 "O Master Let Me Walk with Thee"

HOLY COMMUNION (10:30 AM Dave Fischer prep and help; 9 AM Nate Kalstad)

BENEDICTION (9 AM): The Lord bless you and keep you, the Lord make His face to shine upon you and be gracious unto you, the Lord lift up His countenance upon you and grant you peace. Amen

DOXOLOGY: (10:30 AM-To the tune of Edelweiss) *May the Lord, Mighty Lord, Bless and keep you forever-- Grant you peace, Perfect peace, Strength in every endeavor. Lift up your eyes and see His face, Feel His grace forever. May the Lord, Mighty Lord, Bless and keep you forever. 9 AM OVH #32*

POSTLUDE: Ray Holmberg

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