

It transforms lives...

Introduction

Last week we saw that Jesus' pathway to generosity is grounded in prayer. Our pathway to generosity, as we respond to God's call and claim on our lives, is to answer the question, "Lord, how are you calling me to give?" In the text from John's story of Jesus, we get some very strong clues, though not necessarily overt, about how to answer the question.

Discussion Questions for John 2:13-21

1. Check out the Tantrum in the Temple story in Matthew 21:12-14; Mark 11:15-18; and Luke 19:45-48. How are these accounts different and alike?
2. Jesus was following in the prophetic tradition when he denounced the buying and selling of animal sacrifices as a means of gaining God's favor. Jesus defines worship as another way. In what way of worship does God delight?
3. Jesus says that material things are a false notion of what God requires of us. With what are the old sacrifices replaced?
4. Continue reading in chapter two, verses 23-25. Why does Jesus not trust himself to persons who believe in him only because they see the signs that he does?
5. Why do you think the authors of the synoptics place this story much farther into their accounts of the ministry of Jesus?
6. So how does this passage help us answer the question, "Lord, how are you calling me to give?"?

Prayer

Holy God, you know our human heart and mind. Arouse our consciences to hear and understand the message of Jesus that faith is not a transaction but a relationship with you and our neighbors. Remind us that your scriptures tell us that those who give out of a desire to grow in their discipleship are generous. Help us to be channels of your love, your compassion and generosity. Amen.

Next week: John 3:14-21