

## Jesus the House Cleaner     John 2:13-17

Last week we learned that God cares about our earthly happiness & joy!  
Jesus' miracles reveal his desire to give us good gifts in this life & in the next.

But what do we do when it feels like God is giving us nothing but misery?  
Is God the source of the things that cause us pain, suffering, & loss as well?

If the answer is "yes", how is it possible to get to a place where we can say:  
*"Though you slay me, yet I will praise You! Though You take from me,  
I will bless Your name! Though You ruin me, still I will worship!  
Sing a song to the One who is all I need!"*

There's another song that says:

*"You tear me down and then you pick me up.  
You take it all and still it's not enough. You try to tell me you can heal  
me, but I'm still bleeding. You will be the death of me!"*

How can we make sense of a God like this? A God who brings good things  
into our lives, & one who also, at least from our perspective, brings misery?

Is such a God still good, & worthy of our praise & affections? Should we run  
to such a God and embrace His plan for our lives, or try to flee from Him?

Job wrestled with this! Peter had to endure this! Paul experienced this his  
entire Christian life! Steven had to look beyond this! **Jesus too had to face this!**

The Christian life consists of 2 primary transformative realities: **Death & Life**

- The death of the old self/flesh
- The coming to life of the new

The H.C. 88 declares this truth **when speaking of true repentance & conversion!**

Why is the death of me/self, essential in receiving & experiencing the new life  
that comes from God, through Jesus Christ? **Because we can't serve 2 masters!**

- Job's self-righteousness had to be put to death to be able to see more  
clearly, and respond more fully to God, and His perfect righteousness!
- Peter's confidence in himself had to be destroyed in order to put His  
hope in Jesus Christ alone!
- Paul's pride had to be severed, if God's glory was to be the focal point  
and pursuit of his life going forward!

- The injustice shown to Steven had to take place in order to reveal &  
ignite the self-sacrificing, yet life-giving, Christian movement!
- Jesus' earthly life had to be crucified, in order to provide eternal life to  
all who would believe in His name!

Is it possible to have such faith, that pursues life in the midst of death/  
suffering/loss of self? It is, but it only comes through faith in the One who  
has overcome the greatest loss, the worst of suffering, even death itself!

All the pain in this world, even the self-inflicted kind, will one day be  
removed from our experience. **But here & now they have redemptive purpose!**

- They lead us to turn to, and trust in, God alone! That's why we sing, "Give  
us wisdom, give us courage, for the facing of this hour. For we need Your  
holy power... Make us Your story, God of glory & grace!"
- They lead us to a new life that is only experienced through the cross!  
**"Oh the wonderful cross, bids me come & die to find that I can truly live!"**
- They bring more fully the transformative power, & love, of Jesus into  
our lives! **"In my heart & my soul, Lord I give You control. Consume me  
from the inside out... It's the art of losing myself in bringing You praise!"**

If we dare to believe in the redemptive work of God, in the midst of our  
suffering/loss/discipline, then we can give Him a torch... a scalpel... **even a  
whip...** to rid us of what is keeping us from experiencing more fully His glory!

The Bible speaks of our bodies being the **"temple of the Holy Spirit!"** Christ  
makes His home in our hearts, **but they often need some cleaning out first!**

Jesus uses a variety of methods to clean house! What's needed in your  
temple? **John 2:13-17** – Jesus the house cleaner!

Jesus cleans house by:

- **By taking a whip and driving out what doesn't belong!** What doesn't  
belong in your house/life, that is keeping you from honoring God?
- **By pouring out the misplaced desires of our hearts!** What misplaced  
desires consume your life, at the expense of serving God and others?
- **By overturning the tables where injustice and sin are taking the place of  
the altar!** Who is the worshipper, & who is the worshipped?

*"Holy fire, burn away my desire for anything that is not of You and is of me.  
I want more of You and less of me! Empty me! Fill me with You!"*

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