

EXTREME TEMPLE MAKEOVER: HEART EDITION

(March 2010 – Beausejour Church – Pastor Chris Jordan)

OPENING JOKE:

A pastor had had a bad week. On Sunday he was very frustrated and he began his sermon, "Everyone in this church is going to hell if they don't change their ways."

One man in the back began to laugh. So the pastor said it again louder.

The man continued to laugh. The pastor went back to him and asked him why he was laughing.

He answered, "Because I don't belong to this church!"

INTRO TO TOPIC: This morning is a significant day in the calendar of Christian events. It is one week before Easter, the weekend where we remember the death and resurrection of Jesus. It was on this day that the Lord Jesus made His triumphal entry into the city of Jerusalem.

In some denominational churches, they have a season called 'Lent' where they prepare their hearts for Easter Sunday. Although that is not necessarily a Biblical concept, we are going to prepare our hearts this Sunday morning to enter into the Easter Season.

OPENING TEXT:

"**1** Now when they drew near Jerusalem, and came to Bethphage, at the Mount of Olives, then Jesus sent two disciples, **2** saying to them, "Go into the village opposite you, and immediately you will find a donkey tied, and a colt with her. Loose them and bring them to Me. **3** And if anyone says anything to you, you shall say, 'The Lord has need of them,' and immediately he will send them." **4** All this was done that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, saying: **5** "Tell the daughter of Zion, Behold, your King is coming to you, Lowly, and sitting on a donkey, A colt, the foal of a donkey." **6** So the disciples went and did as Jesus commanded them. **7** They brought the donkey and the colt, laid their clothes on them, and set Him on them. **8** And a very great multitude spread their clothes on the road; others cut down branches from the trees and spread them on the road. **9** Then the multitudes who went before and those who followed cried out, saying: "Hosanna to the Son of David! Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord! Hosanna in the highest!" **10** And when He had come into Jerusalem, all the city was moved, saying, "Who is this?" **11** So the multitudes said, "This is Jesus, the prophet from Nazareth of Galilee." (Matthew 21:1-11).

- Picture this triumphal entry! Jesus is riding into the city on a donkey.
- The people cut down palm branches and lay their clothes on the road before Him.
- The people are passionately worshipping and praising the coming of the King!
- In Luke's Gospel, as he tells this same story, he adds: **"Then, as He was now drawing near the descent of the Mount of Olives, the whole multitude of the disciples began to rejoice and praise God with a loud voice for all the mighty works they had seen."** (Luke 19:37).
- What a joyful celebration this was – the people rejoiced in God's goodness!

JOKE:

It was Palm Sunday, and the mother's 3-year old son had to stay home from church because of strep throat. When the rest of the family got home carrying palm branches, the little boy asked what they were for. His mother explained, "People held them over Jesus' head as he walked by." "Wouldn't you know it," the boy fumed. "The one Sunday I don't go, and Jesus shows up."

KEY TEXT:

“12 Then Jesus went into the temple of God and drove out all those who bought and sold in the temple, and overturned the tables of the money changers and the seats of those who sold doves. **13** And He said to them, "It is written, 'My house shall be called a house of prayer,' but you have made it a 'den of thieves.' " **14 Then the blind and the lame came to Him in the temple, and He healed them.** **15** But when the chief priests and scribes saw *the wonderful things that He did*, and the children crying out in the temple and saying, "Hosanna to the Son of David!" they were indignant **16** and said to Him, "Do You hear what these are saying?" And Jesus said to them, "Yes. Have you never read, 'Out of the mouth of babes and nursing infants You have perfected praise?'" (Matthew 21:12-16).

- Notice the important connective word *“Then”* in verse 12 – right after Jesus came to town; He went into the temple and cleansed it.
- *When* did Jesus do all of the wonderful things – healing sick people and transforming lives? *After* He cleansed the temple!
- Jesus wants His temple – our lives – to be a house of prayer, ministry and blessing to others. But that won't happen until we first cleanse our temples – our hearts and lives.

THE BIG IDEA: We are the temple of God – His Holy Spirit lives in us. When Jesus comes into our lives, He wants to perform an Extreme Temple Makeover: Heart Edition.

- You've all seen the home improvement shows; a crew comes in and totally renovates a run-down home, and makes it better. That's what Jesus wants to do with our lives!
- Yes, Jesus loves us the way we are, but He loves us too much to leave us that way.

1. YOU ARE THE TEMPLE OF THE HOLY SPIRIT:

“Do you not know that you are the temple of God and that the Spirit of God dwells in you? If anyone defiles the temple of God, God will destroy him. For the temple of God is holy, which temple you are.” (1 Corinthians 3:16-17).

- In the Old Testament, the presence of God resided in an actual temple building.
- In the New Covenant, the presence of God – His Holy Spirit – lives in believers.
- God gives a stern warning against defiling His holy temple – that's us!
- How can we defile the temple? Sometimes people just focus on externals – smoking cigarettes, getting drunk, doing drugs. There are more ways we can pollute our temples:
- **“And then Jesus added, 'It is the thought-life that defiles you. For from within, out of a person's heart, come evil thoughts, sexual immorality, theft, murder, adultery, greed, wickedness, deceit, eagerness for lustful pleasure, envy, slander, pride, and foolishness. All these vile things come from within; they are what defile you and make you unacceptable to God.’”** (Mark 7:20-23).
- Jesus is more concerned about our heart attitudes and actions than mere externals.

2. YOU ARE TO RUN AWAY FROM SEXUAL SIN:

“Don't you realize that your bodies are actually parts of Christ? Should a man take his body, which belongs to Christ, and join it to a prostitute? Never! And don't you know that if a man joins himself to a prostitute, he becomes one body with her? For the Scriptures say, 'The two are united into one.' But the person who is joined to the Lord becomes one spirit with him. Run away from sexual sin! No other sin so clearly affects the body as this one does. For sexual immorality is a sin against your own body. Or don't you know that

your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit, who lives in you and was given to you by God? You do not belong to yourself, for God bought you with a high price. So you must honor God with your body.” (1 Corinthians 6:15-20).

- In order to keep our temple clean, we need to run away from sexual sin.
- **“But among you there must not be even a hint of sexual immorality, or of any kind of impurity, or of greed, because these are improper for God's holy people.”** (Ephesians 5:3). Not even a HINT of sexual immorality – what does that mean?
- When we were at Promise Keepers, Fred Stoeker shared a message on this:
- He said red flags are: telling off color jokes, double innuendos, lingerie ads, channel surfing, watching other people have sex (we call those movies). NOT EVEN A HINT!
- What is sexual immorality? Homosexuality, premarital sex, living together, pornography

ILLUSTRATION:

- Thursday night, Liza went into the city on a date, and after dinner wandered through the mall. In the perfume section at the Bay, I had to have blinders on my eyes, because there were full size glossy photos of half naked women everywhere!
- Our problem is, we've become so comfortable with sex in our society – it's everywhere!
- **INDIAN HUNTERS AND THE ORANGE MONSTER.** Indian duck hunters will hollow out a pumpkin and float it down the river towards the ducks. The first couple of passes, the ducks will fly away because they are afraid, but after a while, they become desensitized to it, and that's what's happened in our world with sexual immorality.

3. GOD HAS CALLED US TO 'COME OUT' FROM THE UNGODLY WORLD:

“Do not be unequally yoked together with unbelievers. For what fellowship has righteousness with lawlessness? And what communion has light with darkness? And what accord has Christ with Belial? Or what part has a believer with an unbeliever? And what agreement has the temple of God with idols? For you are the temple of the living God. As God has said: "I will dwell in them And walk among them. I will be their God, And they shall be My people." Therefore "Come out from among them And be separate, says the Lord. Do not touch what is unclean, And I will receive you." "I will be a Father to you, And you shall be My sons and daughters, Says the Lord Almighty.” (2 Corinthians 6:14-18).

- God doesn't want us unequally yoked with non-Christians – don't date unbelievers!
- God wants us to come out and be separate from the ungodly world system.

CLOSING CHALLENGE: **“Because we have these promises, dear friends, let us cleanse ourselves from everything that can defile our body or spirit. And let us work toward complete purity because we fear God.”** (2 Corinthians 7:1).

- Challenge – allow Jesus to come into your heart for an extreme temple makeover today!
- Note, this is not a message of condemnation today. God loves those who struggle with sexual addictions, and wants to set you free! Love, acceptance and forgiveness.
- If you want freedom, you need an accountability partner. Talk to me for more info.
- If you need serious help: Overcomer's Outreach and www.settingcaptivesfree.com.
- An important key to victory = get God's Word into your heart! (Psalm 119:9,11).
- The goal is not just to be free from sexual addictions, but to become a force for God, impacting the world with the power of the Gospel of the Kingdom! Lives transformed!