



A House of prayer

INTRODUCTION: When someone looks for a church they often evaluate and ask questions such as, “What kind of music do they have? How is their children’s ministry? Are the people friendly? What is their preacher like? How are they involved in the community? What do they give to missions?” But, are these the things that are most important to God, or are these just cultural things that we have come to place importance on? What does God expect of His Church? What is He looking for in our lives? Please listen to this week’s message to discover what God is looking for in His house and in yours.

READ: Mark 11:15-18

DISCUSSION:

1. Have you ever searched for a house? If so, have you ever seen one that was falsely advertised or was far different than described? Share your experience with the group.
2. How might your experience be similar to what Jesus experienced when He went to the temple in Mark 11?
3. What are some things that you were looking for in a church when you first came to Crosslink? Why were these things important to you? How important are these things to God?
4. What stands out to you most about Jesus’s rebuke in Mark 11?
 - a. Why do we resist being confronted and rebuked about our wrongs?
 - b. Why is this a necessary step for cleansing?
5. After Jesus cleansed the temple, He encouraged several specific things to take place. What were they? How do we experience these on a regular basis at Crosslink?
6. While there are many things that Jesus encouraged, what should be the primary characteristic of a body of believers? How are we fulfilling this at Crosslink? How can we grow in this? How are you contributing to this?
7. To get the Temple back in order, Jesus directed the people back to the Word of God by saying, “Is it not written?” What are some of the things that quickly distract us from God’s Word? Why is it important that God’s Word be the constant focus in our life as a church?
8. Jesus pointed out that the religious leaders had made the Temple a den of thieves because they were using it to put on a mask and hide their sins. How do people still do this today?
9. As a group read Jeremiah 7:9-11 and discuss:
 - What were some of the actions of the false believers?
 - What did these people say when they came to the temple to worship?
 - Who were they trying to deceive?
 - Who did they really deceive?

10. As a group read Matthew 21:14-19 and discuss:

- What happened after Jesus cleansed the temple?
- How did the religious leaders respond?
- What did they do with His offer of repentance?
- Look closely at verse 19. What was Jesus saying in this powerful illustration?

MAKE IT SO: What things in your "house" need to be cleaned up so that it can be a house of prayer?

READING LIST: Monday: Matthew 21:1-11 / Tuesday: Matthew 21:12-17 / Wednesday: Matthew 21:18-22

Thursday: Matthew 21:23-27 / Friday: Matthew 21:28-32 / Saturday: Matthew 21:33-41 / Sunday: Matthew 21:42-46