

## **Discussion Questions: John's Gospel (2:13-22)**

### **Overview Question:**

1. What are your questions, wonderings, disagreements, reflections, AND/OR connections, from the teaching this past Sunday on John 2:13-22, where Jesus clears the temple and declares that the sign for his authority to do so will be the destruction and raising of the temple of his body?

### **Literary/textual Questions:**

2. This event takes place during the week of Passover at the beginning of Jesus' ministry (assuming John's intent is chronological accuracy). Jesus will be killed on the eve of Passover two years later. What do we know about Passover and its significance for Israel? Does that significance appear to play any role symbolically here in this event or not? If so, what might that be?
3. It was asserted that Jesus' action of clearing the temple was NOT an attempt toward calling for a reform to the temple's functioning but instead was an acted out parable of judgment, foreshadowing the temple's destruction. Agree or disagree? (Texts to consider: Matt. 21:12-22; Mk. 11:12-21; Lk. 19:41-46)
4. It was asserted during the Sunday teaching that when the Jews asked Jesus for a sign, they were essentially asking him to prove he was the Messiah—the one who had legitimate authority over the Temple. Why do you think Jesus offers the sign that he does offer in response? Why not provide them with something more tangible and timely? Would direct communication by Jesus even work here?
5. (Related to #4) Why do you think Jesus chooses not to clear up the confusion the Jews had about what "Temple" he was referring to when they had misunderstood him to be talking about the physical building (vs. 20)?
6. Not that we can know, but do you think Jesus literally didn't respond to the Jews' question in verse 20, or does John purposely leave out whatever response was provided? If you were Jesus, what would you have said (or not) here?
7. Why do you think John breaks into the story and provides the retrospective narration in verses 17 and 22? What does it provide the reader?

### **Connection and Implication Questions:**

8. Jesus' death and resurrection bring us Gentiles into the story of Israel—a story that is both familiar (to those of us who have been around the Sunday school block) and yet very foreign, with its temple, covenants, history, way of living, etc.... Do you think it matters that we understand Israel's history if we are going to fully embrace Jesus as Messiah or not? Discuss.
9. Jesus calls his body a temple (vs. 19/21). What do you think he means by this? Why does it matter to us now?

10. It was suggested that Jesus' authority as Messiah extends not just over the temple in this passage but over our lives—whether we choose to submit or not. In what ways are we sometimes (or more often than sometimes) like the Jews in the story, demanding a “sign” from him (in theoretical or practical ways)? What motivations do we have for doing so?
11. The NT uses the temple imagery to describe our relationship to God, to one another, and to the world (e.g. Eph. 2:19-22). Given what we know about the Temple and what it symbolized, what do you think being now a part of a living temple of God means when it comes to how we relate with one another?