



TURNING THE TABLES OVER TODAY

AUGUST 19, 2024

READ **JOHN 2:14-16** & **MATTHEW 21:13**

God does not approve of mixing religion with business. The Bible shows that in the past, He was very displeased with priests who claimed to represent Him while instructing “for a price.” (**Micah 3:11**) God condemned the greedy commercial practices that had turned his place of worship into “a cave of robbers.”—**Jeremiah 7:11**.

Jesus shared God’s disgust for those who used religion for financial gain. In His day, religious leaders profited from greedy merchants whom they permitted to operate inside Jerusalem’s temple. There they exploited sincere people who came to worship. Jesus courageously cleared those crooked merchants out of the temple area, saying: **“Stop making the house of my Father a house of commerce!”**—**John 2:14-16**.

Jesus also reflected God’s thinking in the way he conducted his ministry. (**John 8:28, 29**) He never charged people when he taught them about God. He did not request payment when he performed miracles, such as feeding the hungry, curing the sick, and raising the dead. Jesus never used his ministry to accumulate wealth—he did not even own a home.—**Luke 9:58**.

Jesus cleansed the temple of the money-changers and sellers of merchandise because of His disgust at what they had made of God’s house of prayer and His zeal to purify it from the abuse of ungodly men. The money changers in the temple courts were similar to tax collectors in that they extorted money from their own people. They were more than ordinary businessmen. They were seeking to profit financially from the worship of God. To understand what they were doing back then, you must do a study of your own. It is then that you will see how it applies to us today. But do know that it exists! Let us understand what God authorizes and what God does not authorize.

SCRIPTURE READING: **JUDE 1:4**

THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK: Don’t let the crooked keep you from giving. Remember, we are stewards of the Lord! Use great discernment but leave the judgment to Him.