

“Anger: Temple Tantrum” *by Rev. John C. Tittle*

Scripture Reading: Matthew 4:1-11 NRSV

¹⁵ Then they came to Jerusalem. And he entered the temple and began to drive out those who were selling and those who were buying in the temple, and he overturned the tables of the money changers and the seats of those who sold doves; ¹⁶ and he would not allow anyone to carry anything through the temple. ¹⁷ He was teaching and saying, “Is it not written, ‘My house shall be called a house of prayer for all the nations’? But you have made it a den of robbers.” ¹⁸ And when the chief priests and the scribes heard it, they kept looking for a way to kill him; for they were afraid of him, because the whole crowd was spellbound by his teaching. ¹⁹ And when evening came, Jesus and his disciples went out of the city.

Discussion Questions:

1. What jumps out at you about this passage?
2. What was a time that you got really, really angry?
3. How often do you get angry? What are some triggers for you?
4. Is it hard for you to picture Jesus angry? Why or why not?
5. Why was Jesus so angry here? Can you think of other scenes in the gospels where Jesus got angry?
6. If someone told you that they think anger is a deadly sin, would you agree with them? When is anger not a sin? When is it a sin NOT to be angry?
7. What helps you feel, understand, and express your anger in a healthy manner?
8. In the passage, Jesus teaches while he upends the literal apple cart and throws chairs. Is he in control or out of control?
9. Suppressed, ignored, and excessive anger are all very unhealthy for human beings. Why is that?
10. What are some tables and chairs that Jesus needs to upend in your life? In our church? In society?
11. What’s something you learned about anger from this passage?