

Sermon Reflections

Empty Worship (Matthew 21:12-22)

Summary: Jesus comes to comfort and purify your worship. Keep yourself from corrupted worship.

Four Kinds of Corrupted Worship:

1. Superficial Worship (vv. 12–13)

- What would the Temple have looked like when Jesus visited? In what ways was superficial worship on display?
- How might a solemn approach to worship be a front for superficiality? How might a casual approach to worship mask superficiality?
- How can you know when your worship is real rather than superficial? What thoughts compete for the affections of your heart as you sit thru a sermon? How can you guard your heart so that it does not wander from sincere and true worship?

2. Selfish Worship (vv. 13–17)

- Why did children praising Jesus bother the Jewish leaders so much? What specifically needed to change? How could that occur? How does that truth redirect any selfish thoughts?
- What is the relationship between Jesus quoting Psalm 8:2 and the improper Temple worship?
- What does humble worship focused on God, rather than self, look like?

3. Fruitless Worship (vv. 18–19)

- What is the difference between actions and spiritual fruit? What does true fruit look like?
- If someone claims that Jesus is their Savior but does not submit to Him as Lord, what Scriptures can you point them to that show such dichotomy is not the mark of a disciple?
- The primary fruit of a believer is a changed life. What do your thoughts, discussions, and motivations reflect about the affections your heart?

4. Faithless Worship (vv. 20–22)

- Faithless worship is the foundation of all corrupt worship because faith in the person and work of Jesus Christ is the foundation of all true worship.
- What actions can you take to grow your faith? How can you guard against those activities becoming superficial, selfish, or fruitless?
- What are ways you don't rely on Christ, and how does this manifest itself in your worship?
- How can you keep the Cross front and center in your life?