

Welcome to today's Bible study.

Today, we're going to explore a practice that was taking place in the Temple of God—one that was displeasing to the Lord and that He decisively rebuked.

Let's read:

Mark 11:15-16 (ESV)

"And they came to Jerusalem. And he entered the temple and began to drive out those who sold and those who bought in the temple, and he overturned the tables of the money-changers and the seats of those who sold pigeons.

And he would not allow anyone to carry anything through the temple."

This passage is well-known as the account where Jesus drove out those who were buying and selling in the Temple. But often overlooked is verse 16—Jesus **also prohibited anyone from carrying any kind of object or vessel through the Temple courts.**

NO ONE WAS ALLOWED TO CARRY ANY VESSEL THROUGH THE TEMPLE

What does this mean?

The “vessels” mentioned here were not sacred items belonging to the Temple. People were not stealing or moving Temple equipment. Rather, they were **using the Temple grounds as a shortcut**, carrying baskets, containers, tools—ordinary items used in daily life or trade.

Historically, the Temple in Jerusalem was constructed between two strategic areas:

- On one side was **Bethesda**, a major sheep market.
- On the other side was the **Upper City**, where many people lived and worked.

To save time, people began using the Temple courtyards as a **pass-through route**, going from the Upper City to the markets in Bethesda. In doing so, they treated the holy space like a public street. They carried merchandise, food, furniture, and even gambling tables through the Temple—completely disregarding its sanctity.

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Over time, the Temple became polluted with all kinds of traffic:

- Merchants looking for a faster path to market.
- Thieves blending in with the crowds.
- Gossipers and idlers using the Temple as a hangout.
- People with impure motives walking through on their way to schemes.

This kind of irreverent activity **deeply offended the Lord**. Jesus didn't just rebuke the merchants; He also **shut down the flow of people misusing the Temple space**. He stood guard at the entrances and stopped anyone from carrying vessels through the Temple.

In the same way, today we often see churches treated without reverence:

- People walk in and out aimlessly, without focus or intention to worship.
- Vendors sometimes set up near the sanctuary, selling snacks, shoes, or other products.
- Children turn the worship space into a playground.
- Some enter the church not to meet God, but to conduct business, make social connections, or promote personal agendas.

The House of God must be treated as holy ground.

Malachi 1:6 (ESV) says,

“‘A son honors his father, and a servant his master. If then I am a father, where is my honor? And if I am a master, where is my fear?’ says the Lord of hosts to you...”

Just as we protect and honor our own homes—ensuring guests behave respectfully—how much more should we treat the Lord’s house with reverence?

But the Temple of God is not just a building. Scripture also tells us that **our bodies are the temple of the Holy Spirit:**

1 Corinthians 6:19-20 (ESV)

“Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, whom you have from God? You are not your own, for you were bought with a price. So glorify God in your body.”

This means that **our bodies are not to be used for anything unholy**. They are not vessels for sin, impurity, or casual indulgence. Just as Jesus cleansed the physical Temple, He desires to cleanse **our inner temples**—our hearts, minds, and bodies—from all that is profane.

1 Corinthians 6:15-18 (ESV) adds:

“Do you not know that your bodies are members of Christ? Shall I then take the members of Christ and make them members of a prostitute? Never!

Or do you not know that he who is joined to a prostitute becomes one body with her? For, as it is written, ‘The two will become one flesh.’

But he who is joined to the Lord becomes one spirit with him.

Flee from sexual immorality. Every other sin a person commits is outside the body, but the sexually immoral person sins against his own body.”

So just as Jesus would not allow the Temple to be treated as a mere passageway or place for unclean activity, we must not allow **our bodies**, which are temples of the Holy Spirit, to become pathways for sin. We must honor God both **in His house** and **in ourselves**.

Let us be vigilant in maintaining the sanctity of the physical places of worship—and even more, the holiness of our own lives.

Respect the house of God. Respect your body, the temple of the Spirit.

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**May the Lord bless you and keep you.
Amen.**

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