

LENT ADULT FAITH FORMATION
WE ARE BELOVED (Kristen E Vincent)
“Beloved Passion” March 15, 2020

PAUSE

*catch me in my aimless scurrying, Lord,
and hold me in this Lenten season:
hold my heart to the beat of your grace
and create in me a resting place
a kneeling place...*

-Ted Yoder, Guerillas of Grace (adapted)

LISTEN John 2:13-22 (CEB) **Jesus in Jerusalem at Passover**

¹³It was nearly time for the Jewish Passover, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem. ¹⁴He found in the temple those who were selling cattle, sheep, and doves, as well as those involved in exchanging currency sitting there. ¹⁵He made a whip from ropes and chased them all out of the temple, including the cattle and the sheep. He scattered the coins and overturned the tables of those who exchanged currency. ¹⁶He said to the dove sellers, “Get these things out of here! Don’t make my Father’s house a place of business.” ¹⁷His disciples remembered that it is written, *Passion for your house consumes me.*^[a]

¹⁸Then the Jewish leaders asked him, “By what authority are you doing these things? What miraculous sign will you show us?”

¹⁹Jesus answered, “Destroy this temple and in three days I’ll raise it up.”

²⁰The Jewish leaders replied, “It took forty-six years to build this temple, and you will raise it up in three days?” ²¹But the temple Jesus was talking about was his body. ²²After he was raised from the dead, his disciples remembered what he had said, and they believed the scripture and the word that Jesus had spoken.

- **What word, phrase, idea, “shimmered” off the page for you or felt particularly meaningful?**

- What questions do you have of the passage or ideas that you might have found troubling?

THINK (Book Excerpts)

- *The Gospel of John is different in many ways than the other three gospels (Matthew, Mark, Luke). Rather than offering primarily a recounting of Jesus' life, John focuses on explaining who Jesus is. Also, the other three synoptic Gospels place this story towards the end as Jesus nears the culmination of his journey to Jerusalem.*
- *John also records the seven "I am" statements of Jesus:*
 1. *Jesus said, "I am the bread of life" (John 6:35)*
 2. *Jesus said, "I am the light of the world" (John 8:12)*
 3. *Jesus said "I am the gate of the sheep" (John 10:7)*
 4. *Jesus said, "I am the Good Shepherd" (John 10:11)*
 5. *Jesus said, "I am the way and the truth and the life (John 14:6)*
 6. *Jesus said, "I am the resurrection and the life (John 11:25)*
 7. *Jesus said, "I am the true vine (John 15:5)*
- *First and foremost John wants us to know that Jesus is the Christ, the Messiah, the Son of God.*
- *In this passage as Jesus points to his upcoming death and resurrection, Jesus compares his body to the Jerusalem Temple...the holiest of places, the center of Jewish religious life.*
- *(The author notes) that she takes this metaphor to mean that our bodies too are holy places. We are created in God's image. See 1 Corinthians 6:19-20 – "Don't you know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit....."*
- *Seeing our body as holy may not come easy to us...But when we question the holiness of our physical bodies, we need only to remember that God became human in the form of Jesus and then declares Jesus to be God's beloved.*
- *In this passage, Jesus seems to feel this holy place is being overrun with commercialism, that the focus has become more about profit than worship.*
- *Passion doesn't exist in a vacuum. It is intense and derives from a deep anger or a deep love.*
- *We can be passionate about who we are, how we reflect God's love, God's sacred image, God's call to us to live and be in this world.*
- *We can connect with our passions within and through our bodies...learning that our bodies are chuck-full of wisdom....If I feel tired, then I need rest; if I am hungry, then I need food, etc. Though these may seem obvious, listening to our body helps us learn what we need...and can help us tune into our awareness of our belovedness by God.*
- *While finding our passion is a wonderful gift, as we see in our scripture story, passion isn't always viewed favorably....merchants, money collectors, and religious leaders were unhappy... Passion has consequences.*

- Belovedness is not a promise of safety; it is a promise of deep love and new life with Jesus Christ.
- Being beloved is no small thing. It is enormous. The God of the universe has declared that we are beloved. The God of all creation has called us forth to live and serve as beloved. That fact should delight us and inspire us and terrify us all at the same time. That's the nature of passion. It's deep. But we can trust the deep.

REFLECT (Book Excerpts)

- Why do YOU think that John included this story of Jesus cleansing the Temple so early in his Gospel (versus the late inclusion in the other three Gospels)?
What does this story tell YOU about who Jesus is?
- Do you believe that your body is a temple? Why or why not?
How does thinking of your body as the vessel for your soul, change the way you view your body?
How can you honor your body as a temple?
- From today's Gospel story – in what ways does Jesus getting angry and even violent as he overturns the tables and chases away the merchants surprise you?
How does this story speak to you about passion in your own life? About anger?
- In what ways do you see "belovedness" and passion connecting? As a concept? In your life?
- How have you practiced stillness in your life this past week?

PRAY

God of love, who sent your Son Jesus Christ,

so that we might know what it looks like to love passionately.

Help me to believe that my body is a temple and to see it as a vessel of the soul.

I confess that I do not always honor my body as a temple. Help me to do that.

I know that as your beloved, I am called to live a passionate life that brings glory to your Son. Help me to be passionate for the things that glorify you.

Help me to live fully as your beloved, no matter the cost.

In the name of Jesus, your beloved Son.

AMEN

GO

Rest now in God throughout the hurry of your days
Finding a space to pause, to pray, to play
And in that space of rest and re-creation
Remember:

You are beloved.

Stayed tuned on Wednesday, March 18th, for – “BELOVED HEALING”

RESOURCES: We Are Beloved: A Lenten Journey (Kristen E. Vincent; Guerillas of Grace (Ted Yoder); CEB Study Bible; D365 Devotional