

Sermon Series: Life in His Name
Sermon Title: Predicting Life
Text: John 2:13-25

Discussion Questions:

We are surrounded in life by people who make a living making predictions. For example:

Meteorologists - or Weather Forecasters

- What is your opinion of weather forecasters?
- What would make one forecaster “better” than another?
- Is weather forecasting an art or a science?
- Does it ever bother you that forecasters speak with such confidence?
- What’s your take on the Farmer’s Almanac as a method of forecasting?

Financial Forecasters

- How much stock (pun intended) do you put in people who predict the financial markets?
- The definition of a financial forecaster is a person who makes “estimates” about the future financial outcomes for a company or country. What do you make of the word “estimates”? How accurate are estimates? What goes in to making accurate estimates?

Sports Forecasters

- What might cause a person to consult a sports forecaster?
- How much are you willing to bet (again - pun intended) that a sports forecaster is right in their prediction?
- **Can you think of other areas of life where people make a living making predictions?**

Examination:

- Read **John 2:13-17**.
 - What is the first thing that strikes you about this passage?
 - When did this happen in relation to Jesus’ public ministry?
 - Think about all of the various portraits/paintings you have seen through the years that depict Jesus (keeping in mind that every single one of them is nothing more than the artist’s rendition that comes from his/her mind). What are some adjectives you can think of to describe these various depictions?
 - Now compare/contrast the “image” of Jesus that you see in these paintings with what you see happening in this account of Jesus cleansing the temple. Are there some inconsistencies?
 - Based strictly on this account - what might a portrait of Jesus look like?
 - Think even deeper about what is happening here. How easy would it be for one person to overturn tables - drive out cattle and sheep - and expel what must have

been dozens of people? What would you think as you saw this happen?
“Zeal” is a word used to describe Jesus. Can you think of other words?

- Read **Matthew 21:1-27**.
 - Obviously, a very similar account to John 2. And yet, there are some notable and very significant differences. Make a list of these differences.
 - As you can imagine, there is a great deal of discussion as to whether Jesus cleansed the temple once - or twice. What do you think?
 - Moving beyond the question of “how many” times the temple was cleansed - discuss the question of “why”? Why did Jesus do this? What drove Him to such a display of passion and aggression?
 - Why do you think the Pharisees asked about authority?

- Read **John 2:18-22**.
 - We see the Jewish leaders asking Jesus the same thing in John 2 as they did in Matthew 21:23 - *upon what authority do you do this* (v. 18)? There’s a lot going on here. The Jews undoubtedly viewed the temple as THEIR house. Jesus was, in essence, trespassing on THEIR property. But Jesus appeals to a much higher authority as we see in verse 16 - “Stop turning **my Father’s** house into a market!” Can you see how this would create some major tension? What would you think if you heard Jesus say this?
 - The Jews ask for a sign - a way for Jesus to prove that He had the authority to take control of what happened in the temple courts. What might Jesus have done in that moment to satisfy them? Did raising dead people convince them? Or feeding thousands of people with 2 fish & 5 loaves? Or calming storms?
 - What sign does Jesus point to that would prove that He was the Son of God (“...my Father’s house) - and therefore had authority to evict the moneychangers (v. 19)?
 - NOBODY understood what Jesus meant when He spoke of raising the temple in three days...not even the disciples (v. 22). Why do you think He spoke in such veiled terms? How significant is it that Jesus predicted his resurrection?
 - Three years later - after Jesus rose from the dead - the disciples (John being one of them) remembered what Jesus had said on this day. Everything clicked in their minds. Read **John 20:8-9**. Do you think this is the moment that John finally understood what Jesus had said all the way back on this day here in the temple?
 - Why do you think that both here in verse 22 - as well as John 20:9 - it talks about the fact that they finally believed “the scripture”? What scripture do you think this is referring to? How important is it that not only had Jesus predicted his resurrection - but the scriptures had predicted it as well?
 - How does “*believing that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God*” play a part in John’s telling of this account (vv. 22-23)?

Application:

There are many people in the world today who believe that Jesus lived - and was a great moral teacher. But according to God’s Word, they aren’t saved - they don’t have eternal life. Why not? What must we believe in order to be saved? What must we confess to have eternal life? Have you?