

**John 2:13-22**  
**“Which Jesus Do You Know?”**

1. **THE CONFRONTATIONAL JESUS**
  - A. The reason for this confrontation
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2. **THE CONFUSING JESUS**
  - A. They did not know who He was
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3. **THE CONVINCING JESUS**
  - A. His works convince us
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1. In 2004, rock band *Green Day* released its seventh album, entitled *American Idiot*. The album has sold 14 million copies worldwide, and won the 2005 Grammy for best rock album.

2. One of the singles on that album is a song called “Jesus of Suburbia”. It is the story of a young man named Jimmy, who describes himself in the song with the line:

*“I’m the son of rage and love.  
The Jesus of Suburbia,  
From the bible of none of the above,  
On a steady diet of soda pop and Ritalin...”*

3. The *real* Jesus, found in the Bible – the Word of God, was not from suburbia. He is the Son of God and the virgin Mary. He was born in what amounts to a barn, and lived 2,000 years ago in an out-of-the way portion of the Roman Empire.

4. Most people know some of the facts of His life, but remarkably few actually and authentically know the real Jesus Christ.

5. In John chapter 2, we are told of one of the first appearances of the man Jesus in the Jewish temple, which was the center of worship for His people in that day.

6. Jesus caused quite a stir that day as He all but emptied temple court, and then made a bold declaration about His own future and power.

7. If we could have interviewed the people there that day, they would have likely described Jesus in a number of different ways. He made different impressions on the people who witnessed His actions.

8. The truth is; there is only one Jesus. The Word of God describes Him as, *“Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever (Hebrews 13:8).”*

9. With that being said, what is your impression of Jesus? Which Jesus do you know?

10. Think with me about the people who met Jesus that day in the temple so long ago. Think about the Jesus they saw, and see which one best describes your understanding of Him. First of all, perhaps you know:

## **I. THE CONFRONTATIONAL JESUS**

1. There is a children's poem from years ago that begins with the line, "Gentle Jesus meek and mild..."

2. The author of that poem must not have been reading from John 2 when he penned that line. John describes Jesus with a whip in His hand and fire in His eyes, as He busted up a make-shift market in the temple court.

3. Verse 15 says, *"And when he had made a scourge of small cords, he drove them all out of the temple, and the sheep, and the oxen; and poured out the changers' money, and overthrew the tables."*

4. Those people selling animals and changing money must have seen Jesus as being abrasive and aggressive as He confronted them that day.

5. In much the same way, there are those who see Jesus as a threat and even an enemy to their way of life. For them, Jesus is confrontational. Let me show you what I mean. Look at this passage and consider:

### **A. The reason for this confrontation**

1. Why did Jesus go on this rampage; cracking a whip, and kicking over tables? We need to understand the setting.

2. In verse 13, John tells us that it was Passover time, which was a festival that would have drawn thousands of Jews to the city of Jerusalem.

3. At this festival, they were required to go to the temple, pay a temple tax, and offer a sacrifice to God. These requirements led some entrepreneurs to set up services to accommodate these travelers.

4. The end result was that on the temple grounds, people had set up pens of animals to sell for sacrifice, and money-changers had set up tables to exchange Roman money for Jewish money, which was all that was accepted at the temple.

5. There was nothing wrong with the businesses themselves. No, what angered Jesus was not so much *what* they were doing, but *where* they were doing it.

6. Notice His rebuke to them in verse 16. He said, “...*Take these things hence; make not my Father's house an house of merchandise.*”
7. Jesus was passionate about His Father, and His Father's house. He wanted men to recognize and honor the holiness of God.
8. The Old Testament prophet Malachi had predicted this event. He said in Malachi 3:1 says, “...*the Lord, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to his temple...*”
9. In that same prophecy, Malachi says, “*But who may abide the day of his coming? and who shall stand when he appeareth? for he is like a refiner's fire, and like fullers' soap (3:2).*”
10. To some people, Jesus appears controversial because He stands against that which is wrong, and seeks to purify that which is filthy.
11. His stand against that which was wrong was the reason for this confrontation, but notice also further:

#### **B. The result of this confrontation**

1. John says in verse 15, “...*he drove them all out of the temple, and the sheep, and the oxen; and poured out the changers' money, and overthrew the tables.*”
2. Jesus completely upset the lives of those doing business within the temple. Their first meeting with Him was one that completely turned their world upside down.
3. Some of you know what Jesus stands for. You know He represents that which is pure, holy, and right.
4. You also know that if you were confronted by Him today, He would overturn much of what is going on in your life.
5. Some of you know that Jesus would break-up certain relationships in your life because you and He both know they are wrong.
6. In your hearts, some of you know that if you were to encounter Jesus today, He would kick over some of the habits in your life because they are sinful and selfish. You and He both know they are wrong.
7. For those who are living in sin, Jesus is confrontational. He calls on you to leave that which disobeys the commands of God. In Luke 13:3, Jesus said, “*I tell you, Nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish.*”

8. An Australian night club called *La Di Da* is being criticized for a poster promoting a party at the club on Good Friday. The poster has a picture of Christ on the cross, and above it are the words: "Jesus died for somebody's sins...but not mine."<sup>ii</sup>

9. There are those who reject Jesus for the very fact that He confronts them with their sins. To some, He is the confrontational Jesus.

10. In this passage, we are reminded of those who know only *the confrontational Jesus*. Perhaps though, you are more like a second group in this passage, and the Jesus you know is more like:

## **II. THE CONFUSING JESUS**

1. After things had calmed down, the animals and their handlers were gone, and the money had been picked up off the floor, some of the Jews standing around decided they would find out just who this was that had caused such a scene.

2. Notice verse 18. It says, "*Then answered the Jews and said unto him, What sign shewest thou unto us, seeing that thou doest these things?*"

3. Notice they did not argue with what Jesus had done. They knew what was going on was wrong. Their challenge was this: "Who are *you* to run off these people. You better show us something that gives you the right to be so confrontational."

4. Jesus answers them in verse 19 by saying this, "*Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up.*"

5. In verse 21, John tells us plainly that Jesus was talking about His own body, not the building called the temple. Yet, verse 20 says that the Jews did not understand what He meant.

6. There are still people today who simply do not understand Jesus. His whole existence is confusing to them, and they are not sure about Him and what He means.

7. Notice why these people found Jesus confusing. The problem was first of all that:

### **A. They did not know who He was**

1. John opens His gospel by telling us that Jesus was God in the flesh, and that He had always existed, and had come to earth as the Lamb of God to take away the sins of the world (John 1:29).

2. As Jesus cracked the whip and cleansed the temple, the Jews standing around obviously did not have the benefit of reading John chapter 1.
3. They knew nothing about the virgin birth in Bethlehem. They did not realize that the one standing before them was none other than the Messiah the Old Testament had prophesied would come.
4. In John's first chapter, in verse 11, he says, "*He came unto his own, and his own received him not.*" They did not know who He was.
5. There are many today who have heard the name of Jesus, but they really have no idea about who He is. They don't know the truth of His life, the facts of death, and the power of His resurrection.
6. To some people, Jesus is, as the old bluegrass song says, "a rank stranger." They do not know who He is.
7. Notice that these Jews who were confused by Jesus, were confused not only because they did not know who He was, but also because:

#### **B. They did not know what He was**

1. There is a great truth in what Jesus said that day. Verse 19 says, "*Jesus answered and said unto them, Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up.*"
2. In verse 20, the confused people say, "*Forty and six years was this temple in building, and wilt thou rear it up in three days?*" But John explains Christ's words in verse 21: "*But he spake of the temple of his body.*"
3. The temple building had taken 46 years to build, and the Jews recognized it as the place where the presence of God dwelt, and where men came to sacrifice to Him, and to receive forgiveness for their sins.
4. What Jesus was saying was this, "*I am the temple now. The fullness of God dwells in me, and I am now the only way that men can be right with God.*"
5. He was predicting that they would destroy Him, which they did when they crucified Him. He was also predicting that He would rise from the dead, which He did, three days after His death on the cross.
6. Yet, none of those standing around caught all of that. They were looking at the building, not His body. They found Jesus confusing, because they did not know what He was.

7. For some of you, Jesus is like a jigsaw puzzle you can't quite figure out, because you don't have all the pieces.
8. You don't know who He really is, and you don't know what He has truly done. He is pointing you to Himself, and you are looking in the other direction.
9. A *New York Post* article about an upcoming *History Channel* program about the face of Jesus, opens with this line: "New flash: Jesus was five-foot-eight...not blond, and looked nothing like [Jim] Caviezel or Willem Dafoe. He was not movie-star handsome...and he certainly didn't have blue eyes."<sup>iii</sup>
10. Many people *are* confused about Jesus. However, the confusion has less to do with what He looked like, and more to do with who and what He is.
11. In John 2, there were those who saw *the confrontational Jesus*, and those who met with *the confusing Jesus*, but there was a third group, who looked at Christ, and saw in Him:

### III. THE CONVINCING JESUS

1. John tells us of a third group who witnessed the events in the temple that day, and who developed a very different view of Jesus.
2. Look again at the text. In verse 19, Jesus said, "*Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up.*" In verse 21, John notes that Jesus was talking about His own body.
3. Now look at verse 22. John says, "*When therefore he was risen from the dead, his disciples remembered that he had said this unto them; and they believed the scripture, and the word which Jesus had said.*"
4. Some of the people that day found Jesus to be confrontational. Some found Him utterly confusing. But there were some who became convinced that Jesus was in fact the Son of God and the Savior of the World.
5. In much the same way, millions since that day have believed upon the Lord Jesus, and are convinced that He is alive, and able to save all those who accept Him by faith.
6. Notice what it is that convinces this third group. First of all:

#### A. His works convince us

1. Look again at verse 22. John says, "*When therefore he was risen from the dead...*" The Bible clearly states that Jesus was crucified and died on the cross.

2. It says, however, that He did not remain dead. Just as He had predicted, He rose from the dead. His resurrection was what finally and fully convinced His disciples that He was God!
3. Thomas, who had been a skeptic, saw the holes where the nails had been, and viewed the wound from the spear in Jesus' side, and then proclaimed, "My Lord and my God." (John 20:28)
4. The Apostle Paul was convinced of Jesus as well. He wrote in I Corinthians 15:3-4, "*For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures.*"
5. He goes on to say that Jesus was seen alive after His resurrection by well over 500 people. All of whom were convinced by the works of Jesus.
6. I too am convinced by the works of Christ. No, I haven't seen Him physically and personally, as those first century apostles did, but I am nonetheless convinced He is alive, as sure as I know that I am alive.
7. You see:

*I know that He is living, whatever men may say,  
I see His hand of mercy, I hear His voice of cheer,  
And just the time I need Him, He's always near.*

*He lives! He lives! Christ Jesus lives today,  
He walks with me and talks with me,  
Along life's narrow way,  
He lives! He lives! Salvation to impart,  
You ask me how I know He lives,  
He lives within my heart!*

8. Ask those here today who have also believed in Him, and they will testify that they are convinced by His works. He works convince us, but notice also that:

#### **B. His Words convince us**

1. Look again at verse 22. John says, "*When therefore he was risen from the dead, his disciples remembered that he had said this unto them; and they believed the scripture, and the word which Jesus had said.*"
2. John said that the disciples remembered what He had said to them. He had said that He would rise again.

3. Remembering that, they believed the scripture, and the words which Jesus had said. They were convinced by His words.
4. There are some today who are not convinced of Jesus. You have never believed on Him as Savior and Lord.
5. Listen to His Words! Jesus said, *"I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst."* (John 6:35)
6. He said, *"I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life."* (John 8:12)
7. He said, *"I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep."* (John 10:11) He said in Matthew 18:11, *"For the Son of man is come to save that which was lost."*
8. He said, *"And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up: That whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life."* (John 3:14-15)
9. He said, *"...the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many."* (Mark 10:45). He said, *"Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls."* (Matthew 11:28-29)
10. He said, *"I am the root and the offspring of David, and the bright and morning star. And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely."* (Revelation 22:17)
11. He predicted His death and resurrection. He proved it when He rose from the dead. Now His Words stand as a call to all who hear them to be convinced and come.

1. I read about a girl named Tina who volunteered with a mission group from Kentucky. They traveled to Asia, and used sports as a tool to get into nations that were not open to the gospel.
2. After a basketball game, Tina and her teammates were sitting around talking with some of the players from the opposing team.
3. Tina began to tell one of the other players about her closest friend, who was always with her, a man named Jesus.

4. The Asian girl looked around at all the people with Tina's group and asked innocently, "Which one is Jesus?"
5. There's only one Jesus. You may see Him as confrontational. You may see Him as confusing.
6. The reality, however, is that you have not really seen Him, and you do not really know Him until you see Him as convincing.
7. He died for your sins, and He rose from the dead the third day, just as He said He would. I ask you, do you know this Jesus?

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<sup>i</sup> Jesus of Suburbia, *Wikipedia*, accessed 4/1/10, [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jesus\\_of\\_Suburbia](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jesus_of_Suburbia)

<sup>ii</sup> Barry, Evonne, City nightclub La Di Da slammed over 'offensive' Jesus poster, 4/1/10, *heraldsun.com.au*, accessed 4/1/10, <http://www.heraldsun.com.au/news/city-nightclub-la-di-da-slammed-over-offensive-jesus-poster/story-e6frf7jo-1225848258337>

<sup>iii</sup> Stasi, Linda, Is This Christ?, 3/25/10, *New York Post*, accessed 4/1/10, [http://www.nypost.com/p/entertainment/tv/is\\_this\\_christ\\_v5CFHmU9RIPuItcWzHfcEM](http://www.nypost.com/p/entertainment/tv/is_this_christ_v5CFHmU9RIPuItcWzHfcEM)