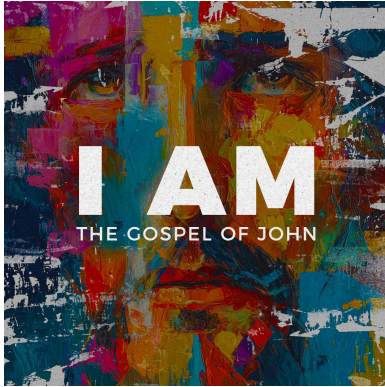


Title: Wet Eyes, Open-Hands, and a Gospel Shaped Vision

Series: I Am

Speaker: Philip Pattison

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Introduction

Jesus cleans the temple of God because He is grieved that God's house has become a place of exclusion and exploitation, rather than a place of welcome and connection with the Father. We are challenged to recover "wet eyes," allowing ourselves to be moved by the brokenness around us, to respond with "open hands" that practice real hospitality toward the vulnerable and overlooked, and to live with a "gospel-shaped vision" - organizing our priorities, values, and actions around Christ's self-giving love and welcome toward others.

Key Texts: John 2:13-25

Icebreaker

What is something that you've seen, experienced, or learned about recently that genuinely moved your heart? How did it affect you?

Discussion Questions

1. Read **John 2:13-25** aloud, and take a few minutes to quietly make some observations. At first glance, is there anything in this text that is surprising, confusing, or challenging? Share that out with the group.
2. **Re-visit verse 16 and 17.** What might these verses reveal about Jesus' identity and His relationship with the Father?
3. **Read John 2:19-22.** It was typical for there to be money changers and animals sold in the temple courts for sacrifices in the temple. However the prices were gouged, foreigners and outsiders were being exploited, and commercialization was crowding out the outsider. Why do you think John places the stories of Jesus filling the purification jars with wine and Jesus cleansing the temple side by side? What do these two stories reveal about the difference between the old ways of relating to God and what Jesus came to bring?

4. Philip reminded us that “some things can only be seen through tears.” Often we can hold painful stories at arms length and become emotionally numb or ambivalent to that which breaks God’s heart. Where have you noticed that emotional numbness in your own life?

5. To live with open-hands and practice hospitality means that we hear, see, and care for the people right in front of us. This will likely cost us something (time, money, stability, our plans). Who is someone that God has placed in front of you that you can intentionally move toward? How might Jesus be inviting you to be an extension of His love to them?

6. God often gives us “wet eyes” before He stirs us to action. What, for you personally, is a God-given “ache” in your heart - something that causes you to pound your fist on the table and say “it’s not supposed to be this way?” What would it look like for you to bring that place of grief or pain to the Lord this week, and ask Him to “teach you the way of tears?”

Key Takeaways

- God desires for us to live with wet eyes - to allow our hearts to be moved again for the things that break His heart. Guarding against emotional numbness requires asking God for soft hearts, and asking Him to “teach us the way of tears.”
- God desires for us to live with open-hands - to practice hearing, seeing, and caring for the people right in front of us.
- God wants to give us a gospel-shaped vision - to live in a way that is shaped by His love, inclusivity, compassion and justice. He invites us to re-imagine our communities through the lens of the gospel.

Silence and Solitude

This week, find a quiet moment to 1) remind yourself of God’s lavish love, welcome, and hospitality toward you and 2) to ask God to fill you with His heart of compassion and deep care for others.

We cannot extend to others what we have not received ourselves. Spend time reflecting on and thanking Jesus for the truths in 1 John 3:1 - “See what great love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called the children of God. And that is what we are!”

Invite God to reveal where you may have become “numb” to His love and to the things that break His heart.

Ask the Lord to “teach you the way of tears” and to grow within you a deep care for the people He has put in front of you. As He brings people to mind, simply write their names down. Resist the urge to “do something” right away - simply ask God what He is stirring in your heart, and how He may be inviting you to respond.