It’s been said that you can *measure the size of a person’s soul by the size of what makes them angry*. Interesting observation, isn’t it? You can measure the size of someone’s soul by what makes them angry. Anger when it comes from a sense of justice and righteous moral outrage is a good thing, because it shows that one has a *passion* for what is right.

And this is going to sound strange, but I really like angry Jesus! It’s great to see Jesus have an outburst of righteous anger in today’s gospel, because it shows us what was truly important – that worship of God is primary, and the mockery of God just won’t be tolerated. Jesus is angry, because he *cares!* Since Jesus is most often portrayed as *gentle* and *loving* and *friend* of the outcast, it’s easy to *sanitize* Jesus as just a ‘nice guy’. And although it is true that Jesus is *gentle*, it is also true that he is serious about the worship of God, his laws, and his teachings. The 10 Commandments as they say aren’t just the ‘10 Suggestions’!

The worship of God was being mocked by the moneychangers as they looked to take advantage of the Passover pilgrims by charging exorbitant fees to exchange the ‘unclean’ Roman currency into Jewish currency to be used in the temple to buy the animals of sacrifice. And of course, the merchants selling the animals of sacrifice – not to be outdone – charged ridiculous amounts of money for ‘temple approved’ animals. Jesus refuses to see his Father’s house being made a mockery, taking away from its true purpose of being a place of prayer and worship for all peoples, not a place of commercial enterprise.

Jesus makes his mark by overturning the tables, and driving out the animals with cords. He is angered by what has become of ritual worship, and how the religious authorities were allowing it to happen, and probably even encouraging it by accepting kick-backs from the unscrupulous vendors. However, Jesus’ actions were not welcomed, and the temple officials did not share Jesus’ outrage.

He shocks them further by proclaiming that he would *tear down this temple, and build it up again in 3 days*. That was a peculiar statement, but John in his gospel account explains what Jesus meant – he was referring to *his own body* – that He would be the new Temple, reconciling all things to himself.

And with Jesus being the new temple, and St. Paul telling us elsewhere that we are all temples of the Holy Spirit, it’s *our turn* to be cleansed. When we invite Jesus into the temples of our souls, *what does he find there?* What tables will have to be overturned within us to get our attention?

That is the question we need to always reflect on, especially during Lent. Which tables does Jesus need to overturn in my life in order to help me turn my heart completely over to him? What does he need to drive out of me with those cords?

We all need to do some Lenten soul searching to answer that question. We need to invite Jesus into our hearts in order to *create a raucous* so that we can get back on to the right track. That soul searching will happen at some point in our lives, but when we invite Jesus in with open arms rather than oppose his presence as the temple officials do, our ‘temple cleansing’ – accepted with *humility* rather than *pride* – can be a beautiful thing rather than a messy confrontation.

How do we do this? Our 1st reading gives us the guide – the 10 Commandments. As I mentioned, notice they aren’t called ‘The 10 Suggestions’ – the 10 Commandments are, as the Psalm tells us, the laws of wisdom – the laws of love that God gives us to guide us to peace.

Do an examination of conscience by systematically going through the 10 Commandments. Do an honest assessment of those things that need to be driven out of your life, and bring them into the light of God’s mercy. We have our Lenten Penance celebration here on Wednesday at 7:30pm and also during the week at the other churches in Waterloo. What a great opportunity to undertake that ‘temple cleansing’ that will set us free. Whether it’s been a few weeks or several years, come out to experience God’s life-chaning forgiveness.

As I mentioned at he beginning, the size of our souls can be measured by the size of that which makes us angry. As we spend some time in soul searching this week, ***let’s make our sinfulness that which makes us angry***, and that which we want to invite Jesus in to our hearts to cast out. The same Jesus we see today in the gospel showing righteous anger over offences against God is also the Good Shepherd who welcomes back with open arms those who are humble enough to realize they need him, and who are humble enough to accept his mercy, his reconciliation, and his love which finds its fullest expression on the cross for all of us.