

Flipping Tables Small Group Guide

Warm-up Questions:

1. What's one chore you absolutely dread doing, but love when it's done?
2. What's the best piece of advice your mom (or parent/guardian) ever gave you that still sticks with you?

Read the following passages: Matthew 21:12-13; Isaiah 56:1-8

In Matthew 21:12-13, Jesus enters the temple and is deeply troubled by what He sees. The temple, meant to be a house of prayer, had become a marketplace. By flipping the tables, Jesus wasn't just reacting to the clutter and chaos; He was making a profound statement about the true purpose of God's house—a place where all people can come to find God and be transformed. This connects to Isaiah's prophecy in Isaiah 56, emphasizing that God's house is a place of prayer for all nations, a sanctuary for everyone regardless of background. These passages challenge us to reflect on whether we are allowing God's house to be what it was meant to be, both in our hearts and in our church community.

Questions for Discussion (Choose several that are relevant for your group):

Understanding the True Purpose

1. Jesus flipped tables to restore the temple to its true purpose. What are some "tables" in your life that might need flipping to align with God's purpose? How do these things distract you from fully encountering God?
2. Reflect on Isaiah 56:7. What does it mean to you that God's house is meant to be a "house of prayer for all peoples"? How does this challenge your perspective on church community?

Belonging in God's House

3. Have you ever felt out of place in church or within the church community? What might be the cause of those feelings? How can the truth of Ephesians 2:13—being brought near by the blood of Christ—reshape your sense of belonging?
4. Jesus welcomed those who felt out of place and flipped tables to reclaim their place. How can you or your group make sure that everyone feels like they belong in God's house?

Expectation and Transformation

5. **Read Mark 5:25-34.** The woman with the issue of blood pushed through the crowd, expecting Jesus to heal her. Are you coming to church with that kind of desperate expectation, or just going through the motions? What's stopping you from fully trusting that God can meet your deepest needs?
6. **Read Psalm 139:23-24.** David asked God to search his heart and reveal anything that needed to change. Transformation can be uncomfortable. What areas of your life do you think God wants to transform, even if it means flipping some tables? How can your group support you through this process?

Cultivating a Heart of Worship

7. Mary chose to sit at Jesus' feet while Martha was focused on tasks. Can you identify anything that keeps you busy but distant from God's presence? What specific steps can you take this week to re-prioritize connecting with God?
8. **Read Psalm 95:6-8.** The psalmist calls us to bow down and worship, but warns against hardening our hearts. Are there areas where your heart has grown cold or resistant to God? What would it take for you to break through that hardness and truly surrender in worship?

Creating a Welcoming Environment

9. How can we as a group and as individuals create a welcoming environment in our church that reflects the "radical inclusivity of Jesus"? What practical steps can we take to make everyone feel accepted and loved?
10. Consider your own biases or discomforts. What are some comfort zones God might be challenging you to step out of to embrace others fully?

Reflection and Action

11. This week, consider one "table" in your life that God might be calling you to flip over—a mindset, habit, or distraction that's keeping you from fully experiencing Him. Share this with the group or a trusted friend for accountability.
12. How can you show up next Sunday (or your next gathering) with an expectation for God to move? Make a plan to pray for this expectation daily.

Pray