

Jesus Unfiltered

Session 5: "Scary" Jesus Disperses Crowd at Shopping Mall

Unedited Transcript

Patrick Morley

Good morning, men. Welcome to Man in the Mirror Men's Bible Study. Let's go ahead and kick it off with a shout-out this morning. We have one to 19 men who meet together on Tuesdays at 8 o'clock. They're led by Larry Wendleman at Christ United Methodist Church Independence, Missouri. Larry writes, "We really appreciate the Bible study videos and the great discussion from our group that results from them." Larry, thank you for submitting this, and others of you out there who have yet to submit, please do that. We'd love to give you a shout-out, too. But this morning we're giving a shout-out to these men from Christ United Methodist Church, so would you join me in giving them a warm and rousing Man in the Mirror welcome? One, two, three. Hoo-ah.

Welcome. Glad to have you men with us. So, we're going to do a little something here this morning. I'm going to give you a little preview of the new Man in the Mirror website, because this may be a helpful resource to you in some way. I'm so proud of Brian Russell who has put this together. He's back on the keyboard working this thing. Too bad we can't get a shot of you, Brian. Actually, at the end Brian, I'm going to ask you if you could just maybe step up here.

So, this is the website. What we do is we help churches to disciple men more effectively. The reason I'm showing this to you is manifold, but one idea is that everything that we do in the ministry, Man in the Mirror, really began here 32 years ago. This is the Petri dish. This is where the mad scientists perform all of their experiments, here. So you're the guinea pigs, you're the Petri dish, and so this is what it's resulted in.

It has a section What We're About, Leadership Training, Church Resources, and Ministry Consulting. Oh, there's the Bible study scrolling across the bottom. And just some different endorsements for leaders and so forth. Back to the top, and of course you're going to have not the easiest time seeing these things, but the first drop down is for Leadership Training, No Man Left Behind, Leadership Webinars, Leadership Conferences. The next drop down is for Church Resources, we have the Video Bible Study, the Journey to Biblical Manhood, the Events we do, Man in the Mirror resources, Small Group resources, Books by the Box program.

Brian, click on Video Bible Studies, since that's who we are, here. This is a re-direct to the Bible study website. So, you're coming here but the six thousand people who are downloading this each week will see this come up. Go ahead and click out of that. So, we're on a two-week delay. Sorry about that guys, online, cost management, containment. But this week, the message online that came up at 7 am this morning is Jesus in the Courtroom. Then, if somebody's new to the website we say start here either with Man in the Mirror, Men Reaching Men, or Marriage and the Man in the Mirror. Those are the three huge issues that we think about.

So that's that website. Now, if you go back, Brian, to the main site, and do the same drop down and let me show these men the Man in the Mirror, MIM Devotions for Men. MIM Devotions for Men. Click on that. This is our new app. So you can go to iTunes or Google Play. You put in MIM Devotions for Men. You have to put in MIM Devotions for Men because it's not populated enough yet to show up. Or you can click on one of these two links in the website itself. What it'll do is you design it however you want to, but basically you get a daily devotion from Man in the Mirror. I've been doing it for a few weeks. It's actually pretty good, if I do say so myself.

Then, if you'll back out of it, and just show you the other drop downs. We won't go to anymore landing pages. There's Ministry Consulting, Find an Area Direct Near You, Join our Field Team, Invest in a Field Team, and then Articles. We've got, I don't know, what do we have? A couple thousand relevant articles, but what we're doing is we've been narrowing that to make it more effective for you on a day-to-day basis. So we have the Equipping Men Blog, patrickmorley.com, Subscriptions to Emails, Archives.

In the About area, Who We Are, Statement of Faith, Giving Opportunities, Join our Partners, Bio on me, Bio on Brett, Board of Directors, our Chairman's Advisory Counsel. A place to make an investment. Then, really, one basic click for people coming to the website. One action point we're asking them to do one thing, and that's to get started with a men's ministry consultation. We won't click on that button, but you can.

So, if you're interested, you can go to the website. You can troll around in there and just see what's going on. Wanted you to see that. Okay. That's it. Now ...

Good. Thank you. Thank you so much.

All right. So everything that Jesus did then applies now. We're going to look at a very unique story today in this series Jesus Unfiltered. The name of the message is Scary Jesus Disperses Crowd at Shopping Mall.

You may remember in one of the Bourne movies, the second Bourne movie, the Bourne Supremacy. You have this professionally trained assassin who has amnesia, saved by a woman, then the people that trained him want to kill him, and accidentally assassinate his girlfriend, and so he seeks revenge. In one of the scenes his handlers says something ... I don't remember. I didn't watch the movie. I looked it up on IMDb quotes. I think what it was is that Jason Bourne looked directly into a surveillance camera, and his handler said, "Well, he finally made a mistake."

Julia Stiles, playing Nicky say, "I don't think so." If his image appeared it's because he wanted to do that. Then they talk about how the agency determined whatever priorities and objectives that he had. So, "Isn't he under our control?"

She says, "I don't think so?"

"Then whose control is he under?"

Nicky looks at her and she says, "Scary version? He's in control. He's making his own decisions." Scary version.

So that's what we have today, is we have scary Jesus. All right? Scary Jesus. You should be, if not already please turn there to John 2:13, and let's take a look at this text. You're going to be astonished. You're going to be surprised at how relevant this text is, even for us today. As I said, everything Jesus did then applies now.

So, verse 13, "When it was almost time for the Jewish Passover, Jesus went up to Jerusalem." Stop. So, this is the first of four Passovers that Jesus participates in. The Passover is like, for Christian's today, it's on Easter. It's like the big day. Everybody shows up. It says, "Jesus went up to Jerusalem." So, does that mean he was south of Jerusalem and then went north? Whenever you see going up in the Scriptures, it's dealing with elevation. Jerusalem is up high. It's the high and holy city, so people were traveling up to Jerusalem.

Verse 14, "In the temple courts, he found men selling cattle, sheep, and doves, and others sitting at tables exchanging money." So, the temple courts, when you hear of temple courts, you have the temple with the Holy of Holies, and so forth things. But then, the temple courts, technically it's the Court of the Gentiles. This is the area around the actual building where the Tabernacle and so forth is maintained. So this is a very busy area in Jerusalem. It's actually a thoroughfare, people going through gates on one side of the city and on the other side of the city, and they go through these temple courts. It's a pretty busy place.

It says a couple things are going on here in these temple courts. Number one is that you have merchants operating. You have men selling cattle, sheep, and doves. Then you have bankers working. You have others sitting at tables exchanging money. So you have merchants and bankers doing their deeds. What are they doing? Well, at their Easter, at their Passover, people come and they offer sacrifices. So they offer lamb, is the typical one, sometimes a cow. If you're poor, a dove or pigeon. If you're coming from a hundred miles, it's not very convenient to drive a cow a hundred miles like that, so what they do is they bring money and then they buy animals for the sacrifice. That's something that's important and necessary to happen for them.

Then, also, the temple tax. It was not considered to be appropriate to have a secular inscription on the coinage that was made, so they would exchange their coins for this properly accepted coin for the temple tax. So these were the things that were going on. These were things that needed to have happen.

So, in the temple courts, he found men doing this. Then, verse 13, so this is how Jesus responded. "He made a whip out of cords and drove all from the temple area, including the sheep and the cattle," it depends on your version. "He scattered the coins of the money changes and overturned their tables. To those who sold doves he said, 'Get these out of here. How dare you turn my Father's house into a market!' His disciples remember that it was written, 'Zeal for your house will consume me.'"

So, it says, "He made a whip out of cords, and then he drove everybody out of the temple area." That's interesting. Corporal punishment? Did he use this whip on the men? We don't know. My guess would be, dealing in the areas of probabilities, not necessities, probably not. It would seem so out of character with Jesus. In no other way did he ever actually beat somebody. So, I can see him cracking this whip. He may have hit people, I don't know. But I can see him more likely cracking this whip and going over the tables and ... "Bahhhh!. Out! Out! How dare you turn my Father's house into an emporium? Into a shopping mall? Merchants, bankers, out!" I can see Jesus getting that angry about it. We have evidence that he was pretty angry, turning things over and chasing people out, and cracking a whip.

What is the situation that has called this text into existence? There was something going on, and when you look for the center of gravity in the text, it says, "Zeal that Jesus has for what's going on in the temple." You don't see this very often. You see it with the Pharisees. You don't see it very often, though, this kind of zeal. Zeal meaning hot, he's bringing heat to the situation. So, what's causing that? Where is it coming from?

Well, there's something about the purity of the temple, the purity of the sanctuary, the purity of the house of worship, the purity of my Father's house, that Jesus is zealous to preserve. What's happened is, when you stop and you think about it, what's going on with these men what they're doing is, these are honorable professions.. Being a merchant, being a banker, these are honorable professions. So it wasn't against the work that they were doing that he was inflamed, it was against where they were doing it, in their Father's house. So, we see that this is the situation that calls the text into existence. The question that we ought to be asking is what made him so hot? I mean, what made him so hot?

HERE'S HOW I FEEL ABOUT "MY FATHER'S HOUSE"

I've got some words that I just jotted down that the Lord would use for what today is the church, these transition from the Old Testament, is from the synagogue to the New Testament is the church. These are some words: sanctuary, holy, place of peace, worship, prayer, sanctity, sacred, purity, rest. So, the intrusion of the world on this sacred place is the thing that has Jesus upset. In the common sense world, we would not think that Jesus wanted these people to stop doing this, he just wanted them to get out of the church. He just wanted them to get outside of the church and keep the sanctuary, the sanctuary.

So who were these men? Well, I've already said they were doing honorable. So what were they doing there? Well, it was either through ignorance or wrong motives that they were bringing the world into the church, bringing worldly ways into the church, into the temple, into our Father's house. So, this is the first of two temple cleansings. There's another one at the end of the ministry. The one at the end of the ministry talks about, "You're making this into a den of robbers," so it's possible that some of that was occurring here in the first temple cleansing, but it doesn't say that. But it's possible, so there could have been some people with wrong motives.

I'd like to give a judgment of charity to these men, and these merchants, these bankers, and just say they didn't know any better. They just didn't know any better. But, ignorance of the law is no excuse in any land. Is that Thomas Jefferson? Anyway, whoever it is, ignorance of the law is no excuse in any land, so Jesus is very upset about this.

What might this look like today? What might this look like today? So, when men today go to our Father's house and they go there to find investors for their real estate deals, and customers and clients for their insurance business, and prospects for their real estate enterprise, and that's the reason they're there, then they're doing the same thing that the merchants and the bankers were doing. They're setting up shop in my Father's house. I know this can happen because this is how I started my spiritual journey.

My wife and I were not getting along. Well, I was not getting along with her, she was getting along fine with me. But, I was not getting along with her, and all of my problems were her fault. So finally I figured, "I need to do something to get this woman fixed." So, I said, "I'm going to take her to church where they can fix her." But that wasn't enough reason to motivate me to go to our Father's house, so I didn't. But then later I realized, "You know, I bet if I went to church, not only could I get my wife fixed, but I could

meet some potential investors for my real estate deals." And that was enough. That was enough to get me there."

Now, give me a judgment of charity. I was doing that in ignorance. I didn't even have the gospel yet. So God used that, God used that to bring me to the gospel. Let's not throw the baby out with the bathwater here. Let's use the common sense world. We don't tell men they can't come to church until they are pure, until they are willing to keep the place a sanctuary, and holy, and all these things, but we need to be aware that that's possible.

I think it might even be broader, broader than just doing business. When you take these principles of Scripture, I think any kind of exploitation, even going on to a leadership team and having your own agenda for the church. How many churches get split because leaders are not humble servants, but rather they bring their own agendas to the leadership team. The pastor, God has called the pastor, given him a vision, he's building a leadership team around that vision, and then you have this outlier who then goes and starts talking behind his back. You've seen this happen. Okay. So you get the idea. So, what is obviously in this passage is that the sanctity of the sanctuary is not an area of compromise.

Here's the Big Idea for the day. First of all, this little section we've been doing, I forgot to put it up, here's how I feel about my Father's house, words from Jesus more or less. Then the Big Idea: **Should I not feel toward our Father's house the same way Jesus felt?** Should I not feel toward our Father's house the same way that Jesus felt? How did he feel? Zeal for his house consumes me. He wanted to maintain the sanctity of the sanctuary. It was not an area of compromise for him.

LET'S KEEP THIS PLACE A SANCTUARY FROM THE WORLD

So what is our response to this? It's let's keep this place a sanctuary from the world. Let's keep this place a sanctuary from the world. So, Matthew 11:28, Jesus says, "Come unto me all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you more work to do." No. He says, "Come unto me all you who are weary and burdened and you'll find rest for your souls." I didn't say the who text there did I? Somebody look that up for me.

If I was a pastor, if I was the pastor of a church, I've said this many times, is that I would have these words over the front door of my church: "Come unto me all you who are weary and burdened ..." What does it say? ... "and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am humble and gentle in spirit, and you will find rest for your souls." That's what I would have over the ... because I would want it to be a sanctuary from the world. I would want it to be a place of respite, a place of peace.

So, I think it's important, staying in the common sense world here, that we're not talking about doing away with bookstores, and coffee shops, and 5K fundraisers. That's not what we're talking about here. We're talking about a spirit of worldly pursuit, so making money, making profit off of the church, that's what I'm talking about. So when you talk about running a coffee shop for the convenience of people, that's called being relevant. That's called being relevant.

I've looked at a bunch of articles this week on the church. One, Five Things I Learned from the 100 Fastest Growing Churches in America, one thing to keep in mind is that these churches typically do have the most relevant worship and so forth. They're the ones that have the coffee shops. They're the ones

that have the restaurants where people can eat and so forth. One of the points, the second point here in this study is that by and large these churches are concerned about teaching Biblical truth and values ahead of anything else. That's what they're mainly about. They're willing to scrap tradition entirely if they have to, and step on the toes of both Christian and popular culture, in order to ensure that they and their congregations remain firmly grounded in biblical truth.

Big, big churches are big for a reason. They're big because they are focused on teaching the truth. It says, "They aren't compromising the message for anyone." As you read interviews from these pastors, you hear it time and again, the most important factor for growth is not a great lighting set up. They have them, but that's not it. Or an awesome worship band. They have them, but that's not it. Or, a killer children's program. They have them, but that's not it. But simply preaching and teaching God's word, and so forth and so on.

It's just so interesting. When people start criticizing big churches, my first question is, "Well, have you actually been to one?" It's like people start criticizing Muslims. I say, "Well, do you actually know a Muslim?" When I was having racial reconciliation work, people would talk, black or white would talk about the opposite race and say something that I knew was pretty dumb. I'd say, "Have you actually ever met a black person?"

"Well, I ... "

"And set down, had a coffee?"

"Well, no, but, you know." So, all the stereotyping that goes on.

Second one was: Are Christian denominations in decline? So many myths about this. So, yeah, the total number of people that identify as Protestants has gone down over the last 50 years, but the total number of Protestants is up 28 million people in the last 50 years in the United States. Then, depending on the kind of denomination, yeah some denominations are in decline. But those that are conservative, Biblical, teaching the Bible are growing. Those churches are growing.

Then this whole new group. You know, you heard about the Nones and now it's the Dones, you know, "I'm done with church." It's really interesting. It's really interesting. There's some great stuff out on the internet. You can find it. This is an article out of Christianity Today.

Yeah, Christianity Today. And basically, you know, the sociologist takes a look at it and basically finds: You know who the dones are? The people who are done with church? They're not the weak faiths. They're the people who were in leadership, but the church itself had a focus that would not be too unlike what was going on here with these men who were selling cows, and pigeons, and doing merchant work. They were in churches that were so focused on doing the business of the church that they burned these guys out, and gals out. There's, of course, a lot more to that than just what I said, but the point is that we were trying to figure out how to keep this place a sanctuary from the world. There are churches who are doing that and they are thriving. They are thriving.

So, one result from this passage that I think is worth noting is that today, by and large, because of this passage, think about this, how many churches do you know that are shopping malls? That are emporiums? When it says this, "Don't turn my Father's house into a market," that Greek word "market"

is emporion from which we get emporium. Turning into an emporium or shopping mall. You don't see that today, so this is a very powerful text because it's given the church, through the centuries, a template for what it should do to maintain the place as a sanctuary from the world. Big Idea today: **Shouldn't I, then, feel towards our Father's house the same way that Jesus felt?**

WHAT SHOULD WE DO WHEN WE BECOME LIKE THOSE MEN?

Then, finally, what should we do when we become like those men? By the way, we're humans. These things happen. We go through seasons. There are undulations in everybody's spiritual pilgrimage, journey, when you're walking more firmly and strongly with God, and other times when you're lapsing back, or backsliding, or whatever word in your tradition is comfortable to use. But there are periods when we become an idiot. As somebody came here and gave a message many years ago said, "I find that I'm just one step away from stupid."

Actually, that's not true. It takes a long time to get to stupid. People don't wake up one morning and think, "Well, I've been happily married for 12 years, I think today I'll go have an affair." That never happens. That never happens. No, it's the process of hundreds, and thousands, maybe tens of thousands of little decisions that you're making over a period of years about what's important to you, that one day, temptation presents itself in a way that closes the deal on years of negotiation between you, and the flesh, and the devil. So, you're not one step away from stupid, but that doesn't mean you can't still do stupid.

So, here's what we should do if this happens to us. If you, through this message, or later it's through some other means, you catch yourself and you realize that, "Oh, everything that Jesus said then does apply now. I have been, through ignorance or wrong motives, I have been using our Father's house as a place of personal gain. If I have brought the world into our Father's house, if I've been doing that," then what we should do is very simple. We humble ourselves, and we repent. And we say, "I'm an idiot! What was I thinking? I'm an idiot."

When I was reading the Bible early in my career, somebody said read the book of Proverbs through once a month. 31 chapters, you can read it once a month. Read a chapter a day. So, I started doing that. I did that for 10 years. But, I realized at the 10 year mark, that what I was really doing is I was looking in the Bible for the secrets of success. There are all kinds of secrets of success in there. I also noticed that some of my friends were getting a very different result from their faith. So I called a time out. I thought it would last a couple of weeks. I'm a smart guy, I'll re-evaluate.

It's like the Lord said, "I believe you but the problem is is that you've given me so little to work with here I'm going to need to start over with you." So, I spent the next two and a half years staring at my navel. I was stuck like in molasses. Then at the 14 year mark in my journey, I wrote on the front of my bible, the same month we started this Bible study, I wrote on the front of my Bible, "I want to live the rest of my earthly life for the will of God," and really meant it. Still do.

Now, I think that I thought at the time, I was probably doing God a favor. I had a pretty high view of myself. I thought I was doing God a favor, you know, "Lucky God. Wow! What a trophy on his wall. Just imagine how much God's going to be able to do now that he has me on his side." But God took me seriously, because I really did mean it. I want to live the rest of my earthly life for the will of God. He took me seriously.

I thought I was signing up for remodeling, redecorating, add a new room on the back. Elegant chandelier. So I was expecting him to send a construction crew one morning to my house. So one morning, excitedly I woke up, and I heard the rumbling of construction equipment. I looked through the blinds, and there are bulldozers, there was a line of bulldozers coming directly at me and they just rolled over me and crushed me. Everything, crushed.

So I'm sitting around the rubble of that a couple of years later, and a thought goes through my mind. I've mentioned it here before. I think it's the greatest lesson I've ever learned. There is a god we want, and there is a God who is. They are not the same God. The turning point of our lives is when we stop seeking the god we want and start seeking the God who is.

What were you thinking? You were such an idiot! Big Idea: Should I not feel toward our Father's house the same way that Jesus did? I had not. I was an idiot. I didn't know any better. I humbled myself. I repented, and I turned from seeking the god, gods, I wanted, to seek the God who is.

Have I done that perfectly every day? Of course I have. Have I done that perfectly every day? Of course I have not. Is that the desire of my heart? Absolutely. Is that the desire of your heart? Absolutely.

Have you brought the world into the sanctuary? If you have, I'd like to give you an opportunity as we close in prayer to repent of that. Simply humble yourself and repent, and just say, "I'm an idiot Lord, I'm an idiot. What was I thinking? Change my life."

Lord Jesus, we want to feel the same way toward your Father's house, our Father's house, that you feel. So we pray that for those areas, Lord, where we have brought worldly thinking into the sanctuary, Lord, we humble ourselves and we repent of that. We say, "Lord, how could we have been so foolish? We're idiots." But, Lord, we know that you want to change our lives and we want to be changed. So we give them to you in humble reliance on your grace, your love, your mercy, and your kindness. Lord, we know that your motivation, your motivation here is to sanctify our lives in the same way that the Father's house is sanctified, so help us to walk in that way. In Jesus' name, Amen.