

**Sermon Summary**  
**3<sup>rd</sup> in Lent**  
**11<sup>th</sup> March 2012**

- Jesus may either be described as initiating a third, new covenant, or clarifying and showing what is meant in the first two
- John starts Jesus' public ministry with the Cleansing of the Temple, placed at the end of his ministry in the other Gospels.
- For John, this is the manifesto for Jesus' ministry, just as reading from Isaiah is in Luke 4.
- Throughout Chapters 1-12, Jesus will be seen to embody the hopes the which are expressed in the existence of the Temple and the feasts of the Jewish calendar
- In John 7, the festival of Sukkoth, Jesus embodies all the main themes of the feast: water, light and the presence of the Messiah.
- Jesus becomes the fulfillment of all that has been hoped for.
- Note that he is never described as destroying the Temple (such references are to his body, not the building in John 2).
- There is great continuity between what he does, and what has gone before.
- If we were to use a phrase from later church history, we might talk of a reformation of the Temple and cult, not its rejection and replacement. I realise this is a very Anglican kind of understanding of reformation.
- Much biblical scholarship of the mid 20<sup>th</sup> century struggled with ideas like this, perhaps reflecting the spirit of the age, and looked for the source of Jesus' thinking and example outside Judaism.
- We do much better to reflect on Jesus' Jewish heritage and the traditions which shaped him if we are to explore more fully the person revealed in Scripture.
- If we do that, we note that the Temple marked presence of God among his people. This is how we are to understand Jesus: the one who embodies God's presence and empowers people to be his followers.

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