

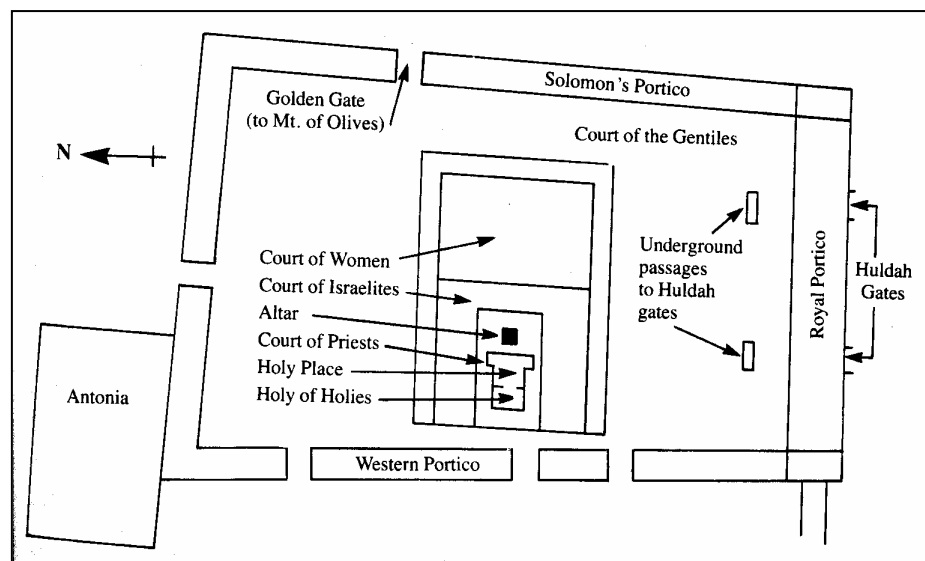
Should we allow fund-raising at church?

Bible Study Worksheet

References: Matthew 21:12-13, Mark 11:15-17, Luke 19:45-46, John 2:12-16
LCMS Biblical Stewardship Principles

Why did Jesus clear the temple?

1. Read Luke 19:45-46. The temple market that Jesus encountered was held in the Court of the Gentiles. How does the layout of the temple compare to church layouts today? Note the similarities and differences.



Holy of Holies was where the Ark of the Covenant was placed. This was the seat of God and only the High Priest on the Day of Atonement could enter to make atonement for the sins of the people. A large and heavy curtain separated this room from the Holy Place. The Holy Place was where the temple priests performed their duties. The Altar was in the Court of Priests where the temple priests would make the sacrifices. The Court of Israelites was only open to Jewish men. The Court of Women was for Jewish women and children. The Court of Gentiles was as far as a Gentile could go in the temple. Messages were posted in three different languages warning Gentiles, on the penalty of death, not to proceed into the inner courts. The Fortress of Antonia housed the Roman troops that patrolled the temple to keep the order.

2. Read Deuteronomy:14:22-26. Moses originally established the temple market and currency exchange. Why was the temple market and currency exchange necessary?
3. Read 2 Kings 23 and Mark 11:15-16. Compare what King Josiah did with what Jesus did. King Josiah was cleansing and rededicating the temple to God after the people had polluted the temple by worshipping Baal. What were Jesus' intentions?
4. Read Matt. 21:13. What can we infer from Jesus' words "It is written"? What word in Jesus' statement reveals the key point that he wants to make? What is Jesus' key point?

5. Read Jeremiah 7:9-11. Robbers would gather in dens to plot their illegal activities, and to store their illicit wealth. Who was Jesus calling robbers? How does Jeremiah describe the “robbers” in temple? How does Jeremiah’s description apply to Jesus’ robbers?
6. Read Isaiah 56:6-7. God’s blessings were for all who called on the name of the Lord whether they be Jew or Gentile. This was difficult for the Jews to accept. What kinds of barriers did the Jews put up to prevent or hinder the believing Gentile from coming to God’s house?
7. The Jews, knowing the Old Testament scriptures would understand Jesus’ message when he quoted from Jeremiah and Isaiah. How would you phrase Jesus’ message to help the Gentiles understand?
8. Read John 2:13-22. By clearing the temple market, Jesus was also symbolically ending the sacrificial system. (Without the temple market which was established by Moses, temple worship would need to change) The Jews were asking for a miraculous sign to prove Jesus’ authority to do this. Jesus answered, “Destroy this temple, and I will raise it again in three days.” What was this miraculous sign to which Jesus refers? Why would this sign mean the end of the sacrificial worship system?

Fund-raising and Stewardship

9. The temple markets and money changers supported the Old Testament worship practices. It was a blessing for traveling pilgrims. This blessing was misused and became a curse for the Jewish people. For us today, fundraising activities are meant to support church mission projects and programs. Sometimes we see these projects and programs as a financial burden rather than a calling. How can we keep our focus on the purpose of our fundraising rather than the effort itself? See Biblical Stewardship Principles 1, 4, 5, and 8.
10. Jesus was angered by the corruption, both physical and spiritual, he found at the temple. How can our misunderstandings of stewardship corrupt how we approach fundraising? How can our misuse of fund raising corrupt how we view stewardship? See Biblical Stewardship Principles 2, 3, and 6.
11. Jesus reminded the Jews that God’s house was open to all; yet, the Jews had put up barriers preventing Gentiles from worshipping and coming into God’s presence. Has fundraising prevented us from being a house of prayer for all nations?

LCMS Stewardship Principles

- 1. GOD'S STEWARDS ARE GOD'S STEWARDS.**
God's stewards are stewards by virtue of creation and their re-creation in Holy Baptism; therefore, they belong to the Lord.
- 2. GOD'S STEWARDS ARE MANAGERS, NOT OWNERS.**
God's stewards have been entrusted by God with life and life's resources and given the privilege of responsibly and joyfully managing them for Him.
- 3. GOD'S STEWARDS ARE SAINTS AND SINNERS.**
God's stewards rejoice in and live out what God has declared them to be through the cross. At the same time His stewards recognize they are sinners who fight sin and its consequences each day.
- 4. GOD'S STEWARDS ARE UNIQUELY SINGULAR, YET PROFOUNDLY PLURAL.**
God's stewards recognize that their lives are not solo performances but are personal responses to God, lived out within the community of faith to benefit the whole world.
- 5. GOD'S STEWARDS ARE *IN* THE WORLD, BUT NOT *OF* THE WORLD.**
God's stewards recognize that the Lord sets them apart from the world and by the transforming power of the Gospel sends them into the world to live out the Gospel.
- 6. GOD'S STEWARDS ARE LOVED AND LOVING.**
God's stewards recognize that their stewardship flows out of God's act of love for them in Christ which empowers them, in turn, to love others in acts of Christ-like love.
- 7. GOD'S STEWARDS ARE SERVED AND SERVING.**
God's stewards recognize that their stewardship involves a Gospel-powered style of life which is demonstrated in servanthood within all the arenas of life.
- 8. GOD'S STEWARDS LIVE WITH AN AWARENESS OF THE PRESENT AND FUTURE, OF TIME AND ETERNITY.**
God's stewards live intentionally in the light of God's eternal purpose while being firmly committed to His rule in the here and now.