

(Due to the nature of movement in this sermon, a recording was not take. Sorry for the inconvenience, Rev. Leigh Sinclair, January 21, 2018)

John 2: 13-25 Jesus in the Temple

“Owning” our emotions means seeking their source, their depth and their probable direction. We are also gifted by the Spirit with wisdom, discernment and our minds to then decide what actions need to be taken to calm the waters. The emotions do not decide their direction. They are not in control.

They are an important gift from God to help us understand what is going on in our lives. In the case of anger, it can teach us two very important things.

Firstly, anger arises when something needs to change. Our scripture calls Jesus' anger in the temple “zeal” because he chooses to use its message that something is unfair to enact change. He does not blame others for his anger but rather cries out for justice. In this story he is claiming God’s temple and love and open to all, for no cost.

He is incensed that any would stand between a child of God and God’s place of sacred love. Anger may lead you to decide to join a protest movement with letters, marches, boycotts and changing of your habits to right a wrong or seek out a change to a law or tradition.

Secondly, anger arises when we feel vulnerable because of other emotions we are feeling. Many turn to anger to feel strong and create a shield between their fear, uncertainty and ignorance on a topic and other people. At best this anger can fuel self-searching and give us courage to push through and ask for help, seek out a listening ear or learn about something new. At worst though our seeking to avoid these scarier emotions brings us to decide to displace our anger onto others. This is when we blame someone for our not know what to do or when we cry out “look what you made me do” after making a decision out of fear instead of our values and faith.

God being our helper let us be honest with ourselves when we feel anger. Let us discern its source (injustice or another emotion hiding underneath), pray and ask for help to understand its depths and what may lay under the surface and then decide with our heart, mind, values and faith what actions to take. Let us “own” our anger and not blame others or use anger to gain power over someone else. Let us acknowledge it and all the emotions within its energy and seek out our way to help God’s love be made know – in our relationships with others, ourselves and our God!