

REFLECTIONS

August 20, 2006

Jesus entered the temple area and drove out all who were buying and selling there.

Matthew 21:12

The Marketplace

No one could ever gain Dale's approval no matter what they did. He was a negative influence in his organization. Now Dale is a very nice man. He means no ill will to anyone; however, his way of saying things simply serves to make matters worse instead of better. Helping Dale modify his style to produce positive results would be no easy task.

Dale is a Christian, so appealing to the loving nature of Christ as a way to help him embrace a warmer relational style seemed to be a good approach. Dale defended his style however, pointing out that Jesus was intolerant too. He cited that Jesus was clearly angry when the Temple had been turned into a marketplace. And I suppose that Dale's point was that we need not be tolerant when people are not doing the right thing.

If only I had had the presence of mind to remind Dale that his place of work is not a temple turned marketplace. It *is* the marketplace. And while Jesus was not *tolerant* of sinners, He was compassionate with them. "Your sins are forgiven," He would say. "Go and sin no more." But I was far too slow on my feet to counter Dale's position. But that is not the only point I could have made.

While Jesus chased the marketplace from the Temple, Dale had an opportunity to bring the Temple into the marketplace. No matter where we are, we are very likely to make an impression on someone. We all have an opportunity in our daily lives to reflect the Savior by the way we conduct ourselves. A caring smile, a friendly hello, or a helping hand can serve to make a difference in the life of someone else.

Go is a word that Jesus used often. *Go* two by two. *Go* into all the world. He tells us to meet the people where they are. The marketplace is one of those places. So, I wish I had been quick enough to remind Dale that Jesus chased the marketplace from the Temple. But we can bring the Temple into the marketplace by the way we treat our fellowman.

Since I wasn't quick enough to encourage Dale, maybe I can work on bringing the Temple to the marketplace myself. And maybe I can encourage you to do it too.

"You are the light of the world."

Richard +