

Shouting matches between family members lead to emptiness and regret. Paradoxically, the people we feel freest to love are those we feel freest to mistreat. Intimacy permits people to show the depths of their love, but also the depths of their rage. The same applies to institutions. If you invest time with a cause, you can get angry there as well.

Surely no one in Israel loved the temple more than Jesus did. The most holy place in this most holy land, it was God's house. If Jesus ever had a home, it surely was the temple. The intense anger Jesus displays in today's Gospel revealed the extent of his love. Now, worshippers needed sheep, cattle, and doves to offer sacrifice in the temple; they needed money changers to make their purchases. Surely Jesus understood that. But the whole tone of the temple had changed to that of a marketplace. What Jesus did in the temple he was doing to all Israel--upsetting their misguided ways, and calling them to new spiritual heights.

But this story takes its most stunning turn when Jesus says, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up." Do you hear how he's turned the tables? *Jesus* is the one who's just made a complete mess of things in this building, and he warns the Jews about what will happen if *they* destroy the temple. It's like, "Say what?" His anger now takes on a deeper meaning. It symbolizes his passion. They will destroy the temple of his body, and in three days that temple will rise again.

People upset us for different reasons. Anger flares in families because members know each other so well. They poke where you're exposed. A proper response to anger balances self-improvement and self-esteem. If we deserve their sarcasm, we can accept it and improve. But if we're blameless, self-confidence will uplift us from attacking back.

Anger is a sign, not a goal. For Jesus it was a sign of his death. For us it's a sign of brokenness. But just as death did not end the story for Christ, so brokenness need not end ours. The intimacy which unleashes anger may also conceal understanding. People may reconcile; or people may agree to disagree. Either way God can heal the hurts of our temples.