

Re:nounce *(Third Sunday of Lent)*

This week the theme of our Lenten Sunday as we look at the work of Repenting of White Supremacy is Re:Nounce. We are inviting you to gather around the story this week on your own or as a household. First, read this context from Stori and Rev. Jesse's podcast this week, to help you set the scene:

Jesus and his disciples have come to Jerusalem for the Passover. This was a significant cultural, religious, and economic event of the time. People from all over Israel came to the temple for the Passover. It was a bustling marketplace. It was the place to be. And there was money to be made. In the temple courtyard, people are buying and selling cattle, sheep, and doves. Because those who had enough money could afford to buy these animals, to pay their due and become right with God. Most people came in with Roman currency (Denari), but roman currency was not accepted in the temple, so they were approaching money changers so they could exchange their Denari for Greek currency (Shekels).

1. Imagine what this might have looked like. What would you see in a bustling marketplace like this. What would you feel? What would you hear? What would you smell? What would you be saying as you walked? Feel free to imagine, act out, or try on different characters in the scene. Imagine being a bystander just outside who couldn't afford to participate. Now imagine being a money changer or temple official who had looked forward to this event for a long time and plotted exactly how it would go and how much money would be made.

Can you picture any events in our time that feel similar to this? (An example might be going to the mall to pay a pretty penny to see Santa at Christmas?)

2. Read [John 2:13-22](#).
3. Now imagine how the scene you picture changes when Jesus enters. What do you hear? What do you see? Imagine you are right in the middle of it. Imagine the physical energy or force it would take to turn over your dining room table? What do you think it might feel like in your body to be in that space? What might you be thinking?

Jesus loudly, perhaps some would say aggresssively, disrupted this event. He destroyed property. He caused people to run away. Perhaps scared people. The doors to this event represented a bottleneck where only some could be pass through so they could be loved by God. Some would profit greatly from this bottleneck, and others would pay all the money they had just to be a part of it, just to be right with God. And then Jesus something shocking. Jesus said that HE is the temple. Jesus effectively has said- this bottleneck is a mirage. This is not what it looks like to be loved by God. And I am offering

a new way where those at the margins- on the sides who can't be a part of this, are at the center. God is here. In me... and given to you.

Now imagine again being different characters in the story and hearing this.

- The bystander who couldn't afford to participate, and thus who knew they couldn't afford to be close to God.
- The money changer or temple official whose system was just disrupted.

Why do you think Jesus acted this way?

4. Below is an excerpt from *Me and White Supremacy*, wherein Layla F. Saad talks about the "tone policing" as a tool of white supremacy. Read and consider where this feels familiar to you.

"Tone policing is a tactic used by those who have privilege to silence those who do not by focusing on the tone of what is being said rather than the actual content. It can be policing BIPOC for using tones that are "too angry" when talking about racism or celebrating them over other BIPOC for using tones that are considered more soft, eloquent, and soothing. In both cases, BIPOC are expected to cater to the white gaze- the white supremacist lens through which people with white privilege see BIPOC- and the comfort level of a person's white fragility when talking about racism. It is also important to note that tone policing does not only have to be spoken out loud. People with white privilege often tone police BIPOC in their thoughts or behind closed doors, understanding that to do so out loud would be considered racist. However, what exists within can do just as much, if not more harm, than what is spoken out loud. What lies within influences what comes out whether intentionally or unintentionally."

"I speak out of direct and particular anger at an academic conference, and a white woman says, 'Tell me how you feel but don't say it too harshly or I cannot hear you.' But is it my manner that keeps her from hearing, or the threat of a message that her life may change?" - Audre Lorde

5. Imagine what it would sound like to "tone police" Jesus after this event. What might people have said to Jesus? Imagine how this event would have been different if Jesus had policed his own tone and "told people how he felt without saying it too harshly".
6. Last week we talked about how the heart of love is to make space for pain. Take a moment to get curious with yourself. Where can you make space to hear someone's pain in the form of anger? What would it look like to make space for it- how would you manage your own emotions to abide and listen?