



Sermon Discussion Guide for Groups

House of Prayer for All Nations

Preached by Mateo Mendoza

July 19, 2026

Summary

Have someone in your group read the following summary aloud.

Pastor Mateo taught from Mark 11:15-18, where Jesus drives out the money changers from the temple. He explained why Jesus responded with such fierce anger -- the marketplace had taken over the Court of the Gentiles, the one place where outsiders could come to pray and seek God. Jesus's anger was not a lapse in judgment but a reflection of His deep love for all people to have access to God's presence. His sermon challenges us to examine whether our acts of worship are accompanied by a Christlike heart, particularly in how we love and welcome others.

The sermon also focuses on prayer as childlike worship. Drawing from Hebrews 4:14-16 and Isaiah 56:6-7, Pastor Mateo emphasized that because of what Jesus has done, believers can approach God's throne with boldness and confidence. Prayer is not a religious ritual but a declaration of trust in God, much like a child reaching up to a parent.

Key Passages

- Mark 11:15-18
- Isaiah 56:6-7
- Amos 5:21-24
- 1 Samuel 15:22
- Hebrews 4:14-16

Opening Prayer

Open your session in prayer, using the words below or your own

Heavenly Father, we come before you today with open hands and open hearts. We ask that you would quiet the noise of our busy lives and help us to fix our eyes on you. As we gather, we do not want to simply go through the motions. We want to truly encounter you. Holy Spirit, we invite you into this conversation. Speak to us, challenge us, and draw us closer to you and to one another. May what was spoken from your Word take root in our hearts and bear fruit in our lives. In Jesus's name, **Amen**.

Getting Going

Allow time for each member to answer the following questions before moving on.

What is one place or setting where you feel most at ease talking to God, and why do you think that is?

Discussion Questions

Answer as many of these questions as time and interest allow.

1. Pastor Mateo described Jesus making a whip and driving people out of the temple with force. What does that image of an angry Jesus reveal to you about his character and His love for people?
2. The money changers had taken over the Court of the Gentiles, the one space set aside for outsiders to come and pray. In what ways might we, as individuals or as a church, unintentionally block others from experiencing God's presence?
3. God says in Amos 5 that He hates the sacrifices and songs of people whose hearts are not right toward others. How does that challenge the way you think about your own worship and spiritual habits?
4. Do you have people around you who are different from you? How intentional are you about building relationships with people outside your usual circle, and what makes that difficult?
5. Pastor Mateo said that the things that make us most angry are often connected to the things we love most deeply. How does understanding Jesus's anger as an expression of love change the way you read the passage?

6. Pastor Mateo described prayer as childlike worship, a simple declaration that says, "God, I trust you and I need you." Does that description match how you currently approach prayer? Why or why not?
7. Hebrews 4:16 invites us to approach the throne of grace with confidence. What are some things that make it hard for you to come before God boldly, and how can this group help you overcome those barriers?
8. Pastor Mateo challenged us to enter church with eyes toward others rather than heads down. What is a practical way you could be more present and encouraging to the people around you when you gather?

Making It Personal

Take the opportunity noted below to apply this week's sermon to your everyday life.

This week, identify one person in your life who feels far from God or far from community. Make a specific and intentional effort to invite them in, whether that means having them over to your home, grabbing coffee, or inviting them to church. At the same time, set aside a few minutes each day to practice childlike prayer. Come before God with open hands, tell Him what you need, and simply say, "Jesus, I trust you." Let your prayer life this week be a declaration of dependence on him.

Key Takeaways

Commit to memory one point from the message before dismissing.

- Jesus is not pleased with religious acts performed with an unchristlike heart. God cares deeply about the condition of the worshiper's heart, which is most clearly revealed in how we love and treat one another.
- God's desire is for all people, including those who feel like outsiders, to have access to His presence. When we exclude or overlook others, we work against the very heart of God.
- Our love for God is most clearly demonstrated not just in our worship services but in how we advocate for the poor, the lonely, the vulnerable, and those who are different from us.
- Prayer is childlike worship. When we come before God and ask him for what we need, we are declaring that we trust Him, and that declaration is an act of worship.
- Because of what Jesus has done, we can approach God's throne with boldness and confidence. We do not need to clean ourselves up first. We come empty-handed and receive from a generous and loving Father.

Closing Prayer

Have someone from your group close your time in prayer, using the words below or your own.

Father, thank you for the reminder that your house is meant to be a house of prayer for all people. Forgive us for the times we have gone through the motions of worship while our hearts were far from you or far from others. We ask that you would create in us pure hearts, hearts that reflect your love for every person around us. Give us the courage to invite others in, to pray boldly, and to trust you even when we do not understand what you are doing. We come before your throne of grace right now, not because we have it all together, but because you are a good Father and you have made a way for us through Jesus. Thank you that your arms are always open. May we leave this place more like you than when we arrived. In the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, **Amen**.