

John 2: 13 – 22

When you see environmental protesters up trees or in tunnels how do you feel?

Do you wish you were with them? Are you inspired by Greta Thunberg and her fellow young climate change activists? Perhaps you champion Fair Trade products, reject single use plastics or write to our MP about inhumane treatment of immigrants.

We can so often feel frustrated by the ways that the world has got itself into ... and sometimes we get the courage to shout about it!

If you have ever taken your campaigning out into public you probably have an idea about how Jesus felt this day when he went into the Temple and found too much worldly business going on and not enough holy business. And I think you can feel empowered by this story to get noisy when you can see the hurt that is being done to God's creation – people, animals or places. Do what Jesus would do!

Not surprisingly Jesus attracts a lot of attention as tables go flying and animals are let loose, not to mention the crack of his whip. People want to know who he is and what it is he's so upset about. They want a miracle to prove that he is someone who can say: '***This is my Father's house.***'

What he says to them is rather odd. He says: '***Destroy (or Tear down) this temple and in three days I will build it up again.***' We understand it because John explains for us that Jesus is no longer talking about the Temple buildings, he's talking about his body as God's temple.

It was only when Jesus rose from the dead three days after being killed on the cross that those in the temple that day understood what he meant and came to believe in him.

I wonder what sign made you believe in Jesus? Perhaps you are still waiting for a sign to know that the things Christians talk about are true. If you are open to such a sign, then one wonderful day you will find that Jesus has walked into your life. It might come when you are thinking about the beauty of the world and the things in it; perhaps you will be inspired by the life of someone who acts out of love for Jesus; perhaps, like the writer of our next hymn, you will find yourself thankful for having survived a very frightening experience.

**John Newton** had led a wretched life, not all of it of his own making and he had spent most of it at sea. One day, at a time when he thought things were looking up for him, he was on a ship when there was a great storm and he thought the ship was going to sink and he would drown. But miraculously, the ship did not go down and he survived.

Many years later he wrote Amazing Grace, remembering that day and how he had lived his life in God's protection ever since.