

Making Our Point

'Galilean causes havoc: traders' tables overturned in the Temple' might have been the headline in Jerusalem newspapers had they existed 2000 years ago. Jesus came to Jerusalem for the Passover that first Easter, and entered the Temple and tipped over the traders' tables saying they should not be trading in the House of God.

The event caused a stir and is reported in all the Gospels. Good people are not aggressive, violent or angry. So was Jesus angry? Was he violent? Or was he just making a point? Blind anger and violence are never ways of highlighting evil. Clearly he was right to question whether profit-making activities were appropriate in a sacred building – it's like having a market inside the circle of Stonehenge. Although egos were bruised and profits reduced, no one was hurt in this event. Should he just have written a letter to the authorities, or spoken to the traders, or told his friends not to buy from the Temple - or did he need to physically do something?

Taking a stand, as Jesus did, in the face of evil, is important. Edmund Burke (1729-1797) said 'The only thing necessary for the triumph of evil is for good men to do nothing'

Disagreeing with someone else's opinion does not make that opinion evil. 'I'm right and you're wrong' is never an acceptable way to treat others. But when their opinion threatens aggression or violence, or is based on untruth, or treats other human beings without respect, or steals what is not theirs, or exploits resources belonging to us all, then that opinion and its consequences should be challenged. Making our point is good. But using evil means to make it just increases the evil.