

Artist:

# Jay-Z and Alicia Keys

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**Song:** Empire State of Mind

**Album:** The Blueprint 3

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## Teaching Point:

Righteous indignation needs to be expressed sparingly, if ever at all.

## Opening Question:

When do you feel the need to defend Jesus?

## Discussion:

Jay-Z and Alicia Keys have teamed up in their performance of mega-hit, "Empire State of Mind." The song, a tribute to Jay-Z's love of New York, contains a line that has caused controversy among Christians.

## Ask:

- What emotions do you feel when Jay-Z raps. "Jesus can't save you. Life starts when the church ends"? What do you want to do?
- What circumstances would make a person feel as if Jesus can't save them?
- What kind of "life start" when the church ends is the singer talking about?
- What else can you think of that may be behind these lyrics?

Jesus came into the temple, and He was angry. The people who acted as if they were religious had turned the temple into a den of thieves. Jesus turned over the tables and shouted against them. Read about it in these verses:

**Mark 11:15-17**

**Luke 19:45-46**

Jesus directed His righteous indignation at those who claimed to be religious leaders. But, Jesus' words to people who were called "sinners" by the religious were different:

**Luke 19:2-7**

**Mark 2:1-5**

## Conclusion:

Jesus' words of disdain were reserved for the religious people who should have known better. Jesus words of restoration and unconditional love are for everyone – no exceptions. We should reserve our words of righteous indignation to Jesus and focus our faith journey on loving God and loving everyone.