



A Question of Authority

By Jeff Bedwell on January 29, 2021

READING: Luke 20

This chapter is permeated with issues related to authority. The chief priests, the scribes and the elders all had their understanding of their own authority. After the events of the last chapter (the triumphal entry and cleansing of the temple) and Jesus' continued teaching, they questioned His authority.

Jesus tells a parable pointing to the foolishness and eventual destruction of those who reject the ultimate authority of God manifested most clearly in Jesus Christ, "the stone the builders rejected" (vs. 17).

The opponents of Jesus tried to entrap Him with a question about government's authority (vv. 20-26). Jesus gave an answer to clarify the relationship between God's authority and the authority of government.

Governmental authority is instituted by God and must be respected (see Romans 13: 1-7; 1 Peter 2:13-17). God instituted human government, and it is essential for a safe and orderly society that we live as good citizens and obey the authorities for the Lord's sake.

When obedience to God conflicts with obedience to man, then we must put God first (Acts 4:19-20; 5:29), recognizing His ultimate authority, but we must do it in a manner that is thoughtful, honorable and loving. Even if we cannot respect the person who holds a particular office, we must respect the office itself. Jeremiah's counsel to the Jewish exiles in Babylon is a good one for us to follow today (Jeremiah 29:4-7): "Seek the welfare of the city where I have sent you."

In a day and age where there are conflicting "voices of authority," how will you live in a way that honors and submits fully to the authority of God?

PRAYER: "Father, these are challenging days in which to live in submission to You. In a world of competing and conflicting "voices of authority," help me to joyfully trust and obey You and Your authority."

TOMORROW'S READING: Weekend is for catch-up and review.

MONDAY'S READING: Luke 21

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