

Title: QUESTION AUTHORITY, LUKE 20:27 – 38  
(Chatham, NJ; 11/07/10, AM) [D – Topical]

Theme: Although the Pharisees questioned Jesus' authority, we have plenty of evidence to suggest that his authority was legitimate and from God.

Purpose: To examine their questions and demonstrate the reasons why we believe his authority was divinely sanctioned.

Introduction:

1. Today's title was a prominent saying in the 60s.
2. You would think the Pharisees were true children of that era.
3. Cleansing the Temple and his teaching were too much for them (19:45-48; 20:1-2).
4. To compound their frustrations Jesus had grassroots support (19:48) as did John (20:6).
5. It was threatening to have Jesus do all this right under their noses.

I. Question – Where does your authority come from? (20:2).

A. Let's start with John.

1. Where was John's authority from? Heaven or man?
2. They fumbled for an answer because they knew their predicament.
3. They weren't truly inquisitive; they sought to discredit.
4. That is why he doesn't answer their question.
5. Jesus turned the tables on them. He humiliates them on their own terms.

B. Early recognition.

1. Mt. 7:28-29 demonstrates that people noticed how authoritative Jesus was.
2. His command over the demons also demonstrated his authority, Mark 1:27.

II. Question – Should we pay taxes to Caesar?

A. Again, they are duplicitous.

1. They want to arrest him, Luke 20:19.
2. Luke notes they only pretended to be sincere, vs. 20.
3. The question of paying taxes was an attempt to catch Jesus in saying something against the government.
4. They hoped he would challenge the authority of the governor.

B. A question with many facets.

1. What is the relationship of earthly governments to the Kingdom of God?
2. Should Christians rebel against all governments?
3. Should they accept government control over every aspect of their lives?
4. How much influence should the Kingdom have over governments?
5. Authority is the issue behind all of this discussion: who has it?

C. Not another idol.

1. There is a heavenly purpose for earthly governments.
2. However, governments tend toward idolatry: they want to control people's lives.
3. Rome was not content to enforce her laws, she expected emperor worship.
4. The more control they want, the more Christians have pushed back.
5. Our system of limited government is unique in history even if some seek more power than our constitution allows.
6. The matter of authority appears again in this question though Jesus does not offer a clear statement, but centuries of interpretation have given us a lot to think about concerning the role of earthly rulers.

### III. Question – Can you tell us about the afterlife?

#### A. Their challenge.

1. Literally that was not the question, but that is the gist of the answer.
2. They framed the debate in such a way as to elicit a specific response from Jesus.
3. They failed to get it.
4. They didn't believe in an afterlife.
5. He explains that there will be no marriage in heaven.
6. He also explains that God is the God of the living, not the dead.
7. His eternal nature demands something after this life.

#### B. Knowledge of afterlife is the ultimate authoritative knowledge.

1. If you know this you are somebody.
2. His resurrection forever demonstrates his knowledge of the next life.

#### Conclusion:

1. Jesus gets his authority from a lot of things that the Pharisees and others should have known.
2. Fulfilled prophecy demonstrated his connection with the Sacred Writings of the Jews.
3. His miracles of healing, driving out demons, and calming storms demonstrated that he had great power and authority.
4. Hebrews 7:14 speaks of the power of an indestructible life. His resurrection demonstrates his right to speak on the afterlife and on every other aspect of life.
5. This is why the church recognized his rule over everything, Eph. 1:20-21 & 1 Peter 3:22.
6. We do not question Jesus' authority, but many still do.
7. Live in such a way that our witness to his authority is clear.
8. Tell them all of us are answerable to one Lord and one Lord only.