

Luke 20

Who Is This Jesus?

Part 1

Luke 20:1-19 (NIV)

¹ One day as Jesus was teaching the people in the temple courts and proclaiming the good news, the chief priests and the teachers of the law, together with the elders, came up to him. ² “Tell us by what authority you are doing these things,” they said. “Who gave you this authority?”

³ He replied, “I will also ask you a question. Tell me: ⁴ John’s baptism—was it from heaven, or of human origin?”

⁵ They discussed it among themselves and said, “If we say, ‘From heaven,’ he will ask, ‘Why didn’t you believe him?’ ⁶ But if we say, ‘Of human origin,’ all the people will stone us, because they are persuaded that John was a prophet.”

⁷ So they answered, “We don’t know where it was from.”

⁸ Jesus said, “Neither will I tell you by what authority I am doing these things.”

⁹ He went on to tell the people this parable: “A man planted a vineyard, rented it to some farmers and went away for a long time. ¹⁰ At harvest time he sent a servant to the tenants so they would give him some of the fruit of the vineyard. But the tenants beat him and sent him away empty-handed.

¹¹ He sent another servant, but that one also they beat and treated shamefully and sent away empty-handed. ¹² He sent still a third, and they wounded him and threw him out.

¹³ “Then the owner of the vineyard said, ‘What shall I do? I will send my son, whom I love; perhaps they will respect him.’

¹⁴ “But when the tenants saw him, they talked the matter over. ‘This is the heir,’ they said. ‘Let’s kill him, and the inheritance will be ours.’ ¹⁵ So they threw him out of the vineyard and killed him.

“What then will the owner of the vineyard do to them? ¹⁶ He will come and kill those tenants and give the vineyard to others.”

When the people heard this, they said, “God forbid!”

¹⁷ Jesus looked directly at them and asked, “Then what is the meaning of that which is written:

“‘The stone the builders rejected
has become the cornerstone’?”

¹⁸ Everyone who falls on that stone will be broken to pieces; anyone on whom it falls will be crushed.”

¹⁹ The teachers of the law and the chief priests looked for a way to arrest him immediately, because they knew he had spoken this parable against them. But they were afraid of the people.

? What do you think were the chief priests’ motivations in asking Jesus, “Who gave you this authority?”

? The chief priests' failure to answer Jesus' question reveals that they weren't genuinely seeking truth. Why do you think someone would struggle with accepting that Jesus' authority actually came from God?

? How can we more humbly approach Jesus and seek His truth?

? In His parable, Jesus communicates a truth to the chief priests and scribes about their eternal salvation. They responded with hard hearts. How can we better respond to hard truths that Jesus reveals to us about the condition of our hearts?

Jesus As Our Cornerstone

The passage that Jesus quotes in verse 17 comes from Psalm 118:22. This verse is a sort of proverb that was applied to Israel's king. The sense of the psalm is that a stone that is rejected by human hands was used for a greater purpose by God. In ancient building practices, the cornerstone was the principal stone placed at the corner of an edifice. The cornerstone was the first stone set into a foundation and all other stones were set in reference to it. Likewise, Jesus was the first of a new race of people—made righteous before God—and our goal as Christians is to line up with Him.

Part 2

Luke 20:41-47 (NIV)

⁴¹ Then Jesus said to them, "Why is it said that the Messiah is the son of David? ⁴² David himself declares in the Book of Psalms:

"The Lord said to my Lord:

"Sit at my right hand

⁴³ until I make your enemies
a footstool for your feet."

⁴⁴ David calls him 'Lord.' How then can he be his son?"

⁴⁵ While all the people were listening, Jesus said to his disciples, ⁴⁶ "Beware of the teachers of the law. They like to walk around in flowing robes and love to be greeted with respect in the marketplaces and have the most important seats in the synagogues and the places of honor at banquets. ⁴⁷ They devour widows' houses and for a show make lengthy prayers. These men will be punished most severely."

? Instead of answering their questions, Jesus now poses one to the scribes and priests (vs. 41). How would you answer Jesus' question?

? The Jews of Jesus' day taught that teachers were to be respected almost as much as God. Looking at verse 46, how had the scribes of the day misused this status?

? How do these scribes' behaviors contrast with how Christ's disciples should live?

? How do we as Christians sometimes behave like modern-day scribes to those who aren't followers of Christ?

? In what areas of life do modern Christians sometimes try to suppress truth? How can we better accept Jesus' authority over our lives?

For Discussion and Accountability

? What heart issues might Jesus be calling you to address? How can you respond to Him with trust and love?