

By What Authority

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I. Introduction.

- A. Text: Mark 11:27-12:27.
- B. The problem arises with what authority one must follow.
- C. Jesus cleanses the temple and stops the sacrifice system.

II. The response to Jesus' action.

- A. The Jewish leadership raises the question about Jesus' authority.
 - 1. This is the ultimate question—no man is ever his own authority.
 - 2. We are dealing with what is basic and fundamental to all human behavior everywhere.
- B. This is an imposing counsel.

III. Jesus' response.

- A. He examines their credentials.
 - 1. All authority comes either from God or from man
 - 2. We are either responding to God or manipulating/pleasing man.
 - 3. Jesus exposes the leaders as having authority as coming from man.
- B. He predicts their downfall. (Isaiah 5)
 - 1. Through a parable, Jesus shows that unfaithful stewards would be destroyed.
 - 2. What was stewarded over would be given to someone else.
 - 3. Man's authority is always limited and can never be equated with that of God because of duration.

IV. The traps of the leadership.

- A. Should one pay taxes to an authority that is not God?
 - 1. The Scriptures everywhere acknowledge that God is behind secular government—even bad government.
 - 2. Human government only has limited power over men though— it cannot touch the human spirit.

3. The things of the spirit belong to God.

B. Whose wife will a woman be having had several husbands on earth in the resurrection?

1. Man does not understand the mysteries of God through the Scriptures.

2. Man does not know the power of God.

3. Human reason is limited.

V. Human authority must always be subject to the over-arching authority of God—when we live in terms of this reality, everything else will fall into place.

Application questions:

1. How does Jesus find the Jewish leadership's authority wanting?

2. What is the result of the Jewish leadership's manipulation?

3. How is one to respond today to his or her government in light of God's relationship to government? Explain.
