



Who Gave You This Authority?

Luke 20

Tony Chute, Interim Pastor

Overview: Luke depicts a series of interactions between Jesus and those who have plotted to destroy Him. The first interaction revolves around the question of authority in which Jesus silences his critics by exposing their unwillingness to accede the clear conclusion drawn from the ministry of John the Baptist. The parable that follows underscores the nature of rebellion against lawful authority by highlighting the right of God to rule over his people and their refusal to recognize his reign. The second interaction centers on the question of whether a conflict exists between worshipping God and obeying governmental authority. Jesus' response allows for both while at the same time, avoiding idolatry or insurrection. The third interaction is based upon a theological disagreement, which Jesus expertly addresses using the authority of Scripture. The chapter concludes with the assertion that Jesus has received all authority, followed by a warning that those who live under false authority will receive greater condemnation.

01. Rebellion against proper authority is a common trait of the human heart and may be recognized by rejection of known truth, evasion of perceptible truth, pretensions of seeking truth, and disinterest in accepting truth.

02. Reception of proper authority is a common trait of the Christian heart and may be recognized by conforming our thinking to Scripture in all matters including who speaks for God, how to conduct ourselves in this life, and what to expect in the life to come.

1. Why did Jesus refer to the ministry of John the Baptist in order to address the legitimacy of his own ministry? See John 5:30-47 for additional support for the ministry of Jesus.
2. What does the parable of the wicked tenants teach us about the danger of following popular thought in the apparent absence of divine authority? How does the promise of Christ's return shape the way you live each day?
3. Do you struggle to "render to Caesar the things that belong to Caesar"? In what ways? Do you find it more difficult to render to God the things that are God's? What is the proper relationship between Christians and government? See Romans 13 for further insight.
4. How do Jesus' teaching on marriage and the resurrection undermine the question and claims of the Sadducees? What can we conclude about Jesus when He speaks authoritatively about heaven?
5. Are you able to distinguish between proper authority and pretentious authority? Why do those who operate on the basis of pretentious authority deserve greater condemnation? If you have a habit of discarding God-ordained authority, pray for the Lord to give you a heart that desires to serve Him under the leadership of those He has appointed over you.

For Further Reading: D. A. Carson, *The Gagging of God: Christianity Confronts Pluralism* (Zondervan, 1996).