

Authority

Matt. 21:23-27

Introduction:

- A. Jews asked good questions. (v. 23).
- B. Jesus answered them wisely (v. 24)
- C. Jesus' answer prompts us to carefully consider authority – it's source, nature, extent and application.

Discussion:

I. **The Source of Religious Authority.**

- A. Not ourselves. (cf. Jer. 10:23; Naaman)
- B. Not "from men". (cf. Matt. 15:3,6,9)
- C. But "from heaven".
 - 1. Jesus is at right hand of God with all authority. (Matt. 28:18-20).
 - 2. Jesus is head over all things to the church. (Eph. 1:22,23).
 - 3. New Testament writings. (Eph. 3:3-5; 1 Cor. 14:37).
 - a. Not Old Testament today. (Gal. 5:4; Heb. 8:13).
 - b. Not later day revelations. (Jude 3).

II. **The Nature of Religious Authority.**

- A. Commands, Examples, and Necessary Inferences.
 - 1. Jesus used all three. (Mt. 4:4; Lk. 17:32; Matt. 22:31-33)
 - 2. Men use all three in legal matters.
 - 3. We use all three in Lord's supper.
 - a. Command. (1 Cor. 11:24)
 - b. Example. (Acts 20:7)
 - c. Inference. (Every first day; Unleavened bread).
- B. General and Specific terms.

III. **The Extent of Religious Authority.**

- A. Includes both specified and unspecified means.
 - 1. The command to offer Isaac. (Gen. 22:2)
 - a. Things specified in command: The action; The sacrifice; The place.
 - b. Things not specified but inferred: Means of taking - Donkey & men.
 - 2. The commands to assemble, teach, etc.
 - a. Free to choose any expedient means and/or place.
 - b. Free to choose any means consistent with all God's will.
- B. Includes both rights and obligations.
 - 1. The Lord's supper is an obligation. (1 Cor. 11:24)
 - 2. The preacher's marriage and support is a right. (1 Cor. 9:1-6).

IV. **The Application of Religious Authority.**

- A. N. T. commands, examples and inferences binding unless loosed by heaven.
 - 1. When no means, time, or place specified infers not specific.
 - 2. When various means, times or places specified infers no exclusive means.
 - 3. When one means, place, time specified but other scriptures show it to be an indifferent matter. (cf. Upper room.)
- B. N. T. specifies kind of music, organization, and worship.
- C. N. T. authorizes without specifying: Classes, buildings, facilities, cups.

Conclusion:

- A. Let us learn to respect the authority of the scriptures.
- B. Let us learn to respect the silence of the scriptures. (Heb. 7:14)