

## Luke Lesson 20

### Luke Chapter 20

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Memory verses for this week: *Isa 9:6 For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace.*

**Introduction:** We continue our study of the book of Luke this week as we continue in chapter 20. Last week, we began our study with the conversion of Zacchaeus. Jesus taught on the parable of the ten pounds. Later He entered Jerusalem in a triumphal entry as the people cried out in joy. We ended last week's lesson studying about Christ purifying the temple by driving out the moneychangers.

### I. Religious Leaders Question Jesus' Authority

*Luke 20:1 And it came to pass, that on one of those days, as he taught the people in the temple, and preached the gospel, the chief priests and the scribes came upon him with the elders,  
Luke 20:2 And spake unto him, saying, Tell us, by what authority doest thou these things? or who is he that gave thee this authority?*

We find a controversy developed between Jesus and the chief priests, scribes, and elders of Israel. We know these had from the very first rejected the testimony of Christ, and did not accept that he was the Messiah sent from God. The religious leaders of the people were now gathered around Him as he taught the people in the temple. They had gathered on the outer court of the temple where the teachers met with their disciples. They begin by asking two questions found in verse 2. "By what authority doest thou these things? Or who is he that gave thee this authority?" The first question is in regards to him driving out the moneychangers from the temple as we studied at the end of Chapter 19.

The second question concerning authority really upset these people. How could a mere carpenter from Nazareth dare enter into the precincts of the temple and drive out those who sold doves, lambs, and other animals for sacrifices. To them Jesus was not qualified nor did he have the authority to do these things. But he did it with GREAT authority, which had to be very confusing to them. Jesus didn't check the popularity polls to decide what He would do. He was God Himself manifested in the flesh, and He was always about doing the Will of the Father.

*Luke 20:3 And he answered and said unto them, I will also ask you one thing; and answer me:*

*Luke 20:4 The baptism of John, was it from heaven, or of men?*

Jesus was not taken by surprise by these men's question. Instead of answering them, he replies back with another questions. "The Baptism of John, was I from heaven or of men?"

*Luke 20:5 And they reasoned with themselves, saying, If we shall say, From heaven; he will say, Why then believed ye him not?*

*Luke 20:6 But and if we say, Of men; all the people will stone us: for they be persuaded that John was a prophet.*

*Luke 20:7 And they answered, that they could not tell whence it was.*

These religious leaders get together and discuss this among themselves. They realize that this was a loaded question. If they were to say it was from heaven, then Jesus would ask why they did not believe him. However, because the people regarded John the Baptist as a great prophet (which he was), if they said it was from men, most likely the people would stone them. So to get out of the predicament, they say that they could not tell whence it was.

*Luke 20:8 And Jesus said unto them, Neither tell I you by what authority I do these things.*

Jesus replies "Neither tell I you by what authority I do these things." They didn't get their smooth answer to help them with Jesus. Jesus was God and knew their thoughts and motives.

## **II. Parable of the Vineyard**

*Luke 20:9 Then began he to speak to the people this parable; A certain man planted a vineyard, and let it forth to husbandmen, and went into a far country for a long time.*

*Luke 20:10 And at the season he sent a servant to the husbandmen, that they should give him of the fruit of the vineyard: but the husbandmen beat him, and sent him away empty.*

In this parable of the vineyard, we have an account that speaks of Israel and the treatment of both the prophets and Jesus Christ. The certain man who planted the vineyard is God. The vineyard is the nation of Israel. The husbandmen who were to take care of the vineyard represent the rulers. These were the temporal rulers as well as the spiritual rulers. The servant sent forth speaks of the prophets. God used these men over and over to call Israel back to God and His law. But the people turned deaf ears to their messages and persecuted them for telling the truth.

*1 Ki 18:21 And Elijah came unto all the people, and said, How long halt ye between two opinions? if the LORD be God, follow him: but if Baal, then follow him. And the people answered him not a word.*

*Isa 43:7 Even every one that is called by my name: for I have created him for my glory, I have formed him; yea, I have made him.*

*Isa 43:8 Bring forth the blind people that have eyes, and the deaf that have ears.*

*Isa 43:9 Let all the nations be gathered together, and let the people be assembled: who among them can declare this, and show us former things?....*

*Isa 43:11 I, even I, am the LORD; and beside me there is no saviour.*

*Luke 20:11 And again he sent another servant: and they beat him also, and entreated him shamefully, and sent him away empty.*

*Luke 20:12 And again he sent a third: and they wounded him also, and cast him out.*

This was repeated again and again. God would send forth a prophet to his chosen nation of Israel, but they would not hear and they would persecute God's chosen man.

*Jer 5:19 And it shall come to pass, when ye shall say, Wherefore doeth the LORD our God all these things unto us? then shalt thou answer them, Like as ye have forsaken me, and served strange gods in your land, so shall ye serve strangers in a land that is not yours.*

*Jer 5:20 Declare this in the house of Jacob, and publish it in Judah, saying,*

*Jer 5:21 Hear now this, O foolish people, and without understanding; which have eyes, and see not; which have ears, and hear not:*

*Luke 20:13 Then said the lord of the vineyard, What shall I do? I will send my beloved son: it may be they will reverence him when they see him.*

*Luke 20:14 But when the husbandmen saw him, they reasoned among themselves, saying, This is the heir: come, let us kill him, that the inheritance may be ours.*

*Luke 20:15 So they cast him out of the vineyard, and killed him. What therefore shall the lord of the vineyard do unto them?*

Finally the Lord sent His own son into the vineyard. "They will reverence him when they see him." He reasoned. But not only did they not reverence Christ, they put him on the Cross and crucified Him. The parable puts forth a question... "What therefore shall the lord of the vineyard do unto them?" There is a price that sin earns.

*Luke 20:16 He shall come and destroy these husbandmen, and shall give the vineyard to others. And when they heard it, they said, God forbid.*

*Luke 20:17 And he beheld them, and said, What is this then that is written, The stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner?*

*Luke 20:18 Whosoever shall fall upon that stone shall be broken; but on whomsoever it shall fall, it will grind him to powder.*

When the Jews heard what Jesus said God would do to them, they say “God forbid.” The bible says it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of God. Without Christ, no one has any hope.

The stone which the builders (meaning the nation of Israel and their leaders) rejected became the head of the corner. The church itself is built upon the precious cornerstone of Jesus Christ. He is now head of the corner.

*Acts 4:5 And it came to pass on the morrow, that their rulers, and elders, and scribes,*

*Acts 4:6 And Annas the high priest, and Caiaphas, and John, and Alexander, and as many as were of the kindred of the high priest, were gathered together at Jerusalem.*

*Acts 4:7 And when they had set them in the midst, they asked, By what power, or by what name, have ye done this?*

*Acts 4:8 Then Peter, filled with the Holy Ghost, said unto them, Ye rulers of the people, and elders of Israel,*

*Acts 4:9 If we this day be examined of the good deed done to the impotent man, by what means he is made whole;*

*Acts 4:10 Be it known unto you all, and to all the people of Israel, that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom ye crucified, whom God raised from the dead, even by him doth this man stand here before you whole.*

*Acts 4:11 This is the stone which was set at nought of you builders, which is become the head of the corner.*

*Acts 4:12 Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.*

*1 Pet 2:4 To whom coming, as unto a living stone, disallowed indeed of men, but chosen of God, and precious,*

*1 Pet 2:5 Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ.*

*1 Pet 2:6 Wherefore also it is contained in the scripture, Behold, I lay in Sion a chief corner stone, elect, precious: and he that believeth on him shall not be confounded.*

*1 Pet 2:7 Unto you therefore which believe he is precious: but unto them which be disobedient, the stone which the builders disallowed, the same is made the head of the corner,*

*1 Pet 2:8 And a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence, even to them which stumble at the word, being disobedient: whereunto also they were appointed.*

It says that whosoever falls upon this stone will be broken. And on whomsoever the stones falls it shall grind him to powder. The stone falling speaks of the judgment Christ will mete out. The first time Jesus came, He came as a loving and forgiving Savior. When He returns this second time, He comes as the Righteous Judge. All those who do not come by the blood of Christ will be crushed and ground to powder. And even worse, they face eternal separation from God in Hell. Oh what an awesome responsibility we have to warn those who are lost about what they face. If we warn them, and they reject us, their blood is not on our hands. But if we fail to tell them, we have no excuse.

*Ezek 3:18 When I say unto the wicked, Thou shalt surely die; and thou givest him not warning, nor speakest to warn the wicked from his wicked way, to save his life; the same wicked man shall die in his iniquity; but his blood will I require at thine hand.*

*Ezek 3:19 Yet if thou warn the wicked, and he turn not from his wickedness, nor from his wicked way, he shall die in his iniquity; but thou hast delivered thy soul.*

### **III. Question of the Tribute Money**

*Luke 20:19 And the chief priests and the scribes the same hour sought to lay hands on him; and they feared the people: for they perceived that he had spoken this parable against them.*

*Luke 20:20 And they watched him, and sent forth spies, which should feign themselves just men, that they might take hold of his words, that so they might deliver him unto the power and authority of the governor.*

The leaders are very upset with Christ and sought that same hour to lay hands on Jesus because they perceived the parable was against them. They were right in that part. They were unable to answer the Lord on this matter, and because they rejected him, they stoop to the lowest of methods when they seek to send forth spies to discredit Him before the people. They send forth these to also find some occasion against Him that they might accuse Christ before Pilate. They were not match in words with Christ because he was the Living Word made manifest to man. They were never going to defeat Jesus in a debate of words because Christ was God Himself. So they sought mean and wicked ways to try and take Christ.

*Luke 20:21 And they asked him, saying, Master, we know that thou sayest and teachest rightly, neither acceptest thou the person of any, but teachest the way of God truly:*

*Luke 20:22 Is it lawful for us to give tribute unto Caesar, or no?*

Being very crafty, they lie as they say “Master, we know that thou sayest and teachest rightly.” They didn’t really believe that, nor the last part about “teachest the way of God truly.” But they were pouring on the charm that they might trick him with a question about giving tribute unto Caesar. If they could get him to speak against the Roman government, they would have him. This shows how desperate they were since they all hated the Roman government and would have delighted to see it overthrown and the Jews liberated as a nation. But their goal was to find fault in Jesus one way or another.

*Luke 20:23 But he perceived their craftiness, and said unto them, Why tempt ye me?*

*Luke 20:24 Show me a penny. Whose image and superscription hath it? They answered and said, Caesar's.*

*Luke 20:25 And he said unto them, Render therefore unto Caesar the things which be Caesar's, and unto God the things which be God's.*

They thought that because God gave the land to Abraham, the father of Israel, and to his descendants, Jesus would lash out against the Romans for making them give tribute unto them. What right did they have to bring authority over God’s people? But Jesus knew their minds and ‘perceived their craftiness’ it says in verse 23. By having pointed out that the money had Caesar’s image on it, that proved that it was his money and they were required to pay the tribute to the Romans. And more importantly, they were required to render unto God the things which be God’s.

**J. Vernon McGee had some good points about the tribute money question.**

The question of the Herodians was a loaded one designed to trap Jesus. Had He said “Yes”—to pay tribute to Caesar, then He would have put Caesar ahead of Moses and ahead of their Messiah. If He had said “No”—not to pay tribute to Caesar, then He would have been subject to arrest by Rome.

The method Jesus adopted in dealing with this question is a masterpiece. He asked for the Roman denarius. Does this mean that Jesus did not have any money? At least He made them produce the coin.

**And he said unto them, Render therefore unto Caesar the things which be Caesar’s, and unto God the things which be God’s [Luke 20:25].**

They were using the legal tender of the Roman Empire. Rome did provide certain advantages and privileges. Rome maintained law and order by her standards and provided protection. Rome made and maintained roads and kept the sea lanes open. She had a universal currency system which was an aid to business. The Jews owed

Rome something for the use of coins, roads, and law and order. Caesar had something coming to him.

God had something coming to Him also. He provided all the utilities: lights, air, water, and the elements from which roads and coins are made. There are two areas of life in which we have a responsibility. Man has both an earthly and a heavenly obligation. He has both a physical and a spiritual responsibility. Citizens of heaven pay taxes down here. Pilgrims down here should deposit eternal wealth in heaven. i

*Luke 20:26 And they could not take hold of his words before the people: and they marvelled at his answer, and held their peace.*

Spoiled again in their little trick, they could not take hold of his words before the people. Even the religious leaders marvelled at his answer.

#### **IV. Jesus Answers the Sadducees about the Resurrection**

*Luke 20:27 Then came to him certain of the Sadducees, which deny that there is any resurrection; and they asked him,*

*Luke 20:28 Saying, Master, Moses wrote unto us, If any man's brother die, having a wife, and he die without children, that his brother should take his wife, and raise up seed unto his brother.*

*Luke 20:29 There were therefore seven brethren: and the first took a wife, and died without children.*

*Luke 20:30 And the second took her to wife, and he died childless.*

*Luke 20:31 And the third took her; and in like manner the seven also: and they left no children, and died.*

*Luke 20:32 Last of all the woman died also.*

*Luke 20:33 Therefore in the resurrection whose wife of them is she? for seven had her to wife.*

Talk about a far fetched question. This one must have taken them a while to come up with. What made it so unbelievable was that it came from the Sadducees who did not even believe in a resurrection. They come up with a doctrinal question this time to try and confuse Jesus. The two leading religious sects of this time period were the Pharisees and the Sadducees. The Pharisees were a very self righteous people who were the most orthodox. In other words they took the Word of God as important and based most of their beliefs on those books of the law.

They believed in the resurrection, in angels, and in spirits. The Sadducees didn't believe in much of anything, and they denied all three of these. So it is this group that comes with this unusual question about the resurrection hoping to find something in which they could betray Christ. They wanted to know if seven

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iJ. Vernon McGee, *Thru the Bible commentary [computer file], electronic ed., Logos Library System*, (Nashville: Thomas Nelson) 1997, c1981 by J. Vernon McGee.

brothers married the same woman after each of the prior brother had died, and note had any children, whose wife would the woman be in the next life... or in the resurrection. Jesus answers them directly and from the Word of God.

*Luke 20:34 And Jesus answering said unto them, The children of this world marry, and are given in marriage:*

*Luke 20:35 But they which shall be accounted worthy to obtain that world, and the resurrection from the dead, neither marry, nor are given in marriage:*

*Luke 20:36 Neither can they die any more: for they are equal unto the angels; and are the children of God, being the children of the resurrection.*

*Luke 20:37 Now that the dead are raised, even Moses showed at the bush, when he calleth the Lord the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob.*

*Luke 20:38 For he is not a God of the dead, but of the living: for all live unto him.*

Jesus explains that in the next life, there will not be marriage as we know it here on earth. He explains how the dead will be raised and be equal unto the angels in the resurrection. But God is not the God of the dead, but of the living. And because of that, we all live unto him.

## **V. Jesus Questions the Scribes**

*Luke 20:39 Then certain of the scribes answering said, Master, thou hast well said.*

*Luke 20:40 And after that they durst not ask him any question at all.*

While they may not have truly believed him, the scribes said that Jesus had answered the question well. And after that, they didn't ask him any more questions.

*Luke 20:41 And he said unto them, How say they that Christ is David's son?*

*Luke 20:42 And David himself saith in the book of Psalms, The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand,*

*Luke 20:43 Till I make thine enemies thy footstool.*

*Luke 20:44 David therefore calleth him Lord, how is he then his son?*

*Luke 20:45 Then in the audience of all the people he said unto his disciples,*

*Luke 20:46 Beware of the scribes, which desire to walk in long robes, and love greetings in the markets, and the highest seats in the synagogues, and the chief rooms at feasts;*

*Luke 20:47 Which devour widows' houses, and for a show make long prayers: the same shall receive greater damnation.*

They found that it was impossible to answer the question Jesus puts forth. How could Christ be a son of David, but yet David call Christ Lord? The then taught them in whom they should fear. Fear those who love to make greetings in the markets and sit in the highest seats of the synagogues and the chief rooms at



feasts. He was warning them about the scribes and religious leaders who were appearing to be religious, but in reality, far from God in their heart. God's desire now is for us to worship Him in Spirit and truth. That is what Jesus told the Samaritan woman at the well who questioned where they should go to worship.

*John 4:19 The woman saith unto him, Sir, I perceive that thou art a prophet.*

*John 4:20 Our fathers worshipped in this mountain; and ye say, that in Jerusalem is the place where men ought to worship.*

*John 4:21 Jesus saith unto her, Woman, believe me, the hour cometh, when ye shall neither in this mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem, worship the Father.*

*John 4:22 Ye worship ye know not what: we know what we worship: for salvation is of the Jews.*

*John 4:23 But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him.*

*John 4:24 God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth.*

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*Prov 4:18 But the path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day.*

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