

CONFRONTATION OVER JESUS' AUTHORITY  
(Matthew 21:23-32)

- I. The CHALLENGE (Matt. 21:23)
  - A. While Jesus was TEACHING in the TEMPLE
  - B. Issued by the “CHIEF PRIESTS and ELDERS”
  - C. Questioned His AUTHORITY
    - 1. “By WHAT authority are You doing THESE THINGS?”
    - 2. “WHO gave YOU this authority?”
  
- II. The RESPONSE (Matt. 21:24-27)
  - A. Offered to answer THEIR question if they would answer HIS
  - B. Asked “From whence came the MINISTRY and MESSAGE of John?”
    - 1. Not a simple REBUKE for their INDECISION
    - 2. But a challenge to ADMIT the TRUTH
  - C. Forced them to RECOGNIZE their DILEMMA
    - 1. To say “from HEAVEN,” would bring JESUS' condemnation for failing to BELIEVE
    - 2. To say “from MEN,” would cause the PEOPLE to condemn them for denying John was a PROPHET
    - 3. Decided to CLAIM, “We DO NOT KNOW”

D. Refused to give them MORE REVELATION

III. The PARABLE (Matt. 21:28-31a)

A. Jesus says that a man with two sons tells BOTH to go work the day in the VINEYARD

1. The older said, “NO,” then REGRETTED it and WENT

2. The younger said, “YES, sir,” then did NOT GO

B. Jesus asks, “WHICH of the two DID the will of his father?”

C. They answer, “The FIRST”

IV. The APPLICATION (Matt. 21:31b-32)

A. Starts with “Truly, I say to YOU...”

B. Pronounces their CONDEMNATION

1. Tax collectors and prostitutes will get INTO THE KINGDOM

2. The chief priests and elders WILL NOT

C. Explains the CONSEQUENCE of their UNBELIEF

1. They REFUSED to believe JOHN

2. The tax collectors and prostitutes BELIEVED

3. The Jewish leaders felt no REMORSE and refused to LEARN from their EXAMPLE