

HOME CHURCH SERMON DISCUSSION GUIDE

MATTHEW 21:23-32

rejected

The Question of Authority

1. How did you feel about your parents' authority when they punished your brother or sister for how they were mistreating you? How did your view of their authority change when they said you were the problem? Why do you think your outlook on the two situations was different? What insight does that give you when it comes to what God is up against, with us, when it comes to our submission to Him?

2. What are some instances, from your general knowledge of the life of Christ (Birth through Public Ministry), that demonstrate that His authority was from God?

“Then Jesus came up to them and said ‘All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me’” Matthew 28:18

3. What are some reasons that indicate the authority of the religious leaders of Israel in Jesus' day was from man and not God?

4. What in our text shows the question asked by the chief priests and elders was not a sincere inquiry but a trap meant to undermine Jesus' legitimacy and avoid His authority? See Matthew 21:23-27.

Jesus doesn't come asking if He can hang out with us. He commands us to follow Him. He has total authority and will settle for nothing less; He won't settle for being an accessory, an add-on, or a peaceful accompaniment to a nice life. No, He will rule, and He will meddle. Justin Buzzard

5. Why does Jesus withhold a straightforward answer and ask about the authority of John the Baptist? What is He exposing with this line of questioning? In what way did their lack of an honest response about John limit Jesus' willingness to give them more light? What is the spiritual principle for us?

6. In Matthew 21:28-32 Who do the sons represent? List the terms that describe the tax collector's and prostitute's submission to God's way of righteousness? Matthew 21:29 & 32. The popular notion is that the immoral irreligious outsider might need to repent but certainly not the moral religious insiders? What does the exact same requirement of repentance and belief teach us about a relationship with God?

7. In what way can we also try to rationalize our way out of submitting to Christ's authority? In what areas of your life do you need to repent and submit to Jesus authority today?

The modern world detests authority but worships relevance. Our Christian conviction is that the Bible has both authority and relevance, and that the secret of both is Jesus Christ - John Stott

PRAY FOR OUR GLOBAL MISSIONS PARTNERS

IN THESE UNCERTAIN TIMES

Safety for staff

Financial resources to pay staff and continue programs

Jesus will be shared in creative ways with their communities

WEST AFRICAN VOCATIONAL SCHOOLS (WAVS), Guinea-Bissau

WAVS is a Christian non-profit in Fresno that offers hope and opportunity to young men and women in Guinea-Bissau by teaching them critical job skills, such as auto mechanics, welding, sewing, computer basics and English.

- The Country Director is currently stuck in the country. No US Embassy in the country
- All WAVS schooling has stopped
- Prayer for government stability

INTEGRATED TRIBAL DEVELOPMENT FOUNDATION (ITDF), Thailand

ITDF works to help improve the lives of the Hill Tribes in Northern Thailand by providing fresh drinking water, teaching practical agriculture skills, supporting economic development through fair trade coffee grown by the villagers, helping build and support schools and medical facilities, and by sponsoring children.

- Marshal Law is in place and there is a curfew from 7pm to 7am
- Coffee is stuck in the villages and needs to be brought to Chiang Mai. Lots of travel restrictions.
- Pray for continued safety for staff. Many are back in their local villages or towns

STUDENTS INTERNATIONAL (SI), Nicaragua, Dominican Republic, Guatemala, and Costa Rica

SI focuses on long-term, ongoing Christian community development in Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, Guatemala and Nicaragua, through full-time staff missionaries serving in those countries.

- Currently SI is planning on hosting teams this year
- Countries that we visit, DR and CR are in quarantine.
- Pray for staff and funding as everything has come to a halt

HAITI GOSPEL OUTREACH (HAITIGO), Haiti

HaitiGO works within the community in Pignon, Haiti and surrounding towns. They provide care for orphans, discipleship, public health for the community, and create sustainability by empowering Haitian Christians.

- Poorest country in the western hemisphere
- COVID-19 creates more instability in the government
- Pray for staff on the ground and their continued good health

AGAPE INTERNATIONAL MISSIONS (AIM), Cambodia

AIM is working with vulnerable kids and families in Cambodia that are easily exploited for human trafficking. They are rescuing, restoring, and reintegrating survivors. In this process the hope is that survivors will know their work and value in Christ.

- Safety for staff
- Financial need to help with programs and national staff
- Pray for people drawn into human trafficking

GLOBAL EXTENDED FAMILY / INTERNS

JESSIE RYBACZYK, SI (Costa Rica)

Jessie serves as a long-term missionary with Students International (SI) in Desamparados, Costa Rica, working in the areas of fitness programs, team sports outlets, and mentorship, showing Christ's love to students of all ages and helping them reach their God-given potentials.

- Creating videos for their fitness program so people can do it at home
- Pray for Jeff and the other directors
- Stress is affecting her stomach

SMITH FAMILY, (Eastern Europe)

Smith Family will be working with college students while serving in Eastern Europe, with the goal of making disciples who walk in obedience to Christ and multiply themselves throughout the world.

- All teams from the US have been sent home and all ministry halted
- Newly married and they are learning a lot being quarantined.
- In a few months they'll be moving to a new city for ministry

GRIFFITH FAMILY, (Western Africa)

The Griffith family relocated to a remote village to start learning an ethnic group language, with the purpose of moving closer to the heart of the people and eventually translating the Word of God into the local language.

- Have been told that they can't travel to cities
- Feeling very isolated
- Good health care is not close to them
- Pray for their safety and through whatever happens that Jesus is being shown and shared with the village

JEFFCOACH FAMILY, Global Outreach International (Ethiopia)

The Jeffcoach's are serving in Ethiopia using their medical skills to help train Ethiopians as Surgeons. They are also discipling and training these surgical residents in biblical training so that they can share the Good News to the communities they go to after completing the 5 year program.

- Insults for being foreigners are being yelled at them
- Hospital is not equipped to take COVID-19 patients
- Some staff have left earlier than planned leaving a strain on doctors
- Pray for Soddo Christian hospital and that the Jeffcoaches are able to come to the states for furlough this summer.

BRENNA MCBRIEN, (Global Intern) Network of International Christian Schools (Peru)

Brenna is serving as a secondary mathematics teacher and missionary at the International Christian School of Lima, Lima Peru. She is excited to be able to pair her passion for teaching mathematics with her heart of spreading the gospel to the nations as she teaches to the expat community in Lima.

- Being stuck in her apartment has been difficult
- Has been able to have great conversations with her students
- Thankful she hasn't been having internet issues!

LAUREN, International School in North Africa

Lauren will be serving as a teacher at an International School in North Africa. The school focuses on educating local children through curriculum that correlates to the Common Core Standards. Through the relationships that are developed among the kids and their families, Lauren will show Christ's love to them and share about the teachings of Jesus as the Son of God.

- Patience in the waiting for clearance to go.
- Continuing to invest in the relationships I have here.
- Preparing for the task ahead by making the best use of time.

LOCAL EXTENDED FAMILY & ORGANIZATIONS

EVERY NEIGHBORHOOD PARTNERSHIP

Connects churches and community partners with underserved school neighborhoods to meet literacy needs and be an active presence at Saturday Sports, helping kids grow spiritually and in their character. They also mobilize individuals, groups and organizations to serve alongside residents and existing non-profits through servefresno.org.

FRESNO RESCUE MISSION

Reaching out to the homeless, drug- and alcohol-dependent, impoverished families, neglected and abused children, single transient adults, and other displaced people in the greater Fresno County area, they partner with the Christian community, social service agencies, businesses, families and individuals to meet the spiritual and physical needs of all men, women and children in our community.

MANUEL AND KIM CONTRERAS, Extended Family

World Impact in the Hidalgo Neighborhood

A former gang member and a small-town girl from the Midwest, the Contreras family is investing in the Hidalgo neighborhood and inviting people into the Word of God with the support of World Impact.

Kids in their neighborhood have to walk 2½ miles to get their free breakfast and lunch.

Kim's prayer for their family is, "To be where God wants us to be. We don't want to waste this season."