

Commentary on Luke chapter 20, by Chuck Smith 10.23.22

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October memory verse **Matthew 1:21**

And she will bring forth a Son, and you shall call His name JESUS, for He will save His people from their sins."

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Remember, we are now in the final week of Jesus earthly ministry

We are in the final week of the life of Jesus. He is now in Jerusalem. This is the week in which pilgrims are coming from all over the world to celebrate the Feast of the Passover. He has made His triumphant entry, that is on Sunday. He was officially rejected. He did cleanse the temple, driving out the moneychangers, taking authority in His Father's house. And He taught daily in the temple, we read in verse 47 of chapter 19.

So it came to pass, that on one of those days ([Luk 20:1](#)),

The days that He was teaching in the temple from Sunday through Wednesday or Thursday, "...one of those days,"

as he was teaching in the temple, and preaching the gospel ([Luk 20:1](#)),

Proclaiming to man God's good news.

the chief priests and the scribes came upon him with the elders ([Luk 20:1](#)),

So this august body of religious authority, the chief priests who were mainly Sadducees, the scribes and the elders.

And they spake unto him, saying, Tell us, by what authority do you do these things? and who is he that gave you this authority? ([Luk 20:2](#))

They're probably still a little upset over the fact that He cleansed the temple. He drove out the moneychangers. He came in and took over and said, "This is my Father's house," and He took over. And they were upset because the high priest was in league with the moneychangers. They got a percentage of the moneychangers and those that sold the doves and the oxen and all there in the temple grounds. And so what authority? Now they were expecting, or at least hoping...you see, they're looking now for charges whereby they might put Him to death, and they were hoping that at this point He would say, "I am the Messiah. God is my Father. He gave Me the authority." He referred to the

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temple as "My Father's house," and so they were hoping that He would make the claim of Messiahship in order that they might accuse Him of blasphemy and immediately try Him. But His hour was not yet come. So He did not answer them directly, but

he answered them [indirectly], saying, I will ask you one thing; and you answer me: The baptism of John, was it from heaven, or of men? And they reasoned with themselves, saying, If we shall say, From heaven; he will say, Why did you not believe him? If we say, Of men; all of the people will stone us: for they're persuaded that John was a prophet. And they answered, that they could not tell whence it was. And Jesus said unto them, Neither tell I you by what authority I do these things ([Luk 20:3-8](#)).

Now, John had testified concerning Jesus Christ that, "This is He that was after me, but who was preferred before me, the latchet of whose shoes I'm unworthy to unloose" ([John 1:27](#)). John had declared concerning Jesus Christ, "Behold, the Lamb of God that taketh away the sins of the world" ([John 1:36](#)). So, John, who the people had accepted as from God, they recognized that John's authority was from the Lord. And John, being recognized by the people as the prophet of God, had declared that Jesus was indeed the Lamb of God to take away the sins of the world. So had they said, "Well, John was of the Lord," then Jesus would say, "All right, that's the authority that I have, the same authority of John's." And basically He was saying this, "I came with the same authority that John came."

Now, it is interesting to me how that so often there is that challenge today concerning authority. For men have set up their systems by which they recognized authority. "If you go to our college and graduate and then attend our seminary, then we will recognize your authority to teach the Word of God, or to proclaim God's truth," and the authority that man bestows upon man. I would like to offer my opinion that men have ordained many men to the ministry who have never been ordained by God. They've been ordained to the ministry purely on the basis that they have fulfilled a certain requirement of studies. But there is absolutely no anointing of God upon their lives or upon their ministries, and they'd be better off selling shoes.

We have made it a policy here at Calvary Chapel in the ordination board to observe a person's ministry and to see if their ministry bears witness that God's anointing is upon their life. For we are convinced that only God ordains a man for the work of the Lord, and the best we can do is ratify what God has done. So basically, we haven't ordained anybody to the ministry, nor do we ordain anybody to the ministry. But we like to recognize those that God has ordained and ratify that work of God in their lives. So, recognizing that God has ordained this man, God's anointing is upon his life, God is using him, we give to them that recognition that they need by the state. But it is interesting also how that so many of these young men who have gone out with the obvious work of God in and through their lives are challenged, "Who gave you the authority?" Greg Laurie has been challenged so many times. Raul Ries has been challenged so many times. "Where did you go to seminary? Who gave you the authority?" It's sort of disconcerting and upsetting to these men with their doctorates in

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theology that some young kid can come into town and start a Bible study that grows into a church of over 5,000 members. When with all of their degrees and learning and knowledge of the Greek and Hebrew and so forth, they have a hard time, through pushing and programming and every guise and device that you can think, maintaining 400 or 500 people. "It's just not fair! After all, I've been trained." The authority!

Now, the Mormons quite often ask this question, because they believe that God has restored the authority to the church through Joseph Smith. And that the twelve apostles of the Mormon church are the only ones who can actually bestow authority upon a person to minister the gospel. And so they do not recognize the authority of anyone who has not been sanctioned by the twelve apostles of the Mormon church; for everybody knows that they are the only true church. And so they quite often challenge, "By what authority?" So, Jesus went through the same thing.

Then he began to speak to them a parable; A certain man planted a vineyard, and he let it out to husbandmen, and he went into a far country for a long time ([Luk 20:9](#)).

Note: Jesus is now giving a parable that relates to His going away. Letting out: it's a twofold interpretation, actually, because it also is a parable against these Pharisees.

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. And he again he sent another servant: and they beat him also, and entreated him shamefully, and they sent him away empty. And again he sent a third: and they wounded him also, and cast him out. Then said the lord of the vineyard, What shall I do? I will send my beloved son: it may be that they will reverence him when they see him. 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. So they cast him out of the vineyard, and killed him. What therefore shall the lord of the vineyard do unto them? He shall come and destroy these husbandmen, and shall give the vineyard to others. And when they heard it, they said, God forbid. 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? Whosoever shall fall upon that stone shall be broken; but on whomsoever it shall fall, it will grind him to powder ([Luk 20:10-18](#)).

Now, in the fifth chapter of Isaiah, the Lord speaks there a parable through Isaiah of a vineyard. And the vineyard was the nation of Israel. How that this man planted a vineyard, he put the choicest vines in it, he built a hedge around it and he put a wine press in the middle. And when the time came to gather fruit from the vineyard, there was nothing but wild grapes on the vine. And so he let the vineyard go. And the prophet was speaking about how that God had set apart the nation Israel that it might bring forth fruit unto God. But their failure to bring forth that fruit that God was desiring from them would bring actually a rejection by God, or just being let go by God, and their demise. So when Jesus began to speak the parable of the vineyard, aware of the prophecy of Isaiah, their minds flipped back and they realized that He's talking now about the nation

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of Israel, God's vineyard. The servants that were sent to the vineyard were the prophets who were rejected by the people. Some of them were stoned, others of them were killed; Isaiah was actually sawed in two. And so, these are the prophets that God sent to the nation. Finally, God sent His only begotten Son. "Surely they will reverence Him." But the husbandmen, when they saw Him, said, "This is the heir; let's kill Him, that the inheritance may be ours." And so Jesus, here, is predicting His death at their hands. Now, the result of their rejection of the Son, The commandment of the Lord--destroy the husbandmen. The nation of Israel was destroyed by Titus. Josephus said that he killed 1,100,000 Jews and they carried 97,000 as slaves to Rome. When they heard this, they said, "God forbid!" For they recognized that Jesus was speaking about them. And so then He asked them, "What does this parable mean? That which is written, 'The stone which the builders have rejected, the same is become the chief cornerstone'?" [Psalm 118](#).

Now Peter, in the fourth chapter of Acts, when he was standing before the elders and the scribes and the high priest, this same group that was challenging Jesus here, when Peter stood before them in Acts the fourth chapter, they were asking Peter, "By what authority did you work this miracle on this lame man? By what name or by what power have you done this?" So they were giving him much the same business as they gave to Jesus. "We want to know, by what power did you do this? By what name?" And Peter said, "Ye men of Israel, if we have been examined this day because of the good deed that has been done to this lame man, you judge for yourselves on that. But be it known unto you that it is by the name of Jesus Christ that this man stands before you whole, and this is the stone which was set of naught by you builders, but He has become the chief cornerstone, and neither is there salvation in any other. For there is no other name given among men whereby we must be saved" ([Acts 4:8-12](#)). So Peter was here when Jesus was challenged concerning authority. He remembered the answer of Jesus to these men. He remembered this parable that Jesus ended by saying unto them, "What does this mean, 'The stone that was set of naught by the builders, the same has become the chief cornerstone'?" And so Peter brings it right back to them very forcibly, declaring of Jesus, "This is the stone which was set of naught by you builders, but the same is become the chief cornerstone."

Now Jesus declaring, concerning that stone, said, "Whosoever shall fall upon that stone shall be broken, but upon whomsoever that stone shall fall, it will grind him to powder." You have one of two relationships to Jesus Christ: either that of submitting to Him, falling upon the stone, or resisting Him, and ultimately being ground to powder. Woe unto him who strives with his maker! Many people are so foolish as to fight against Jesus Christ. Fall upon the stone, fall upon Jesus Christ! You'll find you'll be broken; better that you do that than in judgment have Him fall upon you and be ground to powder.

Now the chief priests and the scribes the same hour sought to lay hands on him; but they feared the people: for they perceived that he had spoken this parable against them ([Luk 20:19](#)).

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They got the message. They knew that He was referring to them, and so they were actually wanting, wanting desperately to arrest Him at this point. And yet, because of the popular acclaim of the people, they did not do it.

And so they watched him, and they sent forth spies, which should feign themselves to be just men, that they might take hold of his words, in order that they might deliver him to the powers and authorities of the governor ([Luk 20:20](#)).

They're now going to try and trap Him so that they can accuse Him of sedition or of rebellion against Rome and turn Him over to the governor.

And so they asked him, saying, Master, we know that you say and teach the truth, and you do not accept the person of any, but you teach the way of God truly ([Luk 20:21](#)):

In other words, "You're no respecter of man's persons. You are a straight shooter. We know this. We know that You don't bow to man, that You tell the truth, You speak the truth. Therefore,"

Is it lawful for us to give taxes to Caesar, or not? ([Luk 21:22](#))

If Jesus says, "No, it is not lawful for you to give taxes to Caesar," immediately, they'll run to the Antonio fortress, call for the Roman centurion and have him come down and arrest Jesus for advocating a tax rebellion against Caesar. If Jesus says, "Yes, it is lawful for you to pay taxes to Caesar," these zealots who would not recognize the power of the Roman government, who hated these taxes that were levied by Rome...and there was a certain tax that was levied upon every man just for the privilege of living...this was the tax they were referring to. It wasn't much of a tax, but it was just to show the Roman authority. And so they felt that they had Jesus cleverly trapped; either way, He's wrong. And so He said, "Show me a coin."

Show me a penny. Whose image, superscription does it have on it? And they answered and said, Caesar's. And he said unto them, Render therefore unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and unto God the things that are God's ([Luk 20:24-25](#)).

If it's got Caesar's image on it, give it to Caesar. But He added, "You should be rendering unto God the things that are God's."

And they could not take hold of his words before the people: and they marveled at his answer, and they held their peace. And then there came certain unto him who were Sadducees, who deny that there's any resurrection; and they asked him, saying, Master, Moses ([Luk 20:26-28](#))

Now, the Sadducees were materialists. They accepted as authoritative only the five books of Moses. They rejected the prophets; they would not accept them as a part of the scriptures. Only the five books of Moses did they consider to be divinely inspired.

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And so if you would get into an argument with them and you would quote from the Psalms or quote from the prophets, they would reject it as not being authoritative. Only the five books of Moses. So, they said,

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 a seed unto his brother. Now there were therefore seven brothers: and the first took a wife, and he died without children. And the second took her as wife, and he died childless. And the third, and in like manner the seven also: and they left no children, and they all died. Last of all, the poor woman died too. Therefore in the resurrection whose wife of them is she? for all seven had her as their wife ([Luk 20:28-33](#)).

The endeavor was to make the resurrection seem so ridiculous that people would say, "Well, that's stupid, that's foolish," and thoroughly discount the idea of the resurrection. There have been those who have done the same thing today, only in a little different way. They hypothesize that back in the days of the wild West, when a man was shot in a gun battle and they went out and just dug a shallow grave and buried his body, that as his body decomposed... we know the body is made up of chemicals and elements... and as the body decomposed, these chemicals just actually went into the soil, became a part of the soil. And the prairie grass, its little roots, went down into the soil and the chemicals of this decomposed body were picked up in the roots of the prairie grass and, of course, came up through the root system and into the grass itself, nourishing the grass. And the cows came and ate the prairie grass that has the chemicals of the decomposed body of this man who was shot in the gun battle. And the cows gave their milk that contained part of the chemicals from the decomposed body and I drank that milk. And thus, those chemicals have become a part of my body now. So that in the resurrection, in what body are these chemicals going to go, because they've been a part of many bodies? And they've tried to make the idea of the resurrection seem ridiculous by these hypotheses that they have created. Now Jesus said, "You err because you do not know the resurrection or the power of God." In the resurrection there will be no marrying or giving in marriage. But we will be as the angels, who neither marry, nor are given in marriage.

As I understand God's purpose for marriage, it is to establish a beautiful healthy environment for children to be raised, to be brought into the world. The basic plan for marriage, that we might reproduce, that we might be fruitful and multiply and replenish the earth. Now, in heaven the angels do not reproduce. Thus, no need for marriage. We will not be reproducing, thus, no need for marriage. We will be as the angels are. A lot of questions... "Will we know each other, then, in heaven?" Of course we will; we're not going to be more stupid there than we are here! The Bible says we will know even as we are known. "But what kind of relationships will we have?" Deeper, richer than any we could ever experience on the earth. Now just how, when all of these relationships, God has not really gone into details with us. He's just told us that we'll be as the angels. Now, there are some poor people that feel, "Well, if I can't be married, I don't want to go

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there." Well, the alternative is not so pleasant. And there's nothing that says you're going to be married there either.

You say, "But what about that milk I'm drinking?" I'm not going to have this body in heaven. We know that when the earthly tent, this body, is dissolved, we have a building of God not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. I'm going to get a new body, a building of God not made with hands. So whatever happens to this body, I could care less. Someone said, "Well, what about cremation?" They can do what they want. You know that when this earthly tent is dissolved, and if they do it by cremation it'll be dissolved in thirty-seven minutes. If they let the natural processes go, it'll take a little longer. But I will have moved out and have moved into my new house, the building of God not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. Jesus said, "In my Father's house are many mansions. If it were not so, I would have told you. I'm going to prepare a place for you." You say, "Oh, but what about the resurrection of our bodies?" Well, what about them?

Paul the apostle said, "Some will say, 'How are the dead raised and what kind of a body will they have?'" And he said, "Don't you realize that God teaches resurrection in nature? For when you plant a seed into the ground the seed does not come forth into new life until it first of all dies, and then the body"...and listen carefully..."the body that comes out of the ground is not the body that you planted" ([1 Corinthians 15:35-37](#)). I feel sorry for you that are so in love with your body that you want to carry it on into the new kingdom. "For the body that comes out of the ground is not the body that you planted, because all you planted was a bare grain and God gives it a body that pleases Him. And if it pleases God, you can be sure it's going to please me. So is the resurrection from the dead," Paul asserts, "for we are planted in corruption and we will be raised in incorruption. We are planted in weakness; we will be raised in power. We are sown in dishonor; we'll be raised in glory. We are planted as a natural body; but we'll be raised as a spiritual body. For there's a natural body and there's a spiritual body, and the glory of the terrestrial differs from the glory of the celestial. And even as we have born the image of the earthen and have been earthy, so shall we bear the image of the heavens" ([1 Corinthians 15:37-44](#)).

So, the body that comes out is not the body that was planted. All we planted was a bare grain. God gives it a body that pleases Him. So I'm really quite interested in that new model and all of the gadgets, the capacities of that new model. It's probably just fantastic. As this corruption puts on incorruption, and this mortal puts on immortality. For you see, God created this body out of the earth for the earth, of the earth, earthy, designed it for the environmental conditions of the earth. The atmosphere around the earth is made up of seventy-nine parts of nitrogen, twenty parts of oxygen, and one part of neon and other gases. Now when God made my body, He designed it so that it needed this 79:20 ratio in the atmosphere. It operates well under it. If He put more oxygen in, my heart would beat faster and I would die sooner. More nitrogen, it would have the opposite effect, but I'd still die sooner. My heart would go slower. If He put equal parts of nitrogen and oxygen in the atmosphere, we'd all go around like a bunch

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of laughing maniacs, because that's nitric oxide, which is laughing gas in the dentist chair. So we'd all go around with uncontrollable laughter. So He designed the body for the conditions of the environment of the earth. But to come into the heavenly scene, I need a body that is designed for that environment. And so God has a new body prepared for me, and one day my spirit and soul are going to move out of this body into the new body that God has. And with Paul, I'll say, "Oh, death, where is your sting? Oh, grave, where is your victory?" We have been caused to triumph over them through Jesus Christ. Thanks be unto God who gives us that continual victory through Jesus our Lord.

So, they did not understand. And so,

Jesus said, The children of this world marry ([Luk 20:34](#)),

That is, in this age, in this time, they marry.

and are given in marriage: but they which shall be accounted worthy to obtain [that age,] or that world, and the resurrection from the dead, neither marry, nor are given in marriage: neither can they die any more ([Luk 20:35-36](#)):

My new body is indestructible, eternal in the heavens...the building of God not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. So, you better like your new one, because that's where you're going to be.

for they are equal unto the angels; and are the children of God, being the children of the resurrection ([Luk 20:36](#)).

Uh-oh, wait a minute! You said something, Jesus. These guys don't believe in the resurrection!

That the dead are raised, even Moses showed at the bush ([Luk 20:37](#)),

You see, these men, only accepting the first five books of the Old Testament, held a position that there was no resurrection. And though there were many arguments prior to the time of Christ as others were seeking to prove the resurrection to them, because they only accepted Moses as authoritative, no one had ever offered them from the writings of Moses any proof of the resurrection. So Jesus goes right back to Moses. "Now that the dead are raised, even Moses showed at the bush,"

when he calleth the Lord the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob ([Luk 20:37](#)).

Jacob, at the time that Moses stood before the bush, had been dead for 400 years. Isaac and Abraham even longer. And yet, God, when He spoke to Moses out of the

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bush, said, "I am the Lord. I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob." And Jesus adds,

He is not the God of the dead, but of the living ([Luk 20:38](#)):

Declaring that 400 years after their recorded deaths, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob were still alive in another dimension, another sphere. But still alive, because God is the God of the living, not the God of the dead. And the scribes, when they heard that they said, "Hey, that's all right." They had never been able to argue their case with the Sadducees. But when they heard that argument, they were really pleased at that. "Hey, that's all right! You nailed 'em, you got 'em." And so, they answered Jesus saying,

Master, you have said well ([Luk 20:39](#)).

That's good.

And after that they dared not to ask him any more questions. And so he said unto them, How say they that Christ is David's Son? ([Luk 20:40-41](#))

Now one of the titles for the Messiah was Son of David. Last week you remember when we were in Jericho, and Jesus was entering the city, there was the blind man who cried out, "Jesus, Thou Son of David, have mercy on me." Son of David was a Messianic title, because they were looking for some descendant of David to arise in power and in authority to establish the kingdom and to overthrow the Roman rule. "Thou Son of David": a common title of the Messiah. So He said unto them, "How is it that you say that the Messiah..." and the word *Christ* is the Greek for the Hebrew *Messiah*... "How is that you say the Messiah is David's Son?"

David himself said in the book of the Psalms ([Luk 20:42](#)),

That is in [Psalm 110](#)

The Lord [that is Yahweh] said unto my Lord [my Adonai], Sit thou on my right hand, till I make thine enemies thy footstool. David therefore called him Lord, how then could he be his son? ([Luk 20:42-44](#))

You are dealing with a culture that is a very strong patriarchal culture, the father rules. No matter how old he is, as long as he's living he rules over the household. You can be married and have your own grandkids, but if your dad is still alive, he rules. No father would ever call his son "Lord." That was a title for the father, for the patriarch of the family. He ruled. So no father would ever say to his son, "Lord," using that title. So Jesus said, "Look, if he's a son of David, how is it that David called him 'Lord' if he's his son?" And, of course, they had no answer.

Then in the audience of all the people he said to his disciples ([Luk 20:45](#)),

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And you know, He turns to His disciples now, all the people listening in, He said,

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 in the feasts; which devour widows' houses, and for a show make long prayers: the same shall receive greater damnation ([Luk 20:46-47](#)).

Beware of those who seek to make a public show, for a pretense make long prayers, devour widows' houses, send out computerized letters filled with deceit and fraud to the little women on Social Security, asking, "Go down to the bank and borrow some money to send to them to help them out of this emergency;" who love the honor and the greetings and the palavering of man. Pray for them, because Jesus said they will receive the greater damnation.