

QUESTIONING THE KING | LUKE 20:1-26 | PASTOR MARK BOFILL | 7/12/2026

I. King's Authority Challenged (1-8) | II. King's Patience Tested (9-19) | III. King's Wisdom Displayed (27-31)

INTRO: During His final week before the cross, Jesus was relentlessly questioned by those seeking to trap and discredit Him. Yet every challenge only magnified who He truly is. The more people questioned Jesus, the more His divine authority, patient mercy, and perfect wisdom were revealed. Instead of Exposing Weakness in the King, their questions Exposed the Unbelief of their own hearts. – Today, we'll discover what happens when people begin **QUESTIONING THE KING**

I. THE KING'S AUTHORITY CHALLENGED (20:1-8) – **READ:** This occurs immediately *after Jesus cleansed the temple (19:45-48)*, where we are told the leaders sought to destroy Jesus! **NOW...**

A. The Challenge of His Authority (1-2): Luke mention first that Jesus continued with...

1. **His Proclamation (1):** Jesus faithfully **Teaches and Preaches the Gospel** in the Temple despite growing opposition... **WOW!** – Even in the final week before His crucifixion, **Christ's priority was to proclaim the Good News of God's Kingdom.** (*He was making Disciples til the end!*)
 - Their common hatred for Jesus caused them to unite, with hopes of discrediting Him!
2. **Their Provocation (2):** The Sanhedrin believed only they possessed legitimate religious authority, so they **challenged His AUTHORITY!** – They wanted to know **WHAT RIGHT** He had to cleanse the Temple (19:45)
 - a. By cleansing the temple, forgiving sins, healing diseases, teaching with absolute authority, and accepting worship, Jesus acted as **One possessing divine authority.** (*Had Jesus simply answered, "My authority comes from My Father," they would have accused Him of blasphemy!*)
 - b. **Ironically**, the One who created the temple is now being questioned by those temporarily managing it! – **(Matt 28:18) "All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth."**
 - c. **Their question exposes their Spiritual Blindness.** They demanded proof while standing before the very fulfillment of centuries of prophecy!

B. The Confirmation of His Authority (3-7): Jesus immediately shifts the conversation from His authority to their willingness to recognize God's authority. – Instead of defending Himself, He places them under examination with...

1. **The Penetrating Question (3-4)** ... re: John the Baptist **exposed their hearts!** – The leaders had disapproved of John because he humiliated them and led some to abandon their religious loyalty (cf. Matt 3:7-10). – **Jesus masterfully connected Himself with John's Authority by asking this question.** (*Jesus often asked questions so people would confront the truth about themselves*).
2. **The Private Deliberation (5-6):** **"They reasoned among themselves,"** so as to answer correctly. – If the group had replied 'From heaven' Jesus could have asked them **WHY they did not accept Him** (cf. Matt 21:32); it would also have implied that He had the divine authority! (cf. John 1:29)
 - If they **DENIED** the authority of John, they would have landed themselves in trouble with the people who had certainly regarded John as a prophet. **They feared people more than God!**
 - Their answer: **'We don't know,'** was calculated! The leaders were unwilling to admit divine authority when they saw it and could not make up their minds what to do in the situation.

P/A: Understand that **Fear of Public Opinion** weakens spiritual conviction! However, **Courage** grows through fearing God above man. → Christian leaders must lead by truth, not popularity.

C. The Consequence of Rejecting His Authority (8): *Judicial Silence!* – Jesus refuses to reveal more truth to those who have already rejected the truth they possess.

P/A: Every person must ultimately answer One Question: *By whose authority does Jesus rule?* – Before asking God for More Answers, we should first ask whether we have obeyed the answers He has already given. → These religious leaders **refused to acknowledge Christ's authority** because doing so required repentance and submission. **The issue was never a lack of evidence—it was a lack of Surrender.**

II. THE KING'S PATIENCE TESTED (20:9-19) – **READ:** Jesus turned to the people as He presented the parable of the **Wicked Vinedressers**. The parable specifically exposes Israel's leaders as **Unfaithful Stewards** **who REJECTED God's Son** and lost their privileged responsibilities. – To better comprehend the parable, we must **understand terms used:**

- **The Vineyard** – Represents **Israel**, God's chosen people, whom He planted, protected, and blessed (**tt. Isa. 5:1-7**) – (Also, Ps 80:8-16).
- **The Owner** – Represents **God the Father**, who entrusted Israel with His blessings and His work.
- **The Vinedressers** – Represent **Israel's religious leaders**, who were entrusted to care for God's people but served themselves instead.
- **The Servants** – Represent **God's prophets**, whom He sent to call Israel to repentance.

A. Prepared Vineyard (9): Israel had received unmatched privileges: the Law, the covenants, the temple, the priesthood, the prophets, and the promises (**Romans 9:4-5**).

- God created the Vineyard and **“leased it”** to the spiritual leaders, to care for it.
- The Vinedressers were **NEVER OWNERS** of God's work—**they are only stewards!**

B. Persecuted Servants (10-12): *God desires fruit from the vineyard, not empty religion!* – So, He **repeatedly sent His prophets** to call Israel to repentance and faithful obedience. **Yet many were Rejected and Persecuted**—Jeremiah was imprisoned, Zechariah was murdered. – The **wicked tenants** picture Israel's continual rejection of God's gracious warnings. (**Jer 37:15-16; 2 Chron. 24:20-22**)

- What stands out is not merely the wickedness of the tenants but the astonishing patience of the owner! (**tt. 2 Chron 36:15-16**) – God repeatedly sent prophets before bringing judgment!

P/A: Every warning from God is an act of mercy, which should lead us to repentance! *That is why He sent His*

C. Precious Son (13-15): *The Beloved Son* unmistakably represents Jesus Christ, God's Only Son (13) Jesus was God's ultimate revelation of sending Himself! → **No greater messenger could ever be sent!**

1. (1 John 4:9) says, *In this the love of God was manifested toward us, that God has sent His only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through Him.*
2. The Father sent His Son, yet they CONSPIRED to kill Him! (14-15a) – The leaders recognized Jesus' significance yet intentionally rejected Him. **Their covetous hearts and desire for Authority and Control produces murderous intentions...** they were **Wicked Vinedressers!**

- This is a Prophetic Picture, *where Jesus foretells His own crucifixion outside Jerusalem.* – Within just a few days He would be led to Calvary (Luke 23:23, 33).

D. Promised Judgment (15b-18): Jesus then addresses the *Owner's Twofold Response* (15b-16): He DESTROYS the tenants and Gives the vineyard to others!

1. Within one generation God judged their corrupt system, Jerusalem and the Temple fell in A.D. 70, and the stewardship of God's kingdom was entrusted to Christ's faithful followers, who would bear its fruit; i.e., chiefly Gentiles... *a nation who did not seek Him!* (Isa 65:1)
2. At this point the crowd was in DISBELIEF, saying *"Certainly not!"* (16b), so Jesus went on to speak the fulfillment of another prophetic word from (Ps 118:22), *"The stone which the builders rejected..."*
 - Jesus Himself being the Chief Cornerstone (17), which (*in this context*) is being REJECTED. –
3. To accentuate the seriousness of such a judgment (18), Jesus makes reference to a passage from (tt. Isa 8:13-15). – In simple English: *Be broken in repentance, not crushed in judgment.*
 - Charles Spurgeon: *"If Christ is not your Cornerstone, He will become your stumbling stone."*

P/A: ONLY Christ remains the only true foundation... (1 Cor 3:11) *"No other foundation can anyone lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ."* – Build your life upon Christ alone!

E. Persistent Rebellion (19): *Jesus' teaching infuriated the Leaders!* – Rather than repenting, the leaders become even more determined to destroy Jesus!

P/A: This parable summarizes Israel's history in one story. It reveals **God's Amazing Patience** and man's persistent rebellion. Every servant was another call to repentance, but rejecting God's Son is what ultimately brought judgment. → **God's Patience is never permission to delay repentance!**

III. THE KING'S WISDOM DISPLAYED (20:20-26) – **READ:** Because the Leaders could not accuse Jesus of any wrong teaching, they *"watched Him"* and resorted to entrapment and...

A. Crafty Conspiracy (20-22): They *"Sent Spies"* who pretended to be sincere followers!

1. Their plan is **Calculated** (20): Force Jesus into making a statement that either angers Rome or alienates the Jewish people.
2. Their flattery is **Noteworthy** (21): They correctly describe Jesus as truthful, impartial, and faithful. **Yet they refuse to submit to the very One they praise! Hollow Praise!**
3. Their question is **Loaded** (22): *Is it lawful to pay taxes to Caesar or not?* – In their minds, there were only two apparent options:
 - If Jesus **SUPPORTS** paying taxes, many Jews may reject Him as supporting Roman oppression.
 - If Jesus **OPPOSES** paying taxes, Rome could charge Him with rebellion.

B. Complete Perception (23-24): With divine discernment, Luke tells us that Jesus *"perceived their craftiness"* and confronted them: *"Why do you test Me?"* (23) *As if to say: "Haven't you learned by now!"*

1. Jesus Teaches that No Disguise can fool Him! – (1 Sam 16:7) *"Man looks at the outward*

appearance, but the LORD looks at the heart." – **Nothing is hidden from Him!** *"All things are naked and open to the eyes of Him to whom we must give account."* (Heb 4:13)

2. Jesus Transforms the Political trap into an Object Lesson (24). – **A Denarius coin symbolized Roman authority**. So, using one meant that they submitted Caesar's civil authority and were required to **PAY TAXES**. → **Jesus then shifts attention from Taxation to Ownership!**

- They acknowledged that **the coin bore Caesar's image (24b)**, but Jesus associated humanity with bearing God's image (cf. Gen 1:26-27).
- **This captures Jesus' Genius! He didn't merely answer their tax question → He redirected it from politics to worship, from currency to identity, from a coin to the human heart!**
- If the coin belongs to Caesar because it bears his image, **how much more do we belong to God because we bear His image?** – *The issue is no longer merely money but allegiance...*

C. **Correct Priorities (25)**: Jesus acknowledged both actions, but emphasizes Proper Priority! → *Render to Caesar... and Render to God ...* i.e., **GIVE**.

1. Jesus Taught that citizens have a responsibility to obey their government. Therefore, **taxes should be paid as required**. – **Paul wrote (Rom 13:1b)**, *"There is no authority except from God, and the authorities that exist are appointed by God."* – Submitting to God-ordained government Honors God (cf. 1 Pet 2:13-17)

2. Jesus also said to **"Render to God the things that are God's."** Since we bear His image, we are to **give Him our whole lives**—our hearts, ourselves, and our complete devotion. *"Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith..."* (Heb 10:22). – This is our *"reasonable service."* (Rom 12:1).

3. **Jesus neither endorses political rebellion nor government worship**. – Instead, He establishes the **proper relationship between** civil government and divine authority:

- As Christians, this means that we are to: Pay our taxes → Honor lawful authority → Pray for leaders → Be good citizens → **VOTE!** Governments deserve respect but God deserves worship! (Acts 5:29) *"We ought to obey God rather than men."*

D. **Confounded Opponents (26)**: **Christ's wisdom silenced His enemies before Him:** (1 Cor 3:19) *For the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God. For it is written, "He catches the wise in their own craftiness"* – But just a few days later (Luke 23:2), informs us that **His enemies deliberately twisted His words**. Though He clearly taught that taxes should be paid to Caesar, they later falsely accused Him before Pilate, claiming He forbade paying taxes to Caesar.

CONCLUSION: Today, we stand where these leaders once stood. We may not ask the same questions, but we must answer the same challenge: **What will I do with Jesus Christ?**

FINAL THOUGHT: Jesus did not come merely to win an argument—**He came to win your heart!** The same King who confronted hardened religious leaders is the **Savior** who lovingly invites sinners to repentance. **If you will humble yourself before Him today**, the **Rejected Stone** will become the **Sure Foundation** upon which you can confidently build your life forever. (John 6:37) *"Whoever comes to Me I will by no means cast out."*

LET'S PRAY!