

Southside Baptist Church  
Wednesday Night Worship – 8-12-26  
Matthew Chapter 21 Part 5  
Chief priests and elders challenge Jesus' authority.

1. Introduction:

a. Taking a look back:

- 1) When Jesus was at the temple, we witness both righteous anger and Him extending genuine, authentic love.
- 2) The Chief Priests refused to rejoice at the miracles. Verse 15.
- 3) Jesus responded with a question. "Yea, have ye never read....?" Verse 16
- 4) Jesus on His way back from Bethany approached a fig tree. Verse 19
  - a) Jesus cursed the fig tree.
  - b) Israel had many religious rituals and observances, but they were spiritually fruitless.
- 5) The fig tree withered, it dried up in front of the disciples. Verse 20
- 6) Verse 21 – remember the context here.
- 7) Verse – 22 – prayer isn't getting what we may desire but, learning to pray and labor towards that which God has called us to.

b. Taking a look ahead:

- 1) A part of the challenge thus far in Matthew 21 is a mindset followed by actions that reflect the character and heart of God when it comes to living out our faith and being a witness to the world.
  - a) Hating sin and yet showing genuine, authentic love to the sinner.
- 2) Jesus continues to challenge these leaders.

2. The chief priests and elders come to challenge Jesus' authority. Matthew 21:23-27

a. Verse 23 –

- 1) Jesus returns to the temple.
- 2) They are asking about authority because it was the way they functioned as religious leaders.
  - a) Jesus asked them a question.

b. Verse 24 –

- 1) If you want to know about my authority, answer this simple question.
- 2) What possible question could Jesus ask them that they could not answer?

c. Verses 25-26 –

- 1) Not sure they saw this coming.
- 2) They begin to reason together as if Jesus doesn't hear or know their thoughts.
- 3) Their options in answering Jesus' question –

d. Verse 27 –

- 1) They chose to not give an answer and Jesus then did the same.
- 2) Why did Jesus choose to not answer?
  - a) He had already provided more than enough evidence to authenticate who He was.
- 3) Serving in a spiritual leadership position is a high calling with great responsibility.
- 4) Spiritual leadership positions include:
  - a) Pastors, Deacons, Teachers, Missionaries and those who disciple.
  - b) Others you should also consider include –

3. Parable of two sons. Matthew 21:28-32

a. Something to consider first.

- 1)What is the background for this parable?
  - a)Dwight Pentecost – “the claim of the Pharisees that they were sons of the kingdom by virtue of their descent from Abraham.”
- 2)In this parable you will see that sonship is tested by obedience and only the obedient are the sons.
- b.Verse 28 –
  - 1)Not sure they are ready for this parable.
    - a)“But what think ye?”
    - b)We have a father going to his sons.
- c.Verse 29 –
  - 1)The first son said no but was apparently convicted and then went to the field.
- d.Verse 30 –
  - 1)The second son said yes but never went to the field.
- e.Verse 31 –
  - 1)Which of these sons did what their father asked?
    - a)They answer correctly.
  - 2)What is the point of the story?
    - a)“That publicans and the harlots go into the kingdom of God before you.”
  - 3)What do you see as Jesus’ point?
    - a)Obedience, not mere profession, proves true sonship.
  - 4)What is their testimony here?
    - a)If you listen to their words, you would be inclined to think they are sons. When you watch their lives and see their disobedience to the Father’s will, they are proving they are not sons.
- f.Verse 32 –
  - 1)Why bring John up again?
    - a)John’s challenge to bring forth fruit of repentance means that there was no fruit in their life of repentance.
  - 2)Verse 31 – Jesus receives sinners who repent but leaders who refuse to repent will not be received.
- 4.Tonight’s Takeaway:
  - a.Where does God find you this evening?