

The Disciplex's Commentary

Answer Outline for the Disciplex

Luke 20

20:1-8 – Confrontation in the Temple #1: The question about Jesus' authority

- *Identify for the disciplex the three main sources of authority for the Jews in Jesus' time.*
- *See if the disciplex can determine why the issue of authority was so important concerning Jesus's actions and teachings. How would the issue of authority affect the validity of his teachings and actions?*

The question is, "Is Jesus acting on His own authority, or God's?"

- *What would be the difference in the response of the Jewish leaders if Jesus said that He was acting on God's authority or on His own? How would the leaders try to discredit Jesus if He was acting on His own? How would they have responded if He stated that He was acting on God's authority?*
- *Make sure that the disciplex understands that no matter how Jesus answered the question put to Him by the Jewish leaders, it was a lose-lose situation for Jesus. Why? Because they would not have believed Him if He said that He was acting under God's authority (which He was).*
- *The important point of application here is that when we Christians are confronted with hostile skeptics about our beliefs, simply providing the correct answer will not be enough to sway their opinion; their opinion has already been made up, and therefore, it is sometimes best not to attempt to answer their questions at all!*

Jesus answers the question with a question: "Was John the Baptist...own authority, or God's?"

- *Help the disciplex see the how clever Jesus' answer was to the leaders. Help the disciplex follow the logic if the religious leaders had answered one way or the other.*
- *Help the disciplex see the importance of Jesus' not answering the leaders' question. He never gave them an answer. Why?*
- *Teach the disciplex this important lesson: when debating disbelievers and skeptics, there is no necessity to defend oneself or beliefs. Would they believe anyway? The disciplex needs to learn the lesson that attempting to answer all the skeptics' questions may not always be the best course of action. Sometimes silence is the better choice.*

20:9-18 – The parable of the wicked vine-growers:

- *Make sure that the disciplex understands that this parable was given to the crowd standing around Jesus, not to the religious leaders, even though it was all about them. Why? Because His ministry was to His followers, not to the religious leaders.*

In this parable, the "man" is God, the vineyard is Israel, the "slaves" are the prophets, the "son" is Jesus, and the wicked vine-growers are the religious leaders

- *It is important that the disciplex is able to identify all the various characters in the parable.*
- *Help the disciplex see that the job of the vine-growers was to take care of the vineyard (Israel). How well were the vine-growers doing their job? Who were the vine-growers more interested in, the vineyard, the "man" (owner of the vineyard), or themselves?*

The motive of the vine-growers is to take control of the vineyard, a type of religious leaders

- *Make sure the disciplex understands the motives of the vine-growers. What kind of "fruit" were they growing? How well were they taking care of the vineyard in the manner the owner thought the vineyard should be taken care of?*
- *Make sure the disciplex understands the political intrigue involved in this parable according to the day.*
- *See if the disciplex can make any comparison to the vine-growers in the church in America, and the vine-growers in the parable. How well are the vine-growers in the church in America doing? How much real spiritual fruit are they producing? Concerning those who are visible on television, who does the disciplex believe they are more interested in, themselves and their success and notoriety, or the owner and the vineyard?*

The fate of the vine-growers actually occurs in AD 70

- *If the disciple is not already aware of the events of AD 70, review this. Make sure the disciple understands the effect of AD 70 on the Jewish nation and their religion.*
- *See if the disciple can determine who the “others” are in verse 16.*

The irony of Jesus’ quote about the “chief corner stone”: It’s from Psalm 118

- *The disciple will need some background into what a “chief cornerstone” was and what an important piece it was in building construction.*
- *See if the disciple can draw a relationship between Jesus being the chief cornerstone and the future building of the church.*
- *Make sure the disciple sees the irony of Jesus quoting from Psalm 118 in verse 17. (This will need to be compared to the crowds singing from Psalm 118 as Jesus entered Jerusalem.)*

20:19-26 – Confrontation in the Temple #2: The question about paying taxes to Rome

- *Provide the background for the next confrontation between Jesus and the religious leaders. What were the leaders motives, and were they being truthful in all that they said? Why was the subject of taxes so important to the Jews?*

The enormity of taxes, the image of Caesar, and the meaning of the word “render”

- *To understand the significance of this confrontation, the disciple will need to know the nature of the coinage (with Caesar’s image on it), the non-use of the coinage in the temple compound, and the so-called “poll tax” imposed by the Romans.*
- *Make sure the disciple understands the meaning of the word “render” in verse 25.*
- *Can the disciple make any comparisons to paying taxes in Jesus’ day to paying taxes in this present day? What should be the Christian’s response to paying taxes to an ungodly government?*
- *What is the ultimate lesson here concerning money? Is it a question of trust and provision? Ensure that the disciple can tie the lessons here to Jesus’ other lessons on money and possessions throughout Luke.*

20:27-45 – Confrontation in the Temple #3: The question about resurrection

- *Once again, some background information will be required for the disciple to clearly understand the issues involved in this third confrontation with the Jewish leaders.*

The question of the resurrection is raised by the Sadducees to get back at the Pharisees

- *Clarify the tension between the Pharisees and the Sadducees over the issue of resurrection.*

The problem both parties have regarding the resurrection: lack of knowledge

- *Show the disciple how both the Pharisees and the Sadducees had it wrong because of insufficient knowledge. How does that relate to debating others over biblical or theological issues?*

Why Jesus answered the question about resurrection from Exod. 3:6: from the Pentateuch

- *Remind the disciple what books of the Old Testament comprised the Pentateuch, and why Jesus answered the question about the resurrection from the Book of Exodus.*
- *Make sure that the disciple sees the relationship between Jesus’ answering Satan with Scripture during His temptation in the wilderness, and His answering the religious leaders with Scripture. What’s the relationship? (Note that the key relationship is that the religious leaders were Satan’s minions.)*

Jesus’ own question to the scribes about David’s descendant: “Why call him Lord?” (LORD)

- *Help the disciple see the important tactic of disarming the leaders by asking a question of His own.*

The cause for the warning about the scribes: they are predators

- *In what way were the scribes predators? In what way are some of today’s TV evangelists predators?*