**By What Authority (7) – Rejecting the Authority of the Lord**

*Luke 20:1-8*

**Introduction**

1. Jesus’ interaction with the Jewish leaders showed and implied several things about authority **(Luke 20:1-8):**
   1. Authority is needed.
   2. There is a proper source of authority, and all others are wrong.
   3. Authority must be established and can be shown.
      1. Expediencies within established authority.
      2. The role of silence in the scriptures.
      3. Authority must be established in individual moral matters.
2. Consider the reasoning of these spiritual leaders when asked a question by Jesus in return:
   1. **(v. 5)** – if from heaven it makes no sense to reject.
   2. “Why then did you (of all people – **v. 6** – commoners believed him) not believe him?”
      1. Concern for spiritual things – **(vv. 1-2)** – chief priests, scribes, elders, question on authority.
      2. Yet, rejecting divine authority.
3. It is not sufficient to simply claim spirituality. Following Jesus begins and ends with submitting to Him.
4. If we claim Him as Lord, we must do what He says **(Luke 6:46).**
5. Rejecting the authority of the Lord is no insignificant matter.
6. To Reject the Lord’s Authority is to Reject
7. Spiritual Success
   1. Jesus speaks of those who reach the judgment expecting the reward for what they believed to be a life of spiritual success in the name of the Lord, but they are rejected – **Matthew 7:21-23**
      1. **(v. 21)** – no indication of insincerity.
      2. **(v. 22)** – exact opposite – obvious indication of sincere belief in successful spiritual work in the Lord’s name.
      3. **(v. 23)** – Jesus’ correct evaluation.
         1. Lawlessness – *anomia* – (*a*) negative, (*nomia*) law.
         2. How we measure success should be how Jesus measures success – ***“he who does the will of My Father in heaven.”***
   2. If spiritual success is in submitting to the authority of the Lord in all things:
      1. Sincerity is not enough – **Acts 23:1**
      2. The end does not justify the means – **1 Samuel 15:22-23** (Samuel to Saul after failing to wipe out the Amalekites.)
         1. Means (sparing animals) – End (for sacrificing to the Lord)
         2. Means (unauthorized – utterly destroy) – End (Rebellion as witchcraft, stubbornness as idolatry, rejected word of Lord)
   3. Any quantitative (EX: how many people we have attracted through carnal means) or qualitative (EX: how great the music sounds in worship by adding instruments) measure of spiritual success is only accurate as it pertains to what Christ has authorized.
8. Spiritual Stability
   1. Jesus gives an illustration of the importance of hearing and doing the things He says – **Matthew 7:24-27**
      1. Foundation built upon – hearing and doing Jesus’ sayings (rock); hearing but not doing Jesus’ sayings (sand)
      2. Building the house – would equate with the life a person lives (specifically regarding spiritual responsibility).
      3. Rain, flood water, wind – Judgment **(vv. 21-23);** any threat to spiritual standing with God (context of sermon on mount – several warnings, corrections, and laws laid)
   2. NOTE:
      1. No indication of insincerity.
      2. People attempting something spiritual but failing due to the lack of basis in Christ’s word.
   3. **James 1:6-8** – man whose mind is split between doing what he hears God say in His word, and going his own way is unstable.
      1. ***“in all his ways” – (v. 26)*** – specifically in ways of religion – useless.
      2. **James 1:22, 25** – self-deception, not blessed.
   4. All actions taken without established authority are significant:
      1. Deciding to act without authority in one area is to undermine the emphasis on authority in any other area.
      2. EX: Rejecting the pattern (Command, Example, Necessary Inference) regarding benevolence (limited to needy saints), but appealing to the pattern (Command, Example, Necessary Inference) for steps to salvation.
      3. EX: LS outside of assembly (do we really think God won’t be pleased if we’re simply trying to honor Him?); LS on a different day of the week (could use the same argument).
         1. 1st day of week – only known by approved example and necessary inference.
         2. Assembly – same, but some undermine the pattern.
      4. **Cf. Romans 2:21** – if we subscribe to the principle of needing to establish authority in one area we must subscribe to that principle across the board.
      5. CONSISTENCY IS A MUST.
   5. Truth keeps us from being carried away – **Ephesians 4:13-14**
      1. However, when truth is dealt with inconsistently error creeps in.
      2. Suggesting some matters of Christ’s pattern are essential, and others are inconsequential only blurs the lines of what constitutes an authorized activity.
      3. The result is instability. (Cannot be the pillar and ground of the truth – **1 Timothy 3:15**)
9. The Lord’s Love
   1. We may not have authority for all that we do, but the Lord still loves us?
      1. The Lord loved the world even while sinners – **Romans 5:8**
      2. There are parts of God’s love that are unconditional, and parts that are conditional. (Difference between being a faithful child of God with those benefits, and one who is separated from God – still loved, wants to come to repentance.)
   2. **Jude 20-21** – we have a responsibility to keep ourselves in the love of God – which means we can reject it.
      1. Accomplished by submission to the Lord’s authority – **John 15:9-10**
   3. **Mark 10:21** – before giving a command, Mark notes such was coming from the love Jesus had for the man.
      1. **1 John 5:3** – commands not burdensome.
      2. **Matthew 11:28-20** – offered rest.
   4. To reject the Lord’s authority on any level is to reject His love.
10. Salvation
    1. After healing man and preaching Jesus – **Acts 4:7** – by what power and name.
       1. By what name – **cf. Luke 20:2** – same question – regarding authority.
       2. Answer – **Acts 4:10** – by the name of Jesus – authority of Jesus.
    2. **Acts 4:11-12** – chief cornerstone, no salvation in any other name.
    3. Jesus’ commission to preach the saving gospel predicated upon His authority – **Matthew 28:18-20**
    4. He alone has the power to forgive sins – **Mark 2:10-12**
       1. Power *– exousia* – authority
    5. Submit to His authority = be saved.
    6. Reject His authority = reject salvation.
       1. Such continues beyond the initial submission to the gospel call to be baptized.
       2. Must continue to submit to remain on the narrow path. (**cf. Matthew 7:13-14)**
11. To Reject the Lord’s Authority is to be Rejected by the Lord
12. Adam and Eve
    1. Told not to eat of the tree of knowledge of good and evil – **Genesis 2:15-17**
    2. The woman was deceived and gave to her husband to eat – **Genesis 3:6**
       1. In heeding the words of Satan instead of God they rejected His authority.
    3. They died spiritually – **Romans 6:23**
    4. They were sent out of the garden – **Genesis 3:22-24**
13. Moses striking rock instead of speaking to it.
    1. At an earlier time – **Exodus 17:6** – strike the rock to bring water for Israel.
    2. Later – **Numbers 20:7-8** – take rod, speak to the rock.
    3. Moses’ actions – **Numbers 20:9-11** – took rod, struck the rock twice.
    4. God’s response – **Numbers 20:12** – did not believe, hallow, kept from entering land.
14. Saul’s unlawful sacrifice.
    1. Philistines bearing down on Israelites – **1 Samuel 13:7b-8** – Saul waited prescribed days for Samuel to make supplication to the Lord with an offering.
    2. Saul offered a sacrifice himself contrary to the prescribed way – **1 Samuel 13:9-10**
    3. Samuel’s response – **1 Samuel 13:13-14** – done foolishly, rejected as king.
15. The Jews Rejecting Jesus
    1. NOTE: After their challenge of Jesus’ authority, obvious dishonesty, and rejection of Jesus’ authority. **(vv. 1-8)**
    2. Jesus tells parable of wicked vinedressers – landowner sends servants and vinedressers beat, kill and stone; sent more and did the same; sent his son, and they killed him to seize his inheritance.
    3. Jesus makes the application – **Luke 20:15-19** – the Jews rejected Jesus, so they would be rejected by God.
       1. Chief cornerstone – connotation of authority.
       2. **(v. 18)** – the cornerstone meant for good would be their destruction as they rejected Him.

**Conclusion**

1. The authority of the Lord is not a matter to take lightly.
2. His authority is not merely theoretical, but practical and powerful.
3. If we call Him Lord, we must do as He says **(cf. Luke 6:46).**
4. To fail is to reject everything good He offers. And to fail is to be rejected by Him.