

Home Group notes for the week following Sunday 28th September 2014

## **THE AUTHORITY OF JESUS IS QUESTIONED**

### **As we Gather**

As ambassadors / agents of God, Christians have been given the mandate to continue the ministry Christ started.

**Reading Scripture      MATTHEW 21 : 23 – 32**

### **Thinking together**

While Jesus was teaching in the temple the day after He had evicted the money changers and traders, the temple rulers (chief priests and elders), exercised their right as religious guardians, and wanted to know from Him by what, and on whose, authority He was doing and saying these things [v23].

**In the eyes of the world (then and now)**

= **what gives a person authority? Discuss**

= **who gives a person authority? Discuss**

**What and who gives a Christian authority? Discuss**

**What kind of authority do you exercise? Discuss**

Jesus recognised the reason / purpose, and also the hidden motives, for their question, and in response posed a question which would reveal both the real reason and the motives [v25].

**What do you think was the ruler's reason for questioning Jesus? Discuss**

**What lay behind their eagerness to hear Jesus' reply? Discuss**

The rulers deliberately assumed ignorance in their answer to Jesus' question [v25b-27a], thus they revealed their rejection of John and their attempt to discredit Jesus (both sent by God). By doing so, they both condemned themselves and opened themselves to humiliation. It was part of their role as religious guardians to distinguish between true and false prophets.

**What was (is) the significance of this rejection? [John 7:16-18] Discuss**

We cannot learn new truth if we disobey what God has already told us.

Because of the ruler's response, Jesus told the parable of the two sons [vv 28-32].

The religious leaders had not listened to John [v32], as to have done so and embraced his teaching would have meant changing their lifestyle. The ordinary people had heard him, and believed.

Jesus was pointing to two types of people

- Those who profess to have no interest in religion, claiming to be rational / logical materialists, yet are often kinder and more generous than those who say they love God

**Do you know people like this? Discuss**

- Those who profess a pious religiosity, but whose lifestyle does not reflect their words

**Do you know people who go through the motions but whose actions do not match what they profess? Discuss**

### **In Closing**

A really good person will cheerfully and willingly obey God.

**How good are you when it comes to responding to the promptings of God?**

### **PRAYER YOU MIGHT LIKE TO READ**

God of our salvation,  
we falter before the demands of your word, and turn away  
from your call to life. Pour out your mercy on us as you showed  
mercy to your people of old, that we may turn from our sinfulness  
and walk the path of self-emptying love made known in Jesus Christ.  
Amen.

### **SOURCES CONSULTED IN PREPARING THESE NOTES**

Barclay, William: The Daily Study Bible, revised edition, The Gospel of Matthew, volume 2

Wiersbe, Warren W.: The Bible Expository Commentary, volume 2

Life Application Bible (NIV)

Spirit Filled Life Bible (New King James)