

All in for Heaven's Authority

In Matthew 21:23-27, we find Jesus' authority being called into question by the chief priests and elders of Israel. Notice a few interesting things.

- These men recognized the need for religious authority.
- Jesus did not casually brush their question aside. Instead He countered their question about authority with one of His own. His question had to do with the authority for John's baptism. Did it come from heaven or men?
- If the men answered the question correctly (saying that it came from heaven) it would have become evident to all that they had rejected the authority of heaven.

From this exchange, Jesus teaches us something about authority in religion. Either the authority comes from men or heaven!

I. Authority from men

- A. Tradition (Matthew 15:3-6)
- B. Emotions (Proverbs 14:12; Acts 26:9-11)
- C. Majority (Genesis 6:5; Matthew 7:13-14)
- D. Our family (Galatians 1:14; Matthew 10:37)

II. Authority from heaven

- A. The doctrine of Christ
 1. Not the Law of Moses (Galatians 5:2; 2:21).
 2. Not the Koran or Book of Mormon. Neither of those are inspired by God!
 3. We must submit to teachings of Christ (Matthew 7:24-25; 28:18-20; John 8:31; 12:48; 2 John 9).
- B. The doctrine of the apostles
 1. This is the same as the doctrine of Christ.
 2. Their teachings are inspired by the Holy Spirit (John 16:12-15; 1 Corinthians 14:37; Ephesians 3:4-5; 1 Thessalonians 2:13; 2 Peter 3:15-16).
- C. The practices of the early church
 1. The early church was under the direct guidance of the apostles.
 2. When we follow their approved examples, we can never go wrong (Acts 2:42; 20:7; Philippians 4:9; 2 Timothy 1:13).

III. Why is this important?

- A. Because we are supposed to be like Christ (1 Corinthians 11:1; Matthew 10:25).
- B. Jesus always sought to do the will of heaven (John 4:34; 5:30; 6:38; 8:29; 14:10).
 1. Do we think we are better than Him when it comes to this?
 2. Just like Jesus submitted to the will of heaven, we must as well (Matthew 7:21).

Conclusion:

1. With all that we do, our authority for it will either come from heaven or men.
2. If from heaven, then it will be found being endorsed in the gospel !