

Theme: The actions of Jesus throughout his life and ministry are rooted in his divine authority. That authority is expressed in his perfect rule over creation and his people. It extends to the defining activity of the people of God - Worship! We defy that authority to our own peril.

Background: The long journey to Jerusalem, the city of destiny, is over. We enter the last section of gospel of Luke – the “passion” of Christ, that is, the events leading to his death and resurrection.

Introduction

I. Jesus’ Authority Demonstrated

A. In restoring true worship

1. At the beginning (John 2:13ff)
 - “Zeal for your house will consume me” (Psalm 69:9)
 - But things returned to “business as usual”
2. At the end
 - a. Appearing as “a refiner’s fire” (Malachi 3:1,2)
 - Purify the temple (Mark 11:15ff)
 - b. To take away the sin of the world (John 1:29)
 - Sacrifice to be made – once for all! (Hebrews 9:12)
 - c. To finish the work of the temple
3. A business enterprise?
 - a. Profiting from God’s “means of grace” (Lev. 1:3; Exodus 30:11-14)
 - b. Jesus’ authority over “those in authority”
4. A house of prayer
 - a. Sacrifice and prayer (2 Chronicles 7:12-14)
 - Sacrifice opens the door to prayer (Isaiah 56:7; 1 Kings 8)
 - b. Authority over the most sacred site in all life, history of Jews
 - c. Pure and undefiled
 - Offering the sacrifice of praise (Hebrews 13:15)

B. In proclaiming the Truth

1. Teaching daily in the temple (47, 20:1; 21:37,38)
2. With *Authority* (Matthew 7:29; Mark 1:22, 27; Luke 4:32)

II. Jesus' Authority Challenged

A. Too much power

1. Jesus challenges the temple authorities
2. They seek to “destroy him”
 - This has been building for a long time
(4:15,29; 6:11; 11:54; 14:1; 16:14; 19:39)
 - Had to be careful – because of the people!

B. The pressing question

1. By what authority, who gave it to you (20:2)

NOTE: This is a key question in the gospel of Luke - which everyone must answer!

2. Answer - to your peril! They hope.

C. Answer this first

1. John's authority? God's or man's?
 - a. Jesus ties himself to John's ministry/message in many ways
 - b. It makes the Pharisees answer their own question
2. The Pharisees' dilemma
 - a. From God?
 - They will be asked why *they* didn't accept his message
 - b. On his own?
 - They fear the people, for they would deny him as a prophet
3. Pleading the 5th
 - a. Appearances and politics
 - b. Their weakness is exposed
 - They claim *authority* in all spiritual matters, but have no answer

D. No answer from Jesus

- If they have rejected his authority, it wouldn't matter what he says

III. Jesus' Authority At Work

1. Jesus doesn't reveal all his plans to us
 - But I know they involve my *good*
2. In Him – we are being built up together into a dwelling place for God! (Eph.2:19-22)
3. Worship is still at the center of who we are and what we do (Heb.12:18ff)
4. We must learn to “hang on his words”