



Luke 20:1-8
You DO know

NKJ Luke 20:1 Now it happened on one of those days, as He taught the people in the temple and preached the gospel, *that* the chief priests and the scribes, together with the elders, confronted *Him*
 2 and spoke to Him, saying, "Tell us, by what authority are You doing these things? Or who is he who gave You this authority?"

3 But He answered and said to them, "I also will ask you one thing, and answer Me:

4 "The baptism of John -- was it from heaven or from men?"

5 And they reasoned among themselves, saying, "If we say, 'From heaven,' He will say, 'Why then did you not believe him?'

6 "But if we say, 'From men,' all the people will stone us, for they are persuaded that John was a prophet."

7 So they answered that they did not know where *it was* from.

8 And Jesus said to them, "Neither will I tell you by what authority I do these things."

One of the most irritating experiences for any parent, and kids take note of this, is when a child "plays dumb." You've instructed your child in something, and you know full well that they know it, but when you ask them for the right answer, they look at you with a blank expression and say "*I don't know.*" No, I know you know", you reply "we've been going over this for months. Now just tell daddy the answer." "*I don't know.*"

Sometimes they are no doubt doing it to be insolent, sometimes they are doing it because they just don't want to exert themselves, but either way they result is the same, they refuse to give you the right answer claiming ignorance. They do know, but they aren't going to admit that they do, and you know it, so their position is indefensible, a lie, and downright wrong.

Now lets see if we can take that irritating and sinful practice of claiming ignorance when in fact you know the truth, and apply it to ultimate questions.

In religious matters, particularly in questions like whether Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, it used to be the case that amongst His opponents, whether you were a marxist, a materialist, a nihilist or whatever, atheism was the preferred position. Atheism is of course the belief that there is no God. Of course Jesus isn't the Messiah, the Son of God, there is no God. Whoever he was, we know for certain that he isn't God. But today, in our post-modern society, atheism is no longer the preferred position. I think that is because people have instinctively recognized that Atheism is a dogmatic declaration. *There is no God* implies that you know that for certain. And to know that *for certain*, that in all the universe, there is no God, you would need to be an all-knowing, all-seeing, omnipresent creature. In other words to know for certain that there is no God, you would need to be God.

So these days Atheism is going out of fashion. The new vogue is *agnosticism*. An Agnostic is a person who professes ignorance of these matters, who declares that not only do *they* not know if there is a God, they declare that it *cannot be known if there is a God*. So if you ask them if they believe that Jesus is God they'll answer, *I don't know*, and then haughtily assert *and you don't either!*

But you know what the bible says about that? Open your bibles to Romans 1.

18 For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who suppress the truth in unrighteousness,

19 because what may be known of God is manifest in them, for God has shown it to them.

20 For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead, so that they are without excuse,

21 because, although they knew God, they did not glorify Him as God, nor were thankful, but became futile in their thoughts, and their foolish hearts were darkened.

The word says, they are lying, they DO know, but they refuse to acknowledge what they know because of the consequences that would follow from such an acknowledgment.

In the exchange between Jesus and the High priests that we read, Jesus was also dealing with people who refused to acknowledge what they knew because of the consequences of admitting what they knew.

These people who he is dealing with, are humanly speaking very powerful, we read in verse 1 that he was confronted by the Chief Priests, the scribes, and the elders, together that was most of the Sanhedrin, the ruling body of the Jews, and it should have been disturbing that the Chief Priests, who were Saducees, were now working with the Scribes, who were Pharisees, against Jesus. That's kind of like being so unpopular, that the Democrats and the Republicans are willing to work together to get rid of you. Now that's unpopular.

They are no doubt tremendously irritated that Jesus has driven out the money lenders, and those who had turned the temple into a den of thieves, and is now using the Temple to teach and preach to the people. Who does this Gallilean upstart think he is? He's made them look bad, and now he's reformed their worship, and is teaching in their temple! So, they don't examine the evidence of his miracles, or compare his teaching to the scriptures. They come to him asking where did you get the right to do these things? Thinking if he says, from God, they can call him a blasphemer, and if he says from Man, they can say, *we are the religious authorities, and we have not given you any authority*. Either way they figure they have him trapped.

But Jesus answers their question with a question. The Baptism of John, was it from heaven or from men? In other words, did God appoint John as a prophet and commission him to do his ministry, or did John himself simply start doing these things on his own authority.

Now the common people *knew* what the scriptures specifically tell you, that John was a prophet and they had shown their confidence in his ministry by going out to be baptized by Him – the people had accepted that John had authority from God to perform his ministry, so if the leaders said "well he appointed himself" the people would instantly know that they were frauds, usurpers with no divine commission themselves and would have been in danger of being stoned. On the other hand,

if they answered, "From God" to keep the people happy, they would be completely snookered. Because John had told them that Jesus was the Messiah, the Son of God, turn in your bibles to John 1:22.

John 1:22 Then they said to him, "Who are you, that we may give an answer to those who sent us? What do you say about yourself?"

23 He said: "I am 'The voice of one crying in the wilderness: "Make straight the way of the LORD," ' as the prophet Isaiah said."

24 Now those who were sent were from the Pharisees.

25 And they asked him, saying, "Why then do you baptize if you are not the Christ, nor Elijah, nor the Prophet?"

26 John answered them, saying, "I baptize with water, but there stands One among you whom you do not know.

27 "It is He who, coming after me, is preferred before me, whose sandal strap I am not worthy to loose."

28 These things were done in Bethabara beyond the Jordan, where John was baptizing.

29 The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, "Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!

30 "This is He of whom I said, 'After me comes a Man who is preferred before me, for He was before me.'

31 "I did not know Him; but that He should be revealed to Israel, therefore I came baptizing with water."

32 And John bore witness, saying, "I saw the Spirit descending from heaven like a dove, and He remained upon Him.

33 "I did not know Him, but He who sent me to baptize with water said to me, 'Upon whom you see the Spirit descending, and remaining on Him, this is He who baptizes with the Holy Spirit.'

34 "And I have seen and testified that this is the Son of God."

35 Again, the next day, John stood with two of his disciples.

36 And looking at Jesus as He walked, he said, "Behold the Lamb of God!"

So they take the path of the insolent child, and feign agnosticism "*We don't know*"

They lied, and in doing so they forfeited any right to ask Jesus the question.

Now I want to draw two critically important questions from this teaching for us:

1) The most important question facing the people of Jerusalem on that day that the leaders confronted Jesus is still the most important question facing men. ***Who is Jesus? Because the word of God teaches us that our salvation or our damnation hinges on that question.***

Now you may think you are being very sophisticated and wise if you insist on answering that question "*I don't know*" but that answer will do you just as little good as it did the religious authorities in Christ's day. You must decide. The evidence is there, the miracles, his own teachings, he doesn't give you the "I don't know" option.

Jesus himself asked his own disciples:

Mat. 16:15 He said to them, "But who do you say that I am?"

16 Simon Peter answered and said, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God."

17 Jesus answered and said to him, "Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jonah, for flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but My Father who is in heaven.

No if someone claiming to be a religious leader cannot answer this aright, as many liberal churchmen and many cultists do, they forfeit the title to *be religious leaders*. They can dress themselves up in all sorts of vestments and titles, they can build the grandest buildings, but they are just usurpers with no authority from God.

Real religious authority either devolves from God or it doesn't exist. Marriage issue Reformers during the Reformation. What authority do you have, we are the church!

"All religious beliefs are equally valid." – anecdote

Heretics – Quote in the folder.

Kids, you need to exercise discernment – wolves

1(money)

2 (deny that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God)

NEVER join such a church

2) "The true servant of Christ will do well to remember these things as he travels through this world. He must not believe all he hears, and especially in the matter of religion. He must not suppose that unconverted men really believe in their own hearts all that they say. They often feel more than they appear to feel. They often say things against religion and religious people, which they secretly know to be untrue. They often know the Gospel is true, but have not the courage to confess it. They often know the Christians life is right, but are too proud to say so. The chief priests and scribes are not the only people who deal dishonestly in religion, and say what they know to be false. Then let the servant of Christ go patiently on his way. Those who are now his enemies, will one day confess that he was right, though they used to cry loudly that he was wrong." – JC RYLE

What evidence are you looking for? Fossilized Angel wings?

No one can experience the Christian faith FOR You

Acts 4:12 "Nor is there salvation in any other, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved."

John 14:6 Jesus said to him, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.

So once again the question that is before you today is:

Mat. 16:15 He said to them, "But **who do you say that I am?**"

For those of you who still say "I don't know" – I want to respectfully suggest yes you do, but it may be that you don't like the consequences of having to admit what you know.

16 Simon Peter answered and said, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God."

17 Jesus answered and said to him, "Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jonah, for flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but My Father who is in heaven.