

The Purpose (Why did God write this?): To show that Jesus [*is wiser than His enemies, not intimidated by them, not subject to their will, and*] will not divulge the kind and source of His authority to those who irreverently question it.

²⁷ **They arrived again in Jerusalem, and while Jesus was walking in the temple courts,**

As the religious leaders approach Jesus here, they are plotting his murder.

the chief priests, the teachers of the law and the elders came to him. ²⁸ **“By what authority are you doing these things?” they asked. “And who gave you authority to do this?”**

Asking Jesus questions irreverently cannot be acceptable; asking questions reverently *is* acceptable.

Jesus wouldn't reveal to His enemies where He got His authority unless they passed a one-question pop-quiz:

²⁹ **Jesus replied, “I will ask you one question. Answer me, and I will tell you by what authority I am doing these things.** ³⁰ **John’s baptism—was it from heaven, or of human origin? Tell me!”** ³¹ **They discussed it among themselves and said, “If we say, ‘From heaven,’ he will ask, ‘Then why didn’t you believe him?’** ³² **But if we say, ‘Of human origin’ ...” (They feared the people, for everyone held that John really was a prophet.)** ³³ **So they answered Jesus, “We don’t know.”**

That wasn't one of the options; they failed the quiz. The result:

Jesus said, “Neither will I tell you by what authority I am doing these things.”

Here we see that Jesus is wiser, not intimidated, and not subject to the will of His enemies.

What if Jesus *had* been willing to talk about His authority—what would He have told them?

How can I live in light of Jesus' authority? Here are ten ways to do that:

- 1) Prayerfully review the many scriptures that speak of various kinds of "authority."
- 2) Praise God for Jesus' authority.
- 3) Thank God for Jesus' authority.
- 4) Live under Jesus' authority, obeying His word.
- 5) Say no to sin: "How could I . . ." (Gen 39:9).
- 6) Say no to Satan: "the Lord rebuke you" (Jude 9).
- 7) Teach others to honor God's pure, perfect authority.
- 8) Beware of counterfeit claims of authority (Luke 4:6).
- 9) Pray powerfully—B.R.E.A.D.
- 10) Live a Great Commission life (Matthew 28:16-20).

The Sermon-in-a-Sentence: Those who irreverently question Jesus' authority will be left with their questions unanswered and their souls endangered.

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