

**INTRO:** Ever since Renes Descartes coined his famous phrase “I think therefore I am,” modern man has appointed self as teacher, crowned self as king, and given self the gavel of the judge. Whether Descartes knew it or not, his dictum was an attempt to usurp Jesus’ rightful authority as our teacher, king, and judge. Instead of Jesus being the measure of true humanity, self became the ground of all reality. I think, therefore I am replaced God is, therefore I am, and Jesus is, therefore I should be. Only Jesus deserves these privileges, because He alone is the Son of God, God’s wisdom incarnate. Luke 20:1-21:4 teaches us that **Jesus alone wisely exercises authority over God’s people as God’s Son, our Teacher, our King, and our Judge.**

## 1. JESUS EXERCISES AUTHORITY AS GOD’S SON (LUKE 20:1-19)

V.1 “*Jesus was teaching the people in the temple and preaching the gospel.*” Don’t glide over that too quickly. What good news was He preaching at this point, and where is he preaching the gospel from? There had been no crucifixion or resurrection, and there was no New Testament. He’s preaching Himself, from the OT. It would be like the sermon he preached in the synagogue in Luke 4 from Isa 61, “*The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim liberty to the captives and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed, to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favor.*” The Bible is all one story about God’s one saving plan, the good news of God’s holiness, our sinfulness, Christ’s atoning death, and responding in a faith that repents.... But by preaching Himself from the OT, Jesus annoys the elders, which is clear from v.2. “*Tell us by what authority you do these things, or who it is that gave you this authority?*” He was preaching Himself as prophet, priest, and king, the new temple, the Lord of the Sabbath; otherwise His preaching would have raised no question. Of course, it didn’t help that he had just driven the moneychangers out of the temple in v.45 to illustrate the coming destruction of the temple. And the elders’ issue with Jesus is his authority. They say it twice. “*By what authority...who gave you this authority?*”

And in v.3, Jesus implies that it’s not by their authority. He is not accountable to them. He will not answer their question unless they answer His first. The question he asks them is about John’s baptism. John testified to Jesus. Wherever John’s authority came from, is where Jesus’ authority came from. Answer the John question, and you’ve answered the Jesus question (Morris, *TNTC*, 301; Bock 2:1586). John’s was a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. The angel said to John’s dad, Zechariah, that John would *make ready for the Lord a people prepared* (Luke 1:17). John prepared people to meet Jesus by exhorting them to repent. People are not ready to meet or understand Jesus until they’ve turned from their own sin and self-righteousness. To refuse John’s baptism was to refuse to see him as the forerunner of the Messiah, and to refuse to admit any need to turn from sin. That was what the Jewish leaders had done; and until they saw their need for Jesus, they could not see Him for who He is; so Jesus would not reveal the source of His authority to them, at least not directly. This is just as true today as it was then. Until you repent of your sinful self-reliance, you cannot see Jesus for who He is, and He will remain a mystery to you. Turning from your sinfulness is the first step to seeing Jesus for who He is. And the parable in vv.9-20 reveals Jesus as nothing less than God’s own Son.

The leaders realize that Jesus has put them on the horns of a dilemma. He is too **wise** for them. If they say John’s baptism is from God, then they condemn themselves for rejecting it. If they say it’s from man, they lose popular support, because most people saw John as a prophet. So they say “We don’t know where John’s baptism came from.” Really? You’re the religious leaders of Israel and you can’t tell whether or not John the Baptist is a prophet? How is that not a cop out? Sometimes agnosticism is just a way of evading what we really know to be true (Bock, 2:1588). But that is an ignorance that knows better. Friend, have you ever considered that this might be you? Maybe you’ve been hanging on to this “I don’t know” approach to Jesus and the Bible. But is it really that you don’t know the truth, or could it be that you don’t want to admit the truth of what your conscience tells you? We’ve all done this at some time. We claim ignorance to save face. But that will not exonerate you before God. God has not failed to make Himself clear. The problem is not with God, friend. The reason you don’t understand Jesus is that you won’t admit that He right about your sinfulness.

Jesus goes on in vv.9-15 to tell the parable of the wicked tenants, which illustrates Israel’s continued rejection

of God through their rejection of all the prophets, culminating in the rejection of Jesus Himself. The parable is actually Jesus' veiled answer to the question about His authority from v.2. It's a veiled way of saying, "The authority I have, I have not just as another of the prophets, but as the unique **Son of God** (so also Snodgrass, *Stories*, 287; Bock 2:1592). Jesus is not just another servant. He is the heir, the Son. The vineyard imagery comes from **Isa 5:1-7**, where God talks about Israel as the vine he planted expecting good fruit, but seeing only wild grapes. He says in Isa 5:7 "*For the vineyard of the Lord of hosts is the house of Israel, and the men of Judah are his pleasant planting; and he looked for justice, but behold, bloodshed; for righteousness, but behold, an outcry*" (Isa 5:7). Vine imagery also crops up in **Psalm 80**, "*You brought a vine out of Egypt; you drove out the nations and planted it. You cleared the ground for it; it took deep root and filled the land*" (Ps 80:8-9; cf. Jer 2:21; 8:13; 12:10; Hos 10:1). So in the OT, the vine is Israel in the land, and here in Luke 20, the tenants are Israel's spiritual leaders (Burge, *Land*, 37-38; cf. Bock 2:1591; *contra* Snodgrass, *Stories*, 293).

If you understand this parable, you understand the OT history of Israel. The master entrusts his vineyard to the tenants, sends his servants to collect the fruit, but instead the tenants abuse the servants, which echoes OT passages like **2Chron 36:15** "*The Lord, the God of their fathers, sent persistently to them by his messengers, because he had compassion on his people and on his dwelling place. But they kept mocking the messengers of God, despising his words and scoffing at his prophets, until the wrath of the lord rose against his people, until there was no remedy*" (cf. Neh 9:26; 2Chron 24:19). Finally, the master sends "*My beloved son,*" a phrase that's already been used of Jesus at His baptism in Luke 3:22 where God spoke audibly from heaven (cf. 9:35). In v.15 the emphasis shifts from Jesus' identity to the consequences of Israel's rejecting Him. "*What then will the owner of the vineyard do to them? He will come and destroy those tenants and give the vineyard to others.*"

The people are shocked at the whole thing; "*surely not!*" Surely this is not the meaning of Israel's history in OT times! And Jesus' answer to them in v.17 is "well, if not, then what do you make of Ps 118:22? *The stone that the builder rejected has become the cornerstone.*" The builders reject the very stone that becomes the keystone of God's people in the New Covenant era, and that rejection comes with grave consequences in v.18, "*Everyone who falls on that stone will be broken to pieces, and when it falls on anyone, it will crush him.*" That's a quote of Isa 8, but in Isaiah, God Himself would become this stone of offense and a rock of stumbling. When Jesus applies this verse to His own rejection by the Jews, He's claiming to be God. **It's is another way of saying that He has the authority of the Son of God, the authority of God Himself.** He's also saying that 1<sup>st</sup> century Israelites were about to be judged again, just like their fathers, but now for rejecting Jesus, God's very Son.

The modern mindset is that not believing in Jesus destroys Him. If I don't believe in Him, then He is not true for me. And if I construct a different Jesus in my mind, then Jesus will conform. But that kind of logic will send you to hell. To reject Jesus is to be ruined by Him. If you reject His divine nature and his miracles, if you think His physical resurrection is a sham, if discipleship to Him costs you too much, if His morality is too restrictive for you, if His teaching on hell is not broad-minded enough, then you're tripping over Him, and falling on Him will shatter you. And if you set yourself in opposition to Him, shaking your fist in Jesus' face, angry at Him for who He really is, then He will fall on you and crush you. Either way, He is not the one who breaks. To come into contact with Jesus in any other way than by repentance and faith is to be destroyed by Him.

Rejecting Jesus is not the way to inherit eternal salvation. The reason is that Jesus is the only legitimate heir. He alone is God's Son. He alone has authority to claim the inheritance of heaven. **Heb 1:2**, Jesus is the Son whom God has appointed as the heir of all things. **Gal 3:16, 29**, Jesus is the heir of all the promises to Abraham, and only if we are in Christ, only then we are Abraham's offspring, heirs according to the promise." So if you want access to heaven, you have to ride Jesus' coat-tails. You have to be adopted into sonship by faith in Jesus as God's only true Son. This is what the Jewish leaders could not stomach. They thought their pedigree and their morality guaranteed them entrance into God's kingdom. They were wrong; so the vineyard, the promise of the inheritance, the privilege of citizenship in God's kingdom, would be given to others, to anyone, regardless of ethnicity, who would believe in the Son of God. Jesus is the rejected heir, but his rejection leads to exaltation,

and his exaltation leads to the giving of the vineyard to the nations (*Cf. Acts 28:27-28; 13:46; 18:8; Gal 4:30*).

The leaders get Jesus' point. In v.19, they know he's talking about their rejection of Him, yet they cannot help but prove Him right. They want to kill him right there, and they would have done it if it weren't for Jesus' popularity with the crowds. So they have to switch tactics, which leads us into our second point. "Scripture shows that rejection of God's messenger is common, but that does not stop God from giving honor to his sent one" (Bock 2:1603).

## **2. JESUS EXERCISES AUTHORITY AS OUR TEACHER (LUKE 20:20-44)**

**Structure.** Since they can't just stone him for fear of a mob reaction from the crowd, they have to go to a more subtle approach. They'll try to catch him on the horns of a dilemma. It's brilliant, but it's not really original, because it's what Jesus had just done to them with His question about John the Baptist. The structure of vv.20-40 shows that Jesus' wise authority as teacher is the main point in view here. In v.21 we read, "*So they asked him.*" Again in v.28 "*And they asked him.*" Then in v.40 "*They no longer dared to ask him.*" These questions are coming from the most powerful teachers in Jerusalem, intending to trip Jesus up; yet Jesus gets the best of them without even breaking a sweat. It's a showcase of Jesus' wisdom. *Something greater than Solomon is here.*"

**God and Caesar (20:20-26).** The first question comes in vv.20-26, where the scribes and elders retreat into the background to become the puppet masters as they send their spies undercover to do their dirty work (Bock). And they begin with flattery in v.20. They "*pretended to be sincere*" (*dikai,ouj*) and complement Jesus for his impartiality. But their real motive is to get Jesus in hot water with Rome. They want to make him say something that will give them just cause to hand him over to the governor. The specific question is how the Jews related to the state. Should we pay the poll tax or not? Most Jews hated the poll tax because it reminded them of their subjection to Rome. But the question wasn't just political. It was religious. The tax was being paid to a pagan government that deified its emperor. The denarius Jesus asked for was a coin that had Caesar's image on it. The inscription read "Tiberius Augustus Caesar, son of the Divine Augustus." That word "divine" would have been hard to swallow for a Jew, and giving money to that kind of government wouldn't have set well either. The Jews are banking on Jesus thinking the same way, so that when he says they shouldn't pay it, they'd hand him over to the governor who would prosecute him for treason. But, if on the off chance Jesus said that the Jews should pay the tax, well, to a Jewish crowd that would make Jesus look like a sell-out to the Roman occupation and to the idolatry of the imperial cult, and He'd lose popular support. They think they've cornered him.

"*But he perceived their craftiness*" in v.23. You cannot deceive Jesus with either flattery or deceit. He'll never fall for it. He's wiser than all that. Look there in v.24 "*Show me a denarius. Whose likeness and inscription does it have?*" *They said, 'Caesar's.'* *He said to them, 'Then render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's.'*" The coin has Caesar's image on it, so pay the tax. But the implied question is, where is God's image? God's image is stamped on all humanity. Jesus is not saying that Caesar is sovereign in his sphere and God is sovereign elsewhere. God is sovereign everywhere, even over Caesar; even Caesar has God's image stamped on him, and Paul says in Rom 13 all civil authority is from God, and those civil authorities serve God, whether they realize it or not. So God trumps Caesar, yet Caesar is only to be disobeyed when he commands us to disobey God. And according to Jesus, paying taxes to the government is part of our Christian obedience to God, even if that government is idolatrous. Jesus makes Christian obligation to the state, even an idolatrous state, a subset of our obedience to God. Give the tax to Caesar; give yourself to God.

We should notice in context that Jesus is implicitly teaching the separation of church and state. The parable of the wicked tenants just ended with Jesus saying that the vineyard would be given to others. The others are people from every tribe, tongue and nation. Jesus de-nationalizes God's people; but a non-national religion implies a non-religious nation. If Christianity is a non-state religion, then the state should not be Christianized. The state is still under God's sovereignty and accountable to God's Law. But it is not the church's job to make sure of that. That's God's job. The church is obligated to obey the state in all things that do not coerce her into sin. So give Caesar the coin that bears his image; and give God the soul that bears His image. Both count as

submission to God's sovereignty (Carson, *Christ & Culture*, pp56-58).

But if all we get out of this passage is separation of church and state, we've missed the main point. The main point is, Jesus is divinely wise, He is the only one really qualified to be the Teacher of God's people. Luke sums up the sparring match in v.26 *"And they were not able in the presence of the people to catch him in what he said, but marveling at his answer they became silent."* Modern man has tried to catch Jesus in a contradiction so that His authority can be rejected. He has tried to flatter Jesus as a great moral teacher only to deny that His blood satisfied God's anger at us for our sins. And in all this, modern man has pretended to be sincere, as if he means well, when all the while he is trying to do away with Jesus so that he can live as he pleases. Jesus will have none of it. He will neither be flattered nor trapped. Jesus will answer man, and man will end up marveling and silent, either in this life or the next.

**The resurrection (20:27-44).** In vv.21-26, the scribes and chief priests tried to get Jesus in trouble. Here, in vv.27-44, the Sadducees are trying to make Jesus' teaching sound absurd since they rejected the resurrection. In vv.27-33, they come up with this bizarre situation based on levirate marriage law from Dt 25. If a man died childless, it was his brother's responsibility to marry his widow and raise up children to carry on the dead man's name. The scenario assumes that one woman is widowed by seven brothers in succession, none of them leaving children behind. So if people are raised from the dead, then whose wife will she be in the resurrection, since all seven had her? Again, they're confident; they think they've got Jesus cornered.

Jesus doesn't miss a beat. In vv.34-36 He gives a theological answer from the nature of the resurrection; and in vv.37-38 He gives a Scriptural answer from Exodus 3. But before he gives either answer, he gives a warning in v.35. He starts with the phrase *"those who are considered worthy to attain to that age and to the resurrection."* That's a shot across the bow. It assumes his own doctrine of the resurrection, and it assumes that not everyone will be considered worthy of it, especially not those who don't submit to the wisdom of Jesus' teaching or the merit of His righteousness. He goes on to say that the age to come is not like this age. It's so different that people don't even get married, because in the age to come it's impossible to die. What does that have to do with anything? Well, it has everything to do with the Sadducees' example. The woman in the example remarried for the purpose of raising up children to perpetuate the name of her previous husband. But since no one dies in the age to come, there is no need to perpetuate anyone's name. The example is flawed because it assumes life in the age to come is just like life here. But it's not. The Sadducees are wrong theologically.

They're also wrong biblically. The Sadducees only believed in the Torah, Genesis-Deuteronomy. They rejected the rest of the OT. Even so, Jesus proves from their own limited Scriptures, quoting Ex 3:6, that they should believe in the resurrection if they knew their own Scriptures. God does not say in Ex 3:6 'I was the God of Abraham.' He says, 'I am the God of Abraham,' which assumes that Abraham is still living in covenant relationship to God even though Abraham had died. God is still their God, which means they are still God's people, which in turn means they live on even after death (Longnecker, *Biblical Exegesis*, 53). That's what Jesus means in v.38 *"Now he is not God of the dead, but of the living, for all live to him."* Jesus is not saying that God is not sovereign over dead people (Rom 14:9). He's saying that God is the covenant God only of those who live, because entering God's covenant means entering eternal life. If God is your God and you are His people, you live eternally, even if you die physically. It's much like **1Thess 5:9-10** *God has not destined us for wrath but to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, who died for us so that whether we are awake or asleep we might live with him."* Jesus also teaches us how to study our Bibles here. He draws important doctrine from an implication of a verb tense. This is one reason we believe in verbal plenary inspiration. Every word of Scripture is God-breathed. It's also why we believe that it's permissible for us to draw good and necessary inferences from Scripture. A point of doctrine doesn't have to be sitting on the surface of the text in order to be there. Christian doctrine is legitimately based not only on texts that state that doctrine verbatim, but also on texts that imply that doctrine without stating it so many words. Exodus 3 is not about resurrection; yet Jesus draws that doctrine out of it as a necessary consequence of what is there, and it silences the Sadducees.

V.40 “For they no longer dared to ask him any question.” People were intimidated by Jesus’ knowledge. Grown men could no longer muster the courage to ask Jesus another question. Or maybe they were just no longer brave enough to try to catch Jesus in anything he might say. As loving as Jesus was on earth, He intimidated some people. But look at who it was that he intimidated. He intimidated the religious leaders. Children ran to him; but religious leaders slinked away because they felt threatened by Him, because He had the wisdom and discernment to expose them for who they were and to take away their status and influence as leading teachers.

### 3. JESUS EXERCISES AUTHORITY AS OUR KING (41-44)

Now that Jesus opponents are out of ammunition, Jesus turns his turrets on them and fires a question of his own. “How can they say that the Christ is David’s son? For David himself says in the Book of Psalms, ‘The Lord said to my Lord, sit at my right hand, until I make your enemies your footstool.’ David thus calls him Lord, so how is he his son?” Here again, Jesus is quoting Scripture, Psalm 110:1. Psalm 110 was an enthronement Psalm, a royal Psalm for use at the coronation of a king in Israel. It emphasized that the new king was really only a secondary king beside the true king, Yahweh. Here again, Jesus’ argument is based on the specific wording of a particular sentence. King David is speaking, and he says ‘The Lord said to my Lord, sit at my right hand.’ The Lord at the beginning of the verse is clearly God. But if God is the first Lord, then who is the second Lord, “my Lord”? Originally, David himself would have been crowning his son Solomon king. But if the Messiah is David’s son, as everyone thought, then why would David need to call his own son Lord? No one called their son “Lord” in a patriarchal society like Israel. A son was not superior to his father (CNTUOT, 372); unless, of course, there was more to this Son than met the eye.

The whole idea of the Messiah coming from the line of David had its roots in God’s promise to build David a royal dynasty in 2Sam 7:16. “Your house and your kingdom shall be made sure forever before me. Your throne shall be established forever.” Well, if David were to have an endless dynasty, then one of two things would have to take place. Either he would have an endless succession of mortal descendants who would reign and die, reign and die, reign and die; or there would one day come a single immortal descendant who would Himself reign and never die. But immortality would imply divinity. And that is exactly what Jesus is implying in his own use of Psalm 110:1. The only way that David would call one of his own descendants “my Lord” is if that descendant was Himself “THE LORD,” God incarnate. It’s not that the Messiah would be anything less than David’s son. It’s that he would be more. In the context of Jesus’ earthly ministry, it’s not hard to see that Jesus was implying that He Himself was this divine Davidic descendant (Longnecker, *Biblical Exegesis*, 57). Jesus had already taught in Luke 11 that His own exorcisms proved the arrival of God’s kingdom in His own person. He had already told the Pharisees in Luke 17 that the kingdom of God was in their midst. Now He is teaching, in a veiled way, that He Himself is Great David’s Greater Son. **Jesus exercises authority as our king.**

Evangelical churches today need to recover the idea of Jesus’ authority as our king for our corporate life and worship. **Life** in a popular democracy like America tends to blunt the edge of Jesus’ sword. Congregations can begin to think that we rule ourselves, without remembering that church government is many-sided. Insofar as the congregation is the final court of appeal in matters of doctrine, discipline, dispute, and membership, the church is a democracy. Insofar as the local church is elder-led, it’s an oligarchy. Yet insofar as Jesus is king, the local church is a monarchy. Jesus is our king, and neither the congregation nor its elders can make any decision without respecting Jesus’ rightful and royal authority over us. And the charter of His authority is the Bible. Mature congregations are those that are eager to hear and submit to Jesus’ royal word. And mature leaders, elders in the church, are those who model that eagerness for the rest of the congregation.

The casual lifestyle of the West encourages a casual approach to Jesus in **worship**. The most popular way to think of Jesus today is as our best friend. Now it’s true, Jesus does call His disciples friends and not just servants. But Jesus is still the king, and friendship with Him does not mean that he ditches His royal dignity. It means that he is welcoming us into His world of royalty, and there is an expectation that we act accordingly,

and not abuse His friendship. We should respect and fear Him as our king, even as He condescends to take us up into His courts. Even human royalty deserves a certain level of decorum. Royalty is rightly dignified. How much more, then, should the church's corporate worship of Jesus be marked by respect for His majesty?

Yet Jesus' kingship is not just over the church. God's kingdom is **universal**. His realm is borderless; it extends over all reality. The church is simply where Jesus' reign is most visibly obeyed. Verse 43 says that God is making all Jesus' enemies a footstool for Him. To be Jesus' footstool is to be crushed by His royal authority. It is to be judged by Him; and you might be surprised who He judges, which leads us to our final point.

#### **4. JESUS EXERCISES AUTHORITY AS OUR JUDGE (LUKE 20:45-21:4)**

There's no specific reference to Jesus as judge here. But the idea is implicit in v.47, where Jesus' description of the scribes' religious pride culminates with the observation that they will 'receive the greater condemnation.' Jesus knows that He Himself will be the one to execute that condemnation. And in 21:4, by way of contrast, Jesus commends the poor widow because proportionally, she gave a much higher percentage of her income than the rich people did. So while Jesus does not refer to Himself as judge in this last paragraph, he is performing the functions of the judge. He is warning others in v.45-46 not to fall into same pride as the scribes. In v.47 he pronounces condemnation on the scribes. In 21:1-4, he commends the poor widow, and leaves the verdict out on the rich who think they are giving a lot but who keep exponentially more for themselves. And in all of it, Jesus is discerning who is truly righteous and who is only feigning righteousness. And His conclusions are not the conclusions of the contemporary ruling class of His day. He is asserting His authority as judge, over against the conclusions of the religious authorities. Jesus, then, is the Judge who has the wisdom to discern between the sincere and the fake, and the authority to either condemn or commend.

**Jesus condemns (20:45-47).** In vv.45-47, it's the misuse of religion for personal reputation that's being condemned. The scribes were the people who studied and knew the Bible best. Their long robes were symbols of prestige a religious culture. They were not simply meant as respect for the Lord. They were meant to be ostentatious, to flaunt the social status that came from their religious knowledge. It was also customary to acknowledge religious leaders on the street with long greetings as a form of respect; and the scribes loved it. They wanted people to fall all over themselves when they saw them on the sidewalk. They loved sitting in the most prominent seats at the synagogue, and sitting in the place of the honored guest at dinner parties. They prayed ostentatious prayers in public to impress people. And they put widows on guilt trips to contribute to their own coffers. Today, we'd say that they used the church to puff their reputations and pad their bank accounts. Jesus has the wisdom to see through those kind of people and condemn them. Make sure that's not you, Christian. Don't use the local church to make yourself look good. Jesus hates that, and he will judge it.

Modern evangelicalism is not immune to this stuff. In fact, we evangelicals often aggravate this temptation by making celebrities of our own. We perpetuate a sub-culture of evangelical celebrity. It's not that we shouldn't hold up godly examples of biblical faithfulness and exposition. We all want and need good models. And it's not to suggest that every evangelical leader wants to be made a celebrity. Jesus Himself was misunderstood as a celebrity. Sometimes God raises up special vessels for more prominent use; that's good. But as evangelicals, we sometimes choose our models based on numerical success more than biblical fidelity, which makes them celebrities rather than models. And even when we recognize the right men for the right reasons, we often treat them as pop icons. We need models; but we don't need celebrities, and there is a difference. The difference is in how we treat them. We treat models as examples to emulate, regardless of results. We treat celebrities as pop icons whose success is self-made, and whose stardom makes us look good when we get close to them. I know this as well as anyone; it's in my heart too. I'm preaching to myself. So what do you do if you feel like this? Well, ask yourself next time you're at a conference, would you rather pray privately with a struggling brother who has been serving in obscurity, or would you rather be seen eating lunch with one of the speakers? If it's the latter, then there's a pride in your own heart that is just as corrosive and condemnable as the pride of the scribes.

**Jesus commends (21:1-4).** In fact, what Jesus commends in the very next scene is obscure faithfulness. The widow puts in 2 lepta, which amounted to an 1/8<sup>th</sup> of a cent, but she gave out of her poverty, trusting God would provide. So Jesus says “*This poor widow has put in more than all of them. For they all contributed out of their abundance, but she out of her poverty put in all she had to live on.*” There may be an implicit rebuke here of the scribes who devour widows houses in 20:47. But the main point here is that Jesus is wise enough to measure and judge your generosity not by how much you give, but how much you keep.

**CONCLUSION - Jesus wisely exercises authority over God’s people** – as God’s Son, our Teacher, our King, and our Judge. Are you trusting his wisdom and obeying His authority? Or are you still living by your own?