

~ **THE QUESTION OF AUTHORITY** ~

Matthew 21:23-27 continued

**INTRODUCTION:** The plan of God is perfect because the Person who designed it is perfect. The plan of God is perfect because it is executed by perfect Persons - the three Members of the Godhead. There is no place for man to get any credit because God's plan operates under the principle of grace = God does the work, man does the receiving, and God gets all the credit, all the honor and glory. Legalism operates under the exact opposite principle - Man does the work, God does the receiving, and man gets the brownie points earning favor with God. In other words God now owes man - God is indebted to man because of what man has done. The religious leaders are the ones who opposed the ministry of Christ - they failed to understand the biblical principle of grace. The religion and legalists recognized in Jesus Christ their greatest opposition and therefore they sought to discredit Him in every possible way. For the next two and a half chapters we will see Jesus Christ setting religion back on its heels - discrediting and exposing them for what they were at every point. They start out by seeking to discredit Jesus, and Jesus ends up discrediting them.

**A. THE SOLEMN SETTING**

1. THE PERSONS
2. THE PLACE
3. TIME
4. THE CONFRONTATION
5. THE REASON

**B. THE REVEALING DEBATE**

1. THE OPENING QUESTION
2. THE \_\_\_\_\_ QUESTION

**3. THE \_\_\_\_\_ ANSWER**

**4. THE \_\_\_\_\_ RESPONSE**

**C. THE \_\_\_\_\_ APPLICATION**

The counter question that Jesus asked during His debate with the delegation from the Sanhedrin regarding John's baptism, could be asked of many modern day religious practices even in our Bible preaching evangelical churches. Is what we do "from Heaven" or "from man"?

We'll have to wait until next Sunday, October 1st to find out how to discern if a particular practice is from Heaven or from man.