

# Tale Of Two Brothers

Mt.21:23-32

## 23: By what authority?

- Good question . . . Bad motive
- If He has no proof, they must expose Him
- He has already answered them
  - Mt.7:29
  - Mt.8:5-10
- After three years of proof, they demand more

# 24-25: Jesus' counter-question – John's baptism

- Public opinion proclaimed John a true prophet of God.
  - 'Of heaven' or 'Of men'?

'By what authority' – a Q we must ask

If John is of heaven, so is Jesus

New truth is worthless if disobey  
truth you already know. Jn.7:17

## 25b-27a: motives [Lk.20:6]

- 'From men' – they did oppose John, but were cowards.
- 'From heaven' – they were hypocrites in awkward dilemma.

## 27b: Jesus refuses to answer

- No direct answer
- His parable is a mirror – they can see themselves as they are...in contrast to lower classes they despise

## 28-32: parable

- Their response to His story exposes them as dishonest charlatans

# I. Example – Two Sons

## 28: father's command to first son

- 'Said': how Father communicates
- 'Son': loving attitude. 7:11
- 'Go': evidence of authority. 8:5-9
- 'Today': urgency. Mt.6:11
- 'In vineyard': specific directions



## 29: first son's answer: stubborn refusal

'I will not' . . . (23:37)

- 'Repented': regret
  - Negative and emotional element; sorrow for something; wishing it undone
  - MAY lead to salvation
  - Judas, Mt.27:3; Paul, 2 Co.7
- 'Went': if no change, no repentance

30: father's command to second son;  
response – same call

- 'I': not the sorry lower class. Mt.23:3
- 'Go': long on profession, short on obedience. Lk.15:29
- 'Sir': professed respect; actually rebellious. Mt.15:8
- 'Did not go': false promise. Mt.11:16

## 31-32: Lord's next question – Who did will of Father?

- Their answer condemned themselves
- John – way of righteousness (Mk.1:4; Lk.7:29-30)
- Publicans / harlots believed . . .  
Admitted need

I. Example – Two Sons

II. Exhortation –  
To Go Or Not To Go?

1. 25-26: some let consequences outweigh truth.

- 'Ifs' illustrate fear, lying, insincerity.

The lazy man says, "There is a lion in the road! A fierce lion is in the streets!" – Pr.26:13

## 2. 28: God requires work in His vineyard.

- 1 Co.3:5-11
- 'Most footprints on the sands of time were left by work shoes.'

### 3. 28: Status means nothing to God – only obedience.

- Tax collectors . . . at bottom of social scale
  - Lk. 10, Samaritan

‘They that know God will be humble,  
and they that know themselves cannot  
be proud’

– 1 Tim. 1:15-16, first = foremost

Foremost sinner,

15

Foremost sample,

16

- 4. 29: Only way to know relationship with God – response to His word
- 32, 'way of righteousness' is Lord's way (John 12:48)
- Acts 18:25-26, close is not good enough
- Ro.7:24 . . . 8:2

Those who admit their condition  
go to the Great Physician



## 5. 30: Fine words mean nothing without obedience.

- Lk.6:46

**‘Realize that . . .**  
love is nothing without action;  
trust is nothing without proof;  
regret is nothing without change’

- Psalm 51:16-17