By What Authority?

Matthew 21:23-32

Intro:

A. As Jesus taught in the temple He was interrupted by His enemies.
   1. "...came unto Him as he was teaching..."  v.23
   2. They were distraught by all the things that Jesus had done. He had returned from Bethany.

B. They asked Him two questions.
   1. "By what authority doest thou these things"?
   2. "Who gave thee this authority"?
   3. authority = ἐξουσία = delegated power, authority to do anything; permission, license

C. What "things" do they mean?
   1. The triumphal entry as a king.
   2. The cleansing of the temple.
   3. The children crying in the temple.

I. The Answer Of Jesus.

A. Jesus proposed trading information.  V.24
   1. "I also will ask you one thing..."
   2. "I in likewise will tell you..."

B. The information Jesus sought.  V.25
   1. "The baptism of John, whence was it?"
   2. "from heaven or of men?"

II. The Dilemma Of The Chief Priests And Elders.

A. "...And they reasoned with themselves, saying..."  
   v.25a
   1. reasoned = διαλογίζομαι = "to think through"
   2. "...if we shall say, From heaven..."
   3. "...he will say...Why did ye not believe him?"
   4. "But if we shall say, of men; We fear the people for all hold John as a prophet"  v.26
   5. And they answered Jesus, and said, We cannot tell."  V.27a

B. Jesus stands His ground.
1. "Neither tell I you by what authority..." v.27b.
2. Jesus knew their hearts.

II. Divine Authority Must Be Obeyed.

A. The parable of the two sons.
   1. "But what think ye"? v.28-30
   2. Think about this, form an opinion.
   3. "Whether of them twain did the will of his father"? v.31
   4. "They say unto him, The first."

B. The application of the parable.
   1. This is not Jew and Gentile.
   2. The publican and the harlots where the ones who repented and entered the kingdom.

C. The chief priests and elders would not accept authoritative information.
   1. righteousness = δικαιοσύνη = "the being of doing what is just and right: v.32
   2. The religious leaders were saying, we are doing God's work but they weren't. When they heard and saw authoritative figures they would not repent and enter His vineyard.