

Matthew 21:23-32 A second chance



Back to Matthew's Gospel, three-quarters of the way through, and only a few days before the crucifixion. Jesus has recently entered Jerusalem and outraged the religious establishment in various ways, not least by daring to cleanse the temple courts of the various traders operating there. His opponents now approach him while he is teaching in the temple, asking, in effect, that he show them his credentials to do "these things" (23).

➤ **The one who *does* have authority** (23-27)

What does Jesus claim authority over ...
... in this world?
... in the church?
... in your life?

➤ **The one who says *No*** (28-29)

There are times when our initial response to the claims of Jesus is *No*, or, more literally, *I do not want to*.

Can you give any examples from your own experience?
How guilty are we meant to feel about these feelings?

How can we learn, with this first son, to *change our minds*, and do what God is requiring from us? What practical steps can we take?

➤ **The one who says *Yes*** (30)

The word that Matthew uses is not actually "I will", or "I will go", but simply "I". Do you see this as an assertion of superiority or self-righteousness? Compare the much longer parable of "The Prodigal Son" (Luke 15:11-32)

➤ **The one hope for people like us** (31-32)

Have *you* entered into the kingdom of God yet?

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