

An Issue of Authority and Truth
Mark 11:27-12:12

11:27-12:12 records a series of five debates in the temple area, where Jesus will repeatedly outwit hostile religious leaders.

Question backfires—fear causes leaders to avoid the truth. 11:27-33

- Question is a trap (11:18, recall 3:6,22) to force Jesus' hand.
- Counter-question of Jesus is a common debate move. It creates a dilemma since popular John (1:4,5) endorsed Jesus, Jn. 1:29ff.
- The trapped leaders' answer out of *fear* of the crowd, Lk. 20:5,6.
 - Why is this so painfully embarrassing for them?
 - What must we also be careful to do that they refused to do?

Parable upsets leaders—fear causes them not to seize Jesus. 12:1-12

- This parable offers . . .
 - an ugly history of Israel's bad response to prophetic reformers.
 - a prediction of Jesus' death at the hands of these leaders.
 - a warning of the eventual destruction of the erring leaders.
 - a prophetic twist of Ps. 118:22,23 to validate Jesus' position.
 - an allegorical answer to the question about Jesus' authority.
- Fear of the crowds again impacts the leaders' response (11:18, 32, cf. Matt. 14:5), but this will end in a big way in 15:11-15.
 - What should this parable suggest to us?



John, Jesus and the religious authorities