

**Week of September 27, 2020**

**Matthew 21:23-32**

<sup>23</sup> When he entered the temple, the chief priests and the elders of the people came to him as he was teaching, and said, "By what authority are you doing these things, and who gave you this authority?"

<sup>24</sup> Jesus said to them, "I will also ask you one question; if you tell me the answer, then I will also tell you by what authority I do these things.

<sup>25</sup> Did the baptism of John come from heaven, or was it of human origin?" And they argued with one another, "If we say, 'From heaven,' he will say to us, 'Why then did you not believe him?'

<sup>26</sup> But if we say, 'Of human origin,' we are afraid of the crowd; for all regard John as a prophet."

<sup>27</sup> So they answered Jesus, "We do not know." And he said to them, "Neither will I tell you by what authority I am doing these things.

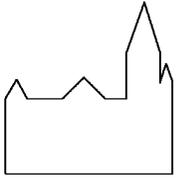
<sup>28</sup> "What do you think? A man had two sons; he went to the first and said, 'Son, go and work in the vineyard today.'

<sup>29</sup> He answered, 'I will not'; but later he changed his mind and went.

<sup>30</sup> The father went to the second and said the same; and he answered, 'I go, sir'; but he did not go.

<sup>31</sup> Which of the two did the will of his father?" They said, "The first." Jesus said to them, "Truly I tell you, the tax collectors and the prostitutes are going into the kingdom of God ahead of you.

<sup>32</sup> For John came to you in the way of righteousness and you did not believe him, but the tax collectors and the prostitutes believed him; and even after you saw it, you did not change your minds and believe him.



### Group Leader

Remember: you don't need to use all of the questions. Go with what works. Give people a chance to think before answering, but if a question falls flat, move on. Let the discussion go where it needs to go, as long as it remains centered around the lesson. Give the participants page 1. Use this page for yourself.

### Gathering questions:

- A. What is your earliest memory of disobeying your parents?
- B. Talk about a time when you spoke up against a wrong being committed.

### Bible Study Questions:

1. In verse 23, what are "these things" that Jesus is doing? Why do you think the chief priests questioned Jesus in the first place?
2. In verse 31, what does it mean for tax collectors and prostitutes to go into the kingdom "ahead of you"?
3. Do you think the order in which the sons are presented makes a difference?
4. Which son better represents your life and why?
5. Would you rather be disrespected (shamed) or disobeyed?
6. How important is your public image to you?
7. Have you ever been afraid to speak the truth that was on your mind? Give a recent example.
8. What would be the hardest thing for you to sacrifice to maintain your integrity? Wealth? Reputation? Friendships?

Closing prayer: particularly invite prayers about having greater courage or integrity.