



This picture tells it like it is. People in church, listening to the preacher, but is their heart open or closed? Well, from the picture I think they may want change, but when it comes to something that involves them – FORGET IT!

It is easy to discuss concepts, but when concepts become a matter of personal involvement, well, that is entirely another matter. To put it into other words: it is easier to talk church than it is to be the church. Jesus had a way of making concepts lead up to a choice for personal involvement and that made people react in ways that ranged from acceptance to outright combativeness. Here is an example...

Matthew 21 ([World English Bible](#))

23 When he had come into the temple, the chief priests and the elders of the people came to him as he was teaching, and said, "By what authority do you do these things? Who gave you this authority?"

24 Jesus answered them, "I also will ask you one question, which if you tell me, I likewise will tell you by what authority I do these things. "

25 "The baptism of John, where was it from? From heaven or from men?" "

They reasoned with themselves, saying, "If we say, 'From heaven,' he will ask us, 'Why then did you not believe him?'"

26 But if we say, 'From men,' we fear the multitude, for all hold John as a prophet."

27 They answered Jesus, and said, "We don't know."

He also said to them, "Neither will I tell you by what authority I do these things. "

28 "But what do you think? A man had two sons, and he came to the first, and said, 'Son, go work today in my vineyard.' "

29 "He answered, 'I will not,' but afterward he changed his mind, and went. "

30 "He came to the second, and said the same thing. He answered, 'I go, sir,' but he didn't go. "

31 "Which of the two did the will of his father?"

They said to him, "The first."

Jesus said to them, "Most certainly I tell you that the tax collectors and the prostitutes are entering into the Kingdom of God before you. "

32 "For John came to you in the way of righteousness, and you didn't believe him, but the tax collectors and the prostitutes believed him. When you saw it, you didn't even repent afterward, that you might believe him. "

33 "Hear another parable. There was a man who was a master of a household, who planted a vineyard, set a hedge about it, dug a wine press in it, built a tower, leased it out to farmers, and went into another country. "

34 "When the season for the fruit drew near, he sent his servants to the farmers, to receive his fruit. "

35 "The farmers took his servants, beat one, killed another, and stoned another. "

36 "Again, he sent other servants more than the first: and they treated them the same way. "

37 "But afterward he sent to them his son, saying, 'They will respect my son.' "

38 "But the farmers, when they saw the son, said among themselves, 'This is the heir. Come, let's kill him, and seize his inheritance.' "

39 "So they took him, and threw him out of the vineyard, and killed him. "

40 "When therefore the lord of the vineyard comes, what will he do to those farmers?" "

41 They told him, "He will miserably destroy those miserable men, and will lease out the vineyard to other farmers, who will give him the fruit in its season."

42 Jesus said to them, "“Did you never read in the Scriptures, "

"“The stone which the builders rejected,"

"the same was made the head of the corner."

"This was from the Lord."

"It is marvelous in our eyes?" Psalm 118:22-23

43 "“Therefore I tell you, the Kingdom of God will be taken away from you, and will be given to a nation producing its fruit. "

44 "He who falls on this stone will be broken to pieces, but on whomever it will fall, it will scatter him as dust.”"

45 When the chief priests and the Pharisees heard his parables, they perceived that he spoke about them.

46 When they sought to seize him, they feared the multitudes, because they considered him to be a prophet.

The chief priests and the elders were THE leaders of the nation of Israel and they KNEW IT. They did not like Jesus trying to teach THEM, for they thought he didn't have the authority to do so. Why? Because they were the ones in charge; they had position and power. So, they challenged Jesus' authority, but Jesus, seeing their hypocrisy turned their question concerning authority right back on them.

Next, he told them two parables, aimed right at their pride, arrogance and lack of obeying the will of God and they hated him for it. They would have seized Jesus if it had not been for the multitude holding Jesus to be a prophet.

So, the next time you are listening to a sermon and the topic makes you a bit uncomfortable.... It is quite possible that the sermon is not aimed at your

head, but rather at your heart. Listen to what God's word tells you to do and change for the better, even if its hard for you to do. God will bless you for it!