

Summary

This sermon explores Jesus' confrontation with religious leaders who questioned his authority after he cleansed the temple. The pastor examines how Jesus responded to their theological traps by teaching about submission to God's authority. Through Jesus' famous statement about giving to Caesar what is Caesar's and to God what is God's, the message emphasizes that because God is the author of life, He is worthy of all our lives. The sermon also addresses the Sadducees' question about marriage in heaven, teaching that we can trust God's authority even when we don't fully understand His ways. The central theme is learning to surrender control and let God be the author of our story rather than living in spiritual rebellion or independence.

Intro Prayer

Father, we thank you for bringing us together today to study your word. We ask that you would open our hearts and minds to receive what you want to teach us. Help us to be humble and receptive to your truth, even when it challenges our thinking or calls us to change. Holy Spirit, we invite you to speak to each person here according to their specific needs. Show us areas where we need to surrender more fully to your authority and help us trust you completely. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Ice Breaker

Share about a time when you were a child and tried to assert your independence from your parents' authority. What happened and how did it turn out?

Key Verses

1. Mark 11:27-33
2. Mark 12:13-17
3. Mark 12:18-27
4. Genesis 1:27
5. Psalm 24:1

Questions

1. What are the four general responses to authority mentioned in the sermon, and which one do you find yourself gravitating toward most often?
2. Jesus said to 'give back to Caesar what is Caesar's, and to God what is God's.' What does it practically look like to give God what is God's in your daily life?
3. The pastor mentioned that 'there is nothing more dangerous than a man who refuses to have any authority in his life.' Why do you think rejecting all authority is so dangerous?

4. How does our culture's view of authority differ from the biblical view of submission to God's authority?
5. What does it mean that we are created in God's image and how should this impact how we live?
6. The Sadducees were described as being known more for what they didn't believe than what they did believe. How can we guard against becoming overly focused on what we're against rather than what we're for?
7. Jesus told the Sadducees they were mistaken because they didn't know 'the Scriptures or the power of God.' How can we ensure we're growing in both areas?
8. What are some things in your life that you might be 'white knuckling' or trying to control instead of surrendering to God's authority?

Life Application

This week, identify one area of your life where you've been resisting God's authority or trying to maintain control. Practice daily surrender by praying 'God, my story for your glory' and taking one specific action that demonstrates trust in His leadership over that area of your life.

Key Takeaways

1. Because God is the author of life, He is worthy of all our lives - we should give to God what is God's
2. There are four responses to authority: destroy it, discredit it, dismiss it, or submit to it - submission is trust, not weakness
3. We can trust God's authority even when we don't fully understand His ways because His thoughts and ways are higher than ours
4. It's always easier to change our beliefs than our behavior, but we should align our lives with God's word rather than the other way around
5. We are created in God's image and scattered to advance His kingdom, carrying His name and image to the world

Ending Prayer

Father, thank you for this time of learning and reflection together. We acknowledge that you are the ultimate authority in our lives and that your ways are perfect. Help us to live out what we've discussed today, surrendering the areas we've been trying to control and trusting you more fully. Give us courage to submit to your authority even when it's difficult, knowing that you are good and your plans for us are good. May we be people who know both your word and your power, and may our lives bring glory to your name. In Jesus' name, Amen.