

★ They Marveled at His Answer

4th - 6th Grade
Lesson 3

The Wisdom of Christ

Jesus was a Jew. Even though Jesus was Jewish, the Jews did not like Jesus. They did not want Him to be with them. The priests fought with Jesus more than anyone did. They did not believe He was God. They did not believe He was the Son of God. They did not believe anything that He did or said.

Do you remember the story of Daniel and the lions' den? Do you remember what happened to the rulers who tried to kill Daniel? They were envious of Daniel. The priests were envious of Jesus in the same way. In fact, they wanted to kill Jesus.

Asked About His Authority

The Jewish rulers thought they were more important than anyone else. They thought they were special. When Jesus was teaching in the Temple, they asked Him why He was saying the things that He said. Jesus proved that He had God's power by healing people and performing miracles, but the rulers did not believe Him. They hated Jesus because people were following Him instead of them. Jesus said things about the rulers that they did not like. People who spent time with Jesus knew there was something very special about Him. And the rulers did not like that either. They were jealous. They should have been excited that Jesus was with them. They should have been happy to have the Son of God in their presence. The Jews had been waiting for hundreds of years for Jesus to come. And when He did, they hated Him.

The Jews wanted Jesus to prove that God was telling Him to teach what He taught. Jesus asked the Jewish rulers if John the Baptist baptized people from Heaven or from men. (Matthew 21:25) The rulers did not know what to say. Many people around the leaders and Jesus loved John the Baptist. They knew that if they said anything bad about him that the people would be angry. They told Jesus that they would not answer Him. Jesus told them that He would not answer them either.

Angered About His Parable

Jesus told the rulers a story about a vineyard. Every time Jesus told a story, that story meant something. The story Jesus told was about a man who planted a vineyard and put another man in charge of it. The man who owned the vineyard sent his servants to the man who was taking care of the vineyard to gather the fruits from it. The man who was caring for the vineyard stoned, beat, and killed the servants who were coming on behalf of the owner! Finally, the owner sent his son to get the fruits of the vineyard. He thought that if he sent his son, the man who was caring for his property would surely honor the son. Instead, he killed the man's son. Jesus was explaining to the rulers how God had sent Him.

And the chief priests and the scribes the same hour sought to lay hands on him; and they

feared the people: for they perceived that he had spoken this parable against them. And they watched him, and sent forth spies, which should feign themselves just men, that they might take hold of his words, that so they might deliver him unto the power and authority of the governor.

—Luke 20:19-20

The rulers knew that Jesus was talking about them. They were so mad that they tried to kill Him! Instead of learning from what Jesus said and admitting their guilt, they were angry.

Amazed About His Answer

The Jewish leaders did not want to talk to Jesus in public anymore. They were very embarrassed. They decided to send spies to watch Jesus. They decided to ask Jesus a question that He would not be able to answer.

The spies asked Jesus if people should give money to Caesar. They thought He would say no because people should give money to God. Then they could have Jesus thrown into prison.

Jesus knew that the rulers were only trying to trick Him! Jesus asked to be shown money, and someone in the crowd gave Him a penny. Jesus then asked the spies whose face was on it. Since it was a Roman penny, it had a picture of Caesar on it.

When the spies replied that the image on the coin was Caesar's, Jesus answered,

Render therefore unto Caesar the things which are Caesar's; and unto God the things that are God's. When they had heard these words, they marvelled, and left him, and went their way.

—Matthew 22:21-22

Jesus shocked everyone with His answer! He told them that what belongs to Caesar should be given to Caesar and what belongs to God should be given to God! The spies did not know what to say!

Conclusion

Jesus always knew the right thing to say. Have you ever said something, then wished you hadn't said it? How can we know the right words to say?

The book of James tells us how we can have wisdom. It says that we should ask God for wisdom. When we pray, we need to ask God to give us the right words to say and show us the right way to act. Then, we need to trust that He will answer our prayer.