

# Luke

Carefully Investigating the Gospel ... Together

## SSBC Luke Bible Study #76

*Take this Bible Study home and use it to guide your exploration of the scripture passage that next Sunday's sermon will be focused on.*

Passage: Luke 20:1-19

Sermon Date: Mar 18, 2007

### **Yielding to the Winner of All Debates**

I was never in the debate club at school. Were you? It required some quick thinking and a clever tongue. Nowadays, these kinds of intellectual battles are seen in courtrooms, election debates and, in rare moments, on talk radio. But I still avoid confrontational debates.

However, Jesus was often involved in verbal sparring with those who opposed him – indeed he seemed to steer directly into such confrontations. Think of the poor souls who faced him in this. Can you imagine the futility of trying to outwit the Lord of the Universe, the Author of Life, the Almighty Creator of Wisdom itself??

Perhaps the quintessential battle of wits occurred during the Passion Week, when Jesus was confronted by the highest ranking leaders among the Jews. The match had a number of rounds, and will span our next few studies. At one point, the religious leaders think they have Jesus down for the count ... but you know who ultimately triumphs! As you begin studying this story, be sure to begin with a time of prayer, perhaps revisiting your own willingness to yield to Jesus – the winner of all debates.

*These studies are produced by South Shore Baptist Church in conjunction with our weekly sermon series. Studies are distributed one week prior to the sermon as inserts in the church bulletin and are also posted at <http://sermonhouse.com/SSBC>. Sermons are also recorded and can be listened to later by visiting that same website. Have feedback or questions? Contact [studieditor@southshorebaptist.com](mailto:studieditor@southshorebaptist.com)*

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**Explore It Yourself:**

1. Read this week's Bible passage and use the chart below to note your observations and any questions you have.

Scripture	Your Observations & Questions
<p><sup>1</sup> One day as he was teaching the people in the temple courts and preaching the gospel, the chief priests and the teachers of the law, together with the elders, came up to him. <sup>2</sup> "Tell us by what authority you are doing these things," they said. "Who gave you this authority?"</p> <p><sup>3</sup> He replied, "I will also ask you a question. Tell me, <sup>4</sup> John's baptism—was it from heaven, or from men?"</p> <p><sup>5</sup> They discussed it among themselves and said, "If we say, 'From heaven,' he will ask, 'Why didn't you believe him?'" <sup>6</sup> But if we say, 'From men,' all the people will stone us, because they are persuaded that John was a prophet."</p> <p><sup>7</sup> So they answered, "We don't know where it was from."</p> <p><sup>8</sup> Jesus said, "Neither will I tell you by what authority I am doing these things."</p> <p><sup>9</sup> He went on to tell the people this parable: "A man planted a vineyard, rented it to some farmers and went away for a long time. <sup>10</sup> At harvest time he sent a servant to the tenants so they would give him some of the fruit of the vineyard. But the tenants beat him and sent him away empty-handed. <sup>11</sup> He sent another servant, but that one also they beat and treated shamefully and sent away empty-handed. <sup>12</sup> He sent still a</p>	

Scripture	Your Observations & Questions
<p>third, and they wounded him and threw him out.</p> <p><sup>13</sup> "Then the owner of the vineyard said, 'What shall I do? I will send my son, whom I love; perhaps they will respect him.'</p> <p><sup>14</sup> "But when the tenants saw him, they talked the matter over. 'This is the heir,' they said. 'Let's kill him, and the inheritance will be ours.'</p> <p><sup>15</sup> So they threw him out of the vineyard and killed him.</p> <p>"What then will the owner of the vineyard do to them? <sup>16</sup> He will come and kill those tenants and give the vineyard to others."</p> <p>When the people heard this, they said, "May this never be!"</p> <p><sup>17</sup> Jesus looked directly at them and asked, "Then what is the meaning of that which is written:</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">"The stone the builders rejected has become the capstone?" <sup>18</sup></p> <p>Everyone who falls on that stone will be broken to pieces, but he on whom it falls will be crushed."</p> <p><sup>19</sup> The teachers of the law and the chief priests looked for a way to arrest him immediately, because they knew he had spoken this parable against them. But they were afraid of the people.</p>	

2. Next, use this chart to **interpret some key observations**.

a. Select a few of your observations & questions from pages 2-3 that you find most interesting or important. Rewrite these below, and interpret and apply them using the columns to the right.

b. For each observation, begin to interpret by asking yourself these kinds of questions:

- What does it mean?
- Why is this important?
- What does this tell me about the Father? Jesus? The Holy Spirit?
- Are there other scriptures that could help me understand this?

<b>Observation</b> What does it say?	<b>Interpretation</b> What does it mean?

3. Now consider how you can **apply** the Word to your life. Look for:

- **S**ins to avoid
- **P**romises to believe
- **E**xamples to follow (remember "SPECK")
- **C**ommands to obey
- **K**nowledge to share

Don't just write things to write them – listen carefully to God's Word and what he seems to be teaching you, and look for relevant things that you're truly stirred to do. Then as you do them, God will help you learn, grow, and help others grow.

<b>Application</b> How do I apply what it means?

**Look Closer:**

4.a. Where does the authority of the chief priests, teachers of the law, and the elders come from? How did John the Baptist and Jesus' credentials compare with those of the formal religious leaders.

b. Where did John the Baptist get his authority (or calling) to baptize? (see Mark 1:2, Luke 3:2, John 1:6) What was his role as it related to Christ's ministry? (see Mark 1:2-9, Acts 19:4)

c. If John's baptism was not from God, what would that have implied about Jesus? On the other hand, if it was from God, what would that mean? (review Mark 1:2-13)

d. Why were the religious leaders unable to hear or acknowledge Jesus' authority? (See Luke 7:29-30)

5. The vineyard imagery Jesus uses is from an Old Testament song.

a. Read Isaiah 5:1-7. What is Isaiah using this song to foretell?

b. Now read Matthew 21:33-44 and note the similarities with Isa 5:1-7. The religious leaders Jesus was addressing were very familiar with Isaiah 5 and its vineyard imagery. What meaning would the similarity between Jesus' parable and the judgment song in Isaiah have conveyed to the religious leaders as they listened to Jesus?

6. What similarities do you notice between Jesus' confrontation in Luke 20:1-19 and the confrontation described in Acts 4:1-12?

7. How is Jesus like a stumbling stone to those who do not have faith? (consider Isaiah 8:11-15, Luke 2:34-35, Romans 9:30-33)

8. What was the nature and purpose of a cornerstone in biblical times? Why is this metaphor used to describe Christ's nature and purpose?

9. Read Isaiah 28:16 and then 1 Peter 2:4-12. How can we live with Christ as the cornerstone of our lives?

10. In what ways does your life reflect your acceptance of Christ's authority? In what ways do you feel you tend to resist or reject his authority over your life? Is there a specific way you could work on better submitting to Christ's authority?

### **Capstone Prayer**

11. Psalms 112-118 were sung as part of the Passover festivities, so they were fresh in the disciples' minds during the events we are studying. Recall also that Psalm 118:26 was among the choruses of praise during the triumphal entry (Luke 19:38). And now Jesus himself quotes Psalm 118:22 in this week's passage. With this rich history as a backdrop, use Psalm 118:22-29 as a template for your own "capstone" prayer as you close this time of study.

<sup>22</sup> The stone the builders rejected has become the capstone;

<sup>23</sup> the LORD has done this, and it is marvelous in our eyes.

<sup>24</sup> This is the day the LORD has made; let us rejoice and be glad in it.

<sup>25</sup> O LORD, save us; O LORD, grant us success.

<sup>26</sup> Blessed is he who comes in the name of the LORD.  
From the house of the LORD we bless you.

<sup>27</sup> The LORD is God, and he has made his light shine upon us.  
With boughs in hand, join in the festal procession up to the horns of the altar.

<sup>28</sup> You are my God, and I will give you thanks; you are my God,  
and I will exalt you.

<sup>29</sup> Give thanks to the LORD, for he is good; his love endures forever. (Psalm 118:22-29)