

# Glad Tidings

“And we bring you good tidings of the promise made unto the fathers...” (Acts 13:32)

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## Answering A Question With A Question

(Jerry Fite)

When Jesus entered Jerusalem, He cleansed the temple of the money changers, while healing the blind and the lame (*Matthew 21:12-17*). The next day, the chief priests and the elders of the people approached Jesus in the temple and asked Him, “By what authority doest thou these things? And who gave thee this authority?” (*Matthew 21:23*). Jesus responded with, “I will also ask you one question, which if ye will tell me, I likewise will tell you by what authority I do these things. The baptism of John, whence was it? from heaven or from men?” (*Matthew 21:24-25*).

Jesus was not trying to avoid the question, but was penetrating the insincere and hypocritical hearts of his inquirers. If they answer John’s baptism derived its authority from God in heaven, would they not, if sincere, submit to the baptism administered by John? We know they refused John’s baptism (*Luke 7:30*). Therefore, the only logical alternative in the question is they must think John’s baptism was from

man, an admission they do not want to make publically. Now, their hypocrisy is exposed, for the multitude viewed John as a prophet from God. They feared the multitude more than they revered God. Therefore, they refuse to answer Jesus’ question.

If Jesus answered their question, would it draw them to the authoritative Christ? Their own thinking process revealed that they were not really interested in God’s authority. So, Jesus did not entertain them with an answer regarding His well established authority.

Some put Christians on the spot by asking leading questions. This can be a difficult experience for young Christians who are striving to stand for the Truth of God’s Word. For example, when teenage girls are dressing modestly, with shamefastness and sobriety as God directs (*I Timothy 2:9*); their friends at school may not understand why they are not wearing short-shorts like the majority of girls, including themselves. When they receive a Scriptural answer, they may not

like it. Instead of conforming to God’s standard for women professing godliness through good works, they begin to accuse and ask leading questions.

Tell me, what do you think of what that girl over there is wearing? I believe you are judgmental!

Jesus’ example may help. Ask them questions to help them see themselves. “Judgmental” means one is hasty and harsh in passing judgment on another. Ask them, “Are you not being judgmental toward me by your charge that I am judgmental?” You tell me, “Do you think that girl is dressing according to the standard of *I Timothy 2:9*?”

A sincere heart may want the meaning of these terms; an insincere heart will just turn away. But the pressure of judging righteous judgment is on them, not you (*John 7:24*). Sometimes these situations arise because your example, not your words, is condemning another’s adornment. Thanks for being God’s light in a dark world (*Phil. 2:15*)!