

## Christ the Cornerstone

### Luke Series #50

Luke 20:1-18

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February 9, 2014

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Well, it is a joy and privilege to be with you once again today. I'm really grateful to be able to be here in this place with you and continuing our study in the book of Luke. I missed quite a bit, but we're so thankful for the internet. We're able to stay up with the series and it's been a blessing to me. I just want to say thank you to the church for your support of our ministry and the calling that God has in our lives to travel the continent of Africa training pastors. I appreciate that so much! Now, I will actually be with you again next Sunday before I take off again for Uganda, Tanzania, Ethiopia and other countries in Africa

I look forward to traveling with Pastor David at the end of March as we go to the Ukraine. It's not quite Africa, but it's still a great opportunity for us to partner together in serving that part of the world where we've been in partnership with the church in Poltava for many years. So we're looking forward to that time together, but I just thank you so much. It's a joy.

As Pastor David said, we are in Luke 20 this morning. We have the privilege to engage once again with the ministry of Jesus, an authoritative ministry that is not recognized. It is often questioned. But it's an authoritative ministry and we must recognize what it means to be a faithful follower of Jesus Christ because of Who He is. He is Lord of all! So I pray that we will be reminded of that today and will engage in a new and fresh way in the context of Luke 20.

Let me read Luke 20 this morning. You follow along as we read the first 19 verses of Luke 20.

*One day, as Jesus was teaching the people in the temple and preaching the gospel, the chief priests and the scribes with the elders came up and said to him, "Tell us by what authority you do these things, or who it is that gave you this authority." He answered them, "I also will ask you a question. Now tell me, was the baptism of John from heaven or from man?" And they discussed it with one another, saying, "If we say, 'From heaven,' he will say, 'Why did you not believe him?' But if we say, 'From man,' all the people will stone us to death, for they are convinced that John was a prophet." So they answered that they did not know where it came from. And Jesus said to them, "Neither will I tell you by what authority I do these things."*

*And he began to tell the people this parable: "A man planted a vineyard and let it out to tenants and went into another country for a long while.*

*When the time came, he sent a servant to the tenants, so that they would give him some of the fruit of the vineyard. But the tenants beat him and sent him away empty-handed. And he sent another servant. But they also beat and treated him shamefully, and sent him away empty-handed. And he sent yet a third. This one also they wounded and cast out. Then the owner of the vineyard said, 'What shall I do? I will send my beloved son; perhaps they will respect him.' But when the tenants saw him, they said to themselves, 'This is the heir. Let us kill him, so that the inheritance may be ours.' And they threw him out of the vineyard and killed him. What then will the owner of the vineyard do to them? He will come and destroy those tenants and give the vineyard to others." When they heard this, they said, "Surely not!" But he looked directly at them and said, "What then is this that is written:*

*"The stone that the builders rejected  
has become the cornerstone"?*

*Everyone who falls on that stone will be broken to pieces, and when it falls on anyone, it will crush him."*

*The scribes and the chief priests sought to lay hands on him at that very hour, for they perceived that he had told this parable against them, but they feared the people.*

Will you join me in prayer?

Our Father, as we come to this passage in the ministry of the Lord Jesus Christ we thank You for the privilege to have Your Words and His life. I pray, through the power of Your Spirit, that You will engage us through Your Word, that we will be drawn into Your message and that we will hear clearly what You have for us today. We believe that the Word of God speaks mightily. We know that the flesh profits nothing; it's the Word of God that quickens and makes the truth alive. And we pray today that Your Spirit would do so in our lives. I thank You, Lord Jesus, for what You will do. We will be sure to give You the glory, for You are worthy to receive it all. In Your name we pray. Amen.

Now, our text picks up right where we left off last week. In Luke 19, we saw Jesus riding into Jerusalem, receiving praise. The people are crying out, "Hosanna! Blessed is He Who comes in the name of the Lord!" He does not apologize for receiving that praise. He willingly receives the praise but the scribes and Pharisees tell Him to tell His disciples to be quiet. Jesus says, "No. If I tell them to be quiet, the very stones will cry out" (Luke 19:40). Jesus knows He is worthy.

Then He comes into the temple and cleanses it. He demonstrates His authority to set His Father's house in order. They had made it a den of thieves and He says, "This is to be a house of prayer." Jesus taught with authority.

As it says in verse 28, the people are hanging on His words. Can you see it? Can you see the people listening, sensing the power of His message? They're engaged. They recognize that this is not your

typical temple message. Who does this type of thing? But look at the chief priests and the scribes and the principle people in verse 47: They “were seeking to destroy Him.” Do you see that word?

Incorporated here in chapters 20 and 21, we see that one day shortly after this is probably the last full day of Jesus’ public ministry. This is His last day of public work. Do you ever think of your last day at work? What do you usually do on your last day at work? I’ve had a few transitions in my life. My last day is usually greeting people, slapping people on the back, good ol’ days, eating some cake and having some punch. That’s usually my last day at work. .

Jesus is fully committed to the very thing He was called to do. Look what He is doing. He’s teaching the people in the temple and preaching the gospel. Now, look at this. He’s in the temple, the place where God has brought the people together to worship Him. But here the scribes and Pharisees and this whole gathering of the Sanhedrin are saying, “What is this Jesus doing?”

You see, the temple was everything in their lives. It was their cultural identity, their racial identity, their political identity, and, yes, even their religious identity. Everything they believed in was held, as it were, in an inverted pyramid upon the temple. And here’s Jesus preaching the gospel. The leaders are becoming more and more angry all the time about the ministry of Jesus. They’re sensing they’re losing control of what is taking place in temple gatherings. They want to destroy Him, as we see in verse 47.

Can you imagine someone coming into your house, rearranging your furniture, giving you different instructions than you typically follow and then changing dinner menu? Who do they think they are? What type of person walks into someone else’s house and changes everything around? Did you ever have that type of person visit your home? Perhaps she was your mother-in-law. It takes someone with a lot of confidence to do that.

I’m married to one such person. About a year ago, there was a restaurant downtown. They were excited about their new establishment being opened and Lynn went to see this new place. When she went there, she determined that the way they had their tables and chairs was somewhat sterile and cold, like an airport. It was supposed to be a coffee shop and she was sensing it should have been more of a community place, a cozy type of arena. So she went to the person at the counter and asked, “Would you mind if I rearranged your furniture here?” The poor, young girl didn’t know what to do, so she said, “I...well...sure. Go ahead.” So Lynn busily reorganized all the furniture in the establishment and she felt really good about it. She came home and told me about it and said, “Yeah, it really looks good! I can’t wait to take you there and show you what it looks like.” So we go there to visit and what do you think happened when I walked in? It looked just like it was before Lynn did her rearranging.

You see, Lynn thought she had authority but she didn’t. She has that authority in our home. [I’m sure there was no doubt in your minds about that.] But what type of person does this? Lynn wants me to

tell you that place is no longer in business. I don't know why she wanted me to add that; I think if they had listened to her they would probably still be in business.

But, you know, the temple people are no longer in business either, are they? They don't want to listen to Jesus. They think they need to remove Jesus from this whole idea of being in the temple. And what is this with Jesus preaching the gospel? Is it uncommon for Jesus to preach the gospel, especially in the book of Luke?

Ten times it's mentions that He's preaching the good news or the gospel.

- We see it first in Luke 2, when the announcement of His birth comes. To whom does it say He will bring good news? All people.
- He was baptized by the Spirit of God Who came upon Him in Luke 4. Verse 18 says, "He came upon Me to [what?] preach the gospel."
- And listen to what He says later in verse 43: *"I must preach the good news of the kingdom of God to the other towns as well; for I was sent for this purpose."*

See, the gospel was really important to Jesus, and, even on the last day of His public ministry, we find Him in the place of worship—in the place where He's preaching and teaching people about the good news of Jesus Christ. Now, many times we get excited about preaching the gospel because the gospel brings salvation to all who believe (Romans 1:16). In this passage of Scripture, we see the good news being preached but look what we see in verse 18: *"Everyone who falls on that stone will be broken to pieces, and when it falls on anyone, it will crush him."*

You see, that is the gospel message. The gospel message is the good news that Jesus came to save sinners (Mark 2:17). But it's also a warning for all those who do not believe. "You will be crushed. There's judgment coming." We don't hear much judgment in our preaching these days. The gospel message warns people of judgment to come. It gives them hope in the gospel that Jesus saves sinners and it warns them that judgment is coming.

The gospel is worth preaching. We believe in it, don't we? We believe that the gospel saves people. Would God find us faithful? It might be our last day. Would we be preaching the gospel on our last day? On our deathbed? Have you seen that person who's preaching the gospel on their very last day of life? Would we preach the gospel?

I want us to understand that, even though Jesus is being challenged about His authority, He still has compassion for them with the gospel. We see this group from the Sanhedrin. They are the authoritative individuals in the temple. They are the representatives of the ruling authority within Israel. This would be like the President, members of Congress and a delegation from the Supreme Court. They're coming and they want to ask Jesus a question, which is the key to unlocking this passage. Look with me in verse two: *"Tell us by what authority you do these things, or who it is that gave you this authority."*

“Jesus, who gave You the authority to do these things?” What things? The things we just previously mentioned: preaching with authority, cleansing the temple and receiving praise from the people. You see, they want to challenge Jesus. It’s a conflict between two authorities and this passage is filled with controversy. That’s what our news media loves nowadays—controversy. We are peering into this controversy, into this conflict between authorities.

I’m sure that each of us has had some issue with authority in our own life, haven’t we? Think of the times you’ve had a run-in with the police department, a run-in with a parent, and so forth and so on. But would you ever have issues within the church?

I remember when I was a youth pastor about 27 years ago. As the youth pastor I had a role to fulfill, responsibilities to steward and authority to execute my plans. But there was one lesson that I had not yet learned and it’s that we all serve under authority. So how was I going to learn this lesson? Our youth group needed to be at this camp at two in the afternoon but had a 14-hour drive. I decided that if we left at midnight, we would get there at two in the afternoon. It would be a perfect plan; we’d get there on time.

Well, the senior pastor heard of this plan. He thought that he would share some of his thoughts about my plan. He was the senior pastor and I was the youth pastor. He said, “I think that you should leave earlier. I don’t want the parents coming at midnight and then having to travel back home. If the young people came around 9 o’clock, you could load up the vans and maybe leave a little earlier. I think it would be better for everyone.” And in all of my wisdom 27 years ago, I said, “I thank you for your opinion; I’ll take that into consideration.”

I know you can’t imagine me saying that, can you? Well, I was learning my lesson about authority. I’ll never forget what he said. He said, “This is not a suggestion. I’m telling you what to do.” I changed my response to, “It’s a great plan. I wish I had thought of it.” I quickly learned a lesson that we are all under authority.

These Jewish leaders had authority but they did not recognize their insignificance in light of the significance of Jesus’ authority. They wanted to hold on to theirs. They didn’t want Him to be King, so they were going to reject Him. They assumed that they were the ones who had supreme authority and they wanted to keep it that way.

You know, this is an important question for us today as we continue looking at this idea of authority. Some of us are fully devoted followers of Jesus Christ. We are excited about worshipping together, hearing the Word of God preached and participating in the Lord’s Table. We have come prepared, ready and eager. We are all in. He is all-in-all; He is our cornerstone.

But some of us are on the proverbial roller coaster of faith. We find that we have our ups and downs. We are not consistent in prayer and the study of the Word of God or participating with God’s people. We struggle with having a heart for the lost. We are not even sure that we always want Him to be

in charge of things in our lives. There are many days when we want to be the boss; we want to hold onto our leadership and our influence.

Lastly, there are probably some folks who find themselves knowing about a historical Jesus and knowing that He did great things, but maybe they don't really see the point of His life, death and resurrection. Why would you ever submit to Him as your King and your Lord?

I'm sure that there are individuals who represent all three of these categories when it comes to the authority of Jesus in our lives but Jesus faithfully unpacks and answers the question about His authority in three progressive, gospel-centered reasons why we must submit to Him.

### **A Shrewd & Challenging Question**

The first way He answers this question is by asking a shrewd and challenging question in return. I say shrewd because it's very provocative. It is very smart, if you would. Look what He says in verse three: *"He answered them [they asked Him a question about who gave Him this authority], 'I also will ask you a question. Now tell me, was the baptism of John from heaven or from man?'"*

Simple questions. They ask Him a simple one; He asks them a simple one. Now, many people think Jesus is being somewhat coy or evasive or slippery, but He's actually using a rabbinical style of dialogue. When you are asked a question, a good thing to do is respond with a question. Why does that help? It helps you get to the very point, or motive, behind the original question and that is what Jesus is trying to do. He's trying to expose the motive behind their question.

Now you see, Jesus and these leaders know the historical, civil and religious significance of John the Baptist. He is that man out in the wilderness, wearing these weird clothes, eating this weird food and preaching a message of repentance. Well, John had many followers and they knew John fulfilled the spirit of Malachi in the coming of a forerunner. They knew that John linked himself to Jesus when he said in John 1:29, *"Behold! The Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!"*

He said, "We're linked together." So whatever you say about Jesus, Jesus and John are linked together. The bottom line is they were embarrassed about this prophet out there in the wilderness. The response reveals their heart and motive behind the question they ask. Look what they do in verse five: *"And they discussed it with one another, saying, 'If we say, 'From heaven,' he will say, 'Why did you not believe him?' But if we say, 'From man,' all the people will stone us to death, for they are convinced that John was a prophet.'"*

You see, instead of just giving an answer, they first took a poll before they took a position. That's what our politicians often do, don't they? "Let's go out and poll the people then we can

decide which way we're going to go." That's what's taking place here. They take a poll before they take a position.

They say, "Oh, from heaven? Then why didn't you believe?" Jesus exposed this earlier in Luke 7:28. He said, "*I tell you, among those born of women none is greater than John.*" Wow! Listen to what Jesus goes on to say in Luke 7:28: "*Yet the one who is least in the kingdom of God is greater than he.* [That's you and me.] (*When all the people heard this, and the tax collectors too, they declared God just [God is right! That is a true statement], having been baptized with the baptism of John...*)". They were all in. They were with John. They believed what Jesus was saying about John.

But listen to what the Pharisees said: "*(... but the Pharisees and the lawyers rejected the purpose of God for themselves, not having been baptized by him.)*" They stood back, separated by the crowds. You see them everywhere: Jesus, the crowds and the spiritual leaders. The crowds are the buffer between Jesus and the spiritual leaders. The crowd is always being used to keep them separated. We saw it in Luke 19:47 where it says, "*The chief priests and the scribes and the principal men of the people were seeking to destroy him, but they did not find anything they could do, for all the people were hanging on his words.*"

Here in verse 19, they are once again afraid of the people. There's a buffer. All they need to do is get the people on their side. We know the rest of the story. These people no longer say, "Hosanna!" What do they say at the end of the week? "Crucify Him! Crucify Him! Crucify Him!"

They feel trapped. "So, if we say 'yes,' the people will stone us." The best thing they can do to save face is to answer, "We don't know. We don't know if it's from heaven or from men."

Now, I don't know about you but how does that work? When people under your authority come to you as a leader and ask you a real question and you say, "I don't know," does that really bolster confidence in you and your leadership? The truth of the matter is they lacked integrity.

Remember Sergeant Shultz on Hogan's Heroes? He said, "I know nothing. I know nothing," but the whole time he knew everything. The Pharisees are doing this here. They're saying that they know nothing but they didn't want to reveal their hearts. Their very answer lacked integrity. Jesus is not asking this question to expose the fact that this was not a real question but because this was something they made up to confront Jesus on His authority because they wanted to kill them.

What did it reveal about them? It revealed that they were really politicians and not shepherds. Folks, what do we need in our church? We need shepherds and not politicians. Expose politics in church. We need leaders who are shepherds. Praise God for our leaders, for they are good shepherds. We want leaders who are not cowards but men of faith. These Pharisees were cowards, not men of faith. We want men who will fear God, not people. These Pharisees feared men and did not have the fear of God. We want leaders who are humble, not proud and embarrassed to say what is right. At the end of the day, these guys claim, “We’re agnostic, really. We don’t know what to believe. We don’t know what right is.”

I think we can learn something about the gospel ministry the way Jesus confronts these leaders. Questions can be powerful tools to get to the heart of individuals. Ask questions.

Remember when God says to Adam in the garden, “Adam, where are you?” What was Adam’s response? Did his response get right to the heart of the issue? No.

Adam says, “I heard You coming and I was afraid.”

“Well, you were not afraid the last time I came, why are you afraid now?”

“We’re afraid because we’re naked.”

“Naked? How did you find out you were naked?” God gets to the point here. “Did you eat of the tree I told you not to eat of?”

Adam still doesn’t answer, does he? “That woman You gave me...”

A question is a great, penetrating way to engage people in the truth of where they are.

Just recently, we had a young salesman come to our house. I was working in my office and I could hear Lynn and this young man talking. I thought, “Hey, why don’t I go out and see if I can engage in a gospel conversation?” So out of the blue I just jump in there and ask, “So, do you go to church?”

The young man says, “Well, I go to church sometimes.”

I said, “You know, going to church is not really the main issue, is it?”

He goes, “No, no, it’s not the real issue.”

I said, “Do you know God?”

He said, “Yeah, I know God.”

I said, “Do you? Do you know God about the same way you know me? You know me because you know my name and address. You came to my house and you’re sitting at my table.

But does that mean that you and I have a deep, intimate relationship with one another? No, it doesn't, does it?"

He said, "Wow, how did you get to the heart of the issue so quickly?"

I said, "Questions do that."

Pray for that young man. Some of you interact with him; ask me later who he is. I told him he could come to my door any time if he wants to know how he can have a personal relationship with Jesus Christ.

Don't be afraid of the answers you don't know. Ask questions. Reveal where people are. What is the real heart behind why they do what they do? At the end of the day, these religious leaders did not have a problem with education. It was an issue of rebellion. "*While we were still sinners, Christ died for us*" (Romans 5:8). These men were rebelling against God and His plan and Person—the Lord Jesus Himself. They wanted to be in control; they did not want to relinquish their authority.

So Jesus points them to the gospel. The message of John was: "Repent! Repent! The Lamb of God Who forgives the sin of the world is coming" (John 1:29). Jesus gives them the message of the gospel through the ministry of John.

### **A Stimulating Story Filled with Symbolic Expressions**

The second way He answers their question about His authority is by telling them a stimulating story filled with symbolic expressions. It's a story that reaches out and grabs you. You are engaged immediately.

Most parables are told to make one point. This parable is filled with allegory, meaning there are many symbols and meanings. So let's quickly look at this parable that Jesus shares with us.

Jesus said, "A man planted a vineyard..." (Luke 20:9) Immediately, in the Jewish mind, a flag goes up. The vineyard always meant the children of Israel (Isaiah 5:7). The vineyard was about the Israelites. And who would've been the man who planted that vineyard? It would have been God Himself. So we see this first symbol being God and the vineyard being Israel itself.

Then we see these tenants. They were the Jewish people who were to be a light to the nations. They were to be a blessing to the nations and they were to occupy the land until the

owner—God—would return. But we see what these tenants do when the servants—the prophets of God—come. They progressively abuse these servants.

The first servant comes and they beat him up, sending him out empty-handed. The second one comes and they mistreat him. They beat him and send him out shamefully, probably stripped of his clothes. Then they abused the third one even more deeply with a beating severe enough to cause a wound. And then they cast him out.

Who would these servants be? They were the prophets who came crying and weeping and preaching to the people of Israel. Stephen makes this very clear in his sermon in Acts 7:51-52. He said, *“You stiff-necked people, uncircumcised in heart and ears, you always resist the Holy Spirit. As your fathers did, so do you. Which of the prophets did your fathers not persecute? And they killed those who announced beforehand the coming of the Righteous One, whom you have now betrayed and murdered...”*

He’s confronting them, saying, “You murdered the Chosen One Who was coming. You persecuted and killed the prophets who came before Him.” Why do you think they’re listening to this parable? It’s stimulating; it’s engaging; it’s full of symbolism.

But look what He says in verse 13: *“Then the owner of the vineyard said, ‘What shall I do? I will send my beloved son.’”* Have we ever heard this phrase, “beloved son”? He says, “I’m going to send My beloved Son and surely they will listen to Him.” This is none other than Jesus Himself—Jesus making several parallelisms about the present-day situation and Israel. It’s a clear allusion to the coming, imminent death of Jesus on the cross.

This is serious. He’s sending His Son, saying, “It’s come to this. I can’t send another servant. Surely, they’ll listen to my beloved Son.” What do they do? When they saw Him coming, they said, “Let us kill Him. Let us kill the Son.”

He said, “I’ve sent My Son to be the Ambassador but now the people who are supposed to be owning and running My vineyard are going to kill Him.” So they threw Him out of the vineyard, took Him out of the city and killed Him. This is the very thing they would do in just a few short days; they took Him to Golgotha and killed Him outside the city. The tenants killed the Son.

Martin Luther said, “If I were God and they had treated me this way, I would kick the retched thing into pieces.” But we see that judgment is coming and look who else is here. Verse

16 says, “*He [the owner, God] will come and destroy those tenants [the Israelites, the whole Jewish system] and give the vineyard to others.*”

Who’s the “other”? It’s the church. It’s the new temple. Jesus said, “*Destroy this temple, and in three days, I will raise it up*” (John 2:19). Jesus said that He is the Temple of God.

We can see throughout the books of Acts and Romans the grafting in of the Gentiles. In Ephesians, the dividing wall is broken down (2:14). There are no longer two people; all the people have become one. In Galatians, there’s no Jew or Greek, no bond or free, male or female (3:28). We are all one in Christ. We are the “others” that Jesus is proclaiming here in Luke 20.

This is the allegory of love—persistent, pursuing love. Servant after servant was sent, then God sent His Son, Jesus. “This is the way of Jesus,” Charles Spurgeon said.

“If you reject Him, He answers you with tears. If you wound Him, He bleeds out cleansing. If you kill Him, He dies to redeem. If you bury Him, He rises, bringing resurrection. He is love to make manifest. How amazing Jesus’ whole purpose was to die for the very ones who refused to recognize His authority.”

He’s coming. He’s coming again. He’s coming with His Word. He’s coming with His Spirit. He’s coming with His people. He’s coming with His Table if we submit to His authority. Do we submit to His authority?

Telling stories is a powerful way to do gospel ministry. I trust that you’ll learn to be a good storyteller—a good storyteller of the gospel story. I trust you’ll be a good storyteller of your own salvation story. You see, stories have a way of engaging us. If I were to say to you, “Let me tell you a story about a time when I was...” what happens to your body? You relax. You put your pen down and start to learn forward. You find yourself engaged. Good storytellers have a way of making words come alive, don’t they?

How effective was Jesus at this? Look at verse 16: “*When they heard this, they said, ‘Surely not!’ But he looked directly at them and said...*” They were engaged. They cried out, “*Surely not! Don’t give it to another!*”

## **A Scriptural Interpretation of the Cornerstone**

This leads us to the third way that Jesus answers the question: by giving a Scriptural interpretation of the Cornerstone. He gives us an interpretation. He first engages them in gospel conversation through questions, then he engages them with gospel conversation in story, and now

he engages them in gospel conversation in the Word. What a great pattern for us to follow!  
Engage people with questions; engage them with story; engage them with the Word.

Jesus shares this passage with them from Psalm 118. They know it well; they were just singing it a few days earlier. It is a messianic psalm, a psalm of ascent. When you are going to worship and on your way to the temple, you're crying, "Hosanna! Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord!" (Matthew 21:9; Mark 11:9; John 12:13). You're full of hope when you go to the temple. You're looking for the Messiah.

Now He takes this passage from Psalm 118:22 and says, "*The stone that the builders rejected has become the cornerstone.*" Well, they had an interpretation of that. They thought they were the rejected ones and that God would bring them back together as they were rejected from other nations. They thought He would pull them together to make them the cornerstone but Jesus is telling them this: "*Everyone who falls on that stone will be broken to pieces, and when it falls on anyone, it will crush him.*"

You see, that is judgment. When you submit to this rejected Cornerstone, Who is Jesus, you come broken. No one comes to Jesus whole. We come broken. And if you do not submit to Jesus, what's He going to do? He will crush you.

Acts 4:8b-11 makes this very clear. When Peter was preaching about the healing of the lame beggar, they asked him, "By whose power do you do this?" And Peter, filled with the Spirit of God, said:

*"Rulers of the people and elders, if we are being examined today concerning a good deed done to a crippled man, by what means this man has been healed, let it be known to all of you and to all the people of Israel that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom you crucified, whom God raised from the dead—by him this man is standing before you well. This Jesus is the stone that was rejected by you, the builders, which has become the cornerstone."*

Peter makes it very clear. He says, "You were the builders. You rejected this Cornerstone. It was thrown away and now the Chief Builder has come, brought in the Cornerstone and Jesus is building His church. He is the Cornerstone."

We're going to come to Jesus, one way or the other. We are going to come to Him broken, receiving the good news, or we are going to come to Him in judgment. Every knee will bow and every tongue will confess that Jesus is Lord (Philippines 2:9-11).

Luke 20:19 says, “*The scribes and the chief priests sought to lay hands on him at that very hour, for they perceived that he had told this parable against them, but they feared the people.*”

What is your attitude today about the authority of Christ? As we come to the Lord’s Table, He welcomes each one of us who knows Him, each one of us who has visited the cross and each one of us who has laid his or her life down and submitted to Him—broken and contrite before Him. Do you believe that His beloved Son Who was killed is the One Who gives life? Do you believe Him?

This is the basic message of the gospel: that God created man to relate with Him but man disobeyed in sin. God, in His mercy, became sin for us (2 Corinthians 5:21) through the Lord Jesus and died a death that we should have died. Do you believe? Do you believe Christ, the Cornerstone?

My hope is built on nothing less  
Than Jesus’ blood and righteousness.

(My Hope is Built by Edward Mote, 1834)

Do you believe? Who’s in charge?

Father, help us, we pray. We say with our words that You are our all-in-all. We say it with our lives, our thoughts and our intents? I pray, Lord Jesus, that You would expose us as we come to Your Table. I pray that we would come with clean hands and a pure heart to worship You. In Your name, we pray. Amen.

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