

MATTHEW



STUDY GUIDE

Introduction:

How would you describe your general relationship with or response to authority?

Share a few stories about:

- Who is someone whose authority you deeply trusted and respected? Why?
- Who is someone whose authority you did not trust or respect? Why?
- How have your experiences with different types of authority (inherent vs. delegated) shaped your view of authority in general?

Matthew 21:18-27

This text had two sections: The Cursing of the Fig Tree, The Chief Priests Question Jesus Authority. Here is the summary of the main idea of each section:

- The cursing of the fig tree was a condemnation of any person, system, or structure that kept people from a life-giving relationship with God.
- The promise that our prayers could “Cause the mountain to be thrown into the sea” was a promise that God’s kingdom would overcome any unjust or ungodly system in our world.
- Jesus’ refusal to answer the question about his authority was ultimately an invitation for all people to wrestle themselves with the question of his authority.
- It must be noted that people are most likely to resist or reject Jesus’ authority in precisely the place they are most comfortable or powerful.

What part of this passage was most compelling or convicting to you? Why?

YOUR MOVE

"What is your relationship with the authority of Jesus?" Take some time to consider this question honestly.

Are there areas of your life where you readily submit to Jesus' authority? Where do you resist it? Why?

Is your relationship with Jesus influenced more by his inherent authority, or by your experience of it?

Do you have a direct relationship with Jesus that influences your understanding of his authority, or do you primarily rely on secondhand information?