

do these things” (Matthew 21:23-27). He blatantly declined to answer the question posed Him by the chief priests and elders until those men answered His own question. Irrational people would call this a deflection, but the Lord set about to be sure a fair interaction would ensue before giving them what they demanded. Since they were unwilling to state their own belief, Jesus was not obliged to continue the conversation.

Jesus rejected the premise of questions that presumed upon error. *“His disciples asked Him, saying, ‘Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?’ Jesus answered, ‘Neither this man nor his parents sinned’”* (John 9:2-3). The inquisitors were His own people; they were not laying a trap, but they were mistaken. So, the Teacher refused them an A or B reply because both options were incorrect. The question presented a logical fallacy called the False Dichotomy whereby two choices are presented as the only choices available while other possibilities exist. Jesus knew better.

“The Sadducees, who say there is no resurrection, came to Him and asked Him, saying: ‘Teacher, Moses said that if a man dies, having no children, his brother shall marry his wife and raise up offspring for his brother. Now there were with us seven brothers. The first died after he had married, and having no offspring, left his wife to his brother. Likewise the second also, and the third, even to the seventh. Last of all the woman died also. Therefore, in the resurrection, whose wife of the seven will she be? For they all had her.’ Jesus answered and said to them, ‘You are mistaken, not knowing the Scriptures nor the power of God. For in the resurrection they neither marry nor are given in marriage’” (Matthew 22:23-30). The Sadducees concocted a scenario they were sure would disprove the resurrection, laying a “Gotcha” trap for Jesus, but He would have none of it! Instead, He told them they did not know what they were talking about.

Jesus ignored some questions! *“The scribes and Pharisees brought to Him a woman caught in adultery. And when they had set her in the midst, they said to Him, ‘Teacher, this woman was caught in adultery, in the very act. Now Moses, in the law, commanded us that such should be stoned. But what do You say?’ This they said, testing Him, that they might have something of which to accuse Him. But Jesus stooped down and wrote on the ground with His finger, as though He did not hear”* (John 8:3-6). Christ was not about to justify this adulteress (Exodus 20:14), nor would He condemn her in the absence

“THE PLANK IN YOUR OWN EYE”

Dylan Stewart

What we are witnessing in politics right now is something I have watched happen in the church my entire life. People are quick to call out the sins of the “other side”, but remain quiet about the sins present in their own house. In politics, people loudly condemn the lies, corruption, and immorality of the opposing party, yet excuse or ignore the same behavior when it comes from their own side. It should be no surprise then that the same thing often happens in the church. Brethren point out the doctrinal errors and immorality in other congregations while refusing to expose the problems present in their own church.

Jesus condemned this attitude when He said, *“And why do you look at the speck in your brother’s eye, but do not consider the plank in your own eye? ...First remove the plank from your own eye, and then you will see clearly to remove the speck from your brother’s eye”* (Matthew 7:3–5). Here, the Lord condemned holding others to a standard we refuse to apply to ourselves, the very thing we see happening both in politics and throughout our churches.

Integrity requires holding everyone to the same standard (Deuteronomy 1:17). If you are going to call out lies, corruption, and immorality in one group, you must be just as willing to call it out among your own group – that’s true both in politics and in religion. Otherwise, your criticism is not about truth or righteousness; it is simply about loyalty to a side. And shame on us if we are merely fighting for a side rather than fighting for the truth! As Paul wrote, *“For we can do nothing against the truth, but for the truth”* (2nd Corinthians 13:8).

Whether in the church or in politics, righteous judgment requires honesty, consistency, and the courage to confront sin wherever it appears, **especially** when the sin exists on “our side”. The moment we excuse sin in our own camp while condemning it in other camps, we stop serving truth and start serving ourselves. If you’ve ever wondered why we fail so often in converting unbelievers, maybe it’s because they see the blatant hypocrisy.

"WHAT MUST I DO TO BE SAVED?"

ACTS 16:30

LEARN THE GOSPEL

John 6:45; Romans 10:17

BELIEVE IN CHRIST

Hebrews 11:6; John 3:16

CONFESS CHRIST

Matthew 10:32-33; Romans 10:9-10

REPENT OF SIN

Acts 3:19; 17:30

BE BAPTIZED INTO CHRIST

Mark 16:16; Romans 6:3-6

REMAIN STEADFAST

1st Corinthians 15:58; Revelation 2:10

"THE ASSEMBLING OF OURSELVES TOGETHER"

HEBREWS 10:24-25

SUNDAY

Worship @ 10:00 a.m.

Studies @ 11:45 a.m.

WEDNESDAY

Studies & Worship @ 7:00 p.m.

THURSDAY

Men's & Ladies' Studies @ 6:20 p.m.

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**Seekers Welcome.
Members Expected.**

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of the adulterer with whom she had been sinning because the Law required the execution of both parties (Deuteronomy 22:22). He knew it was a set-up and He would not fall for the ploy. Scribbling in the dirt was a better use of His time than playing along with the folly.

Jesus understood *"To everything there is a season, a time for every purpose under heaven"* (Ecclesiastes 3:1), including *"a time to keep silence"* (7). Since many questions are insincere, and since many questions are framed so as to elicit a damning reply regardless of the answer given, it can be more prudent to abstain from a response than to become entangled in traps laid by the dishonest.

Recent generations have been deceived into thinking "There are no wrong questions", but there definitely are! Jesus' adversaries and even His disciples proved that, but He exemplified how to deal with them. Take notice.

"WHOLE COUNSEL"

ACTS 20:27

VOLUME 4, ISSUE 10

MARCH 8TH, 2026

YOU NEVER ANSWERED THE QUESTION!

Bryan Matthew Dockens

In the process of discourse, it is not uncommon for one party to set forth a question and then to take umbrage when the opponent's response is an explanation rather than what they would accept as a straightforward Yes-or-No, Either/Or answer. The inquirer might be equally irritated by a reply that is itself a question or for the opponent to simply reject the premise. Almost invariably, the party who put forth the question will accuse the opponent of deflecting and being dishonest because **"You never answered the question!"**

Whether there is integrity in that kind of manufactured indignation will be plain to see when the example of Christ is thoughtfully examined.

Jesus answered questions with other questions. *"The chief priests and the elders of the people confronted Him as He was teaching, and said, 'By what authority are You doing these things? And who gave You this authority?' But Jesus answered and said to them, 'I also will ask you one thing, which if you tell Me, I likewise will tell you by what authority I do these things: The baptism of John — where was it from? From heaven or from men?' And they reasoned among themselves, saying, 'If we say, "From heaven," He will say to us, "Why then did you not believe him?" But if we say, "From men," we fear the multitude, for all count John as a prophet.' So they answered Jesus and said, 'We do not know.' And He said to them, 'Neither will I tell you by what authority I*

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