

Luke 20:39

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Then certain of the scribes answering said, Master, thou hast well said.

Analysis

Then certain of the scribes answering said, Master, thou hast well said (Ἀποκριθέντες δέ τινες τῶν γραμματέων εἶπαν, Διδάσκαλε, καλῶς εἶπας, Apokrithentes de tines tōn grammateōn eipan, Didaskale, kalōs eipas)—After Jesus silenced the Sadducees' resurrection question (20:27-38), some grammateis (scribes), likely Pharisees who believed in resurrection, commend His answer. Kalōs (well, rightly, nobly) acknowledges theological correctness. This is rare approval from religious experts who mostly opposed Him.

Jesus had just demonstrated from Exodus 3:6 ('I am the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob') that patriarchs still live, since God is 'not a God of the dead, but of the living' (20:38). This validated Pharisaic theology against Sadducean denial. The scribes' response shows theological honesty—they acknowledge truth even from an opponent. Yet this approval is limited and self-serving: they're pleased Jesus refuted their rivals, not that they've embraced Him as Messiah.

Historical Context

Pharisees and Sadducees were theological opponents. Pharisees affirmed resurrection, angels, and spirits; Sadducees denied all three (Acts 23:8). Jesus's resurrection argument from the Pentateuch (which Sadducees accepted as most authoritative) was particularly devastating. The scribes' approval, however, didn't translate into following Jesus—they still participated in His arrest and trial.

Related Passages

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Study Questions

1. How can we acknowledge theological truth intellectually without submitting to it personally?
2. What does the scribes' selective approval teach about the danger of using Jesus for our own agenda while rejecting His lordship?
3. When have you agreed with Jesus's teaching in theory but resisted its application to your life?

Interlinear Text

ἀποκριθέντες δέ τινες τῶν γραμματέων εἶπας
answering Then certain G3588 of the scribes said
G611 G1161 G5100 G1122 G2036

Διδάσκαλε καλῶς εἶπας
Master thou hast well said
G1320 G2573 G2036

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