

# ***IT IS SETTLED!***

"Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man" (Ecclesiastes 12:13b)

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*By Howell Lasseter*

## From Heaven, or of Men? (Part 8)

Is it possible to ask the right question for the wrong reason? Luke 10:25-29 records two questions asked of Jesus by a man whom we know only as "a certain lawyer." His first question: "*Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?*" Readers, that is a good question! There is no more vital question that one can ask. But, he did not really want to know the answer. God knew the lawyer's motivation, and records it for us: "*and, tempted him [Jesus]*" (v.25). The lawyer was well educated in the Mosaic Law, and accustomed to answering questions asked by others. He had no problem answering Jesus' questions: "*What is written in the law? how readest thou?*" (v.26.) He correctly replied: "*Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbor as thyself*" (v.27). Jesus commended the lawyer for his answer, and Jesus' reply makes clear the truth that God demands obedience: "*...this **do**, and thou shalt live*" (v.28). Rather than accepting Jesus' answer, the lawyer pressed further. Note that again God records for us the lawyer's motivation: "*But he [the lawyer], willing to justify himself, said unto Jesus, And who is my neighbor?*" (v.29). Bible students will know that Jesus answered the lawyer's question with what is commonly referred to as the "Parable of the Good Samaritan (vs.30-37)." The lawyer correctly answered Jesus' final question: "*which now of these three, thinkest thou, was neighbor to him that fell among the thieves?*" (v.36). The lawyer's reply: "*He that showed mercy on him*" (v.37). Readers, hear Jesus' conclusion: "*Go, and **do** thou likewise*" (v.37). Did the lawyer accept Jesus' teaching and obey it? God has not recorded the answer for us. But we do know the lawyer was not motivated by a sincere desire to know what God wants. He wanted to cause a problem for Jesus.

Today, the Mosaic Law has been replaced by Jesus' New Testament law, and those who attempt to point hearers and readers to the commands therein often face "right questions asked for the wrong reason." The question "What shall I do to inherit eternal life?" is still being asked. And when the New Testament answer is given, it becomes clear the questioner unfortunately is not sincerely seeking God's will, and is unwilling to accept God's commands. Just as the lawyer, the person may raise more questions, possibly even good questions; also just as the lawyer, the goal is for the questioner to attempt to justify himself! Remember that Jesus gave the source of the correct answers: "*What sayeth the law? how readest thou?*" Readers, these are questions for all of us, for when we stand before God in judgment, the criteria will be His law!