

Pastor Dustin Daniels | River Bible Church  
**Mark 11:27-33 | The Infinite Authority of Jesus**  
 June 20, 2021

### WELCOME:

- Please turn your Bibles to Mark 11:27-33
- Bibles in back—our gift to you.

### REVIEW:

Last Sunday, we wrapped up the narrative of the fig tree and learned some vital lessons when it comes to 1) prayer and 2) the false teachings of the prosperity gospel.

### KEYPOINT:

1. A lack of spiritual fruit is a lack of physical life.
2. Faith is believing and trusting in God's ability rather than your human inabilities.
3. There is no power apart from God.

We have no intrinsic, inherent or inborn power of our own. Jesus does. We know this because He tells us in John 5:26. The Father has life in Himself and has granted that His Son have life in Himself as well.

WE SAU Jesus delegate His power to the Apostles.

But we are not Apostles - The Apostolic office is over

4. Doubt refers not to your own faith but doubting God.
5. Your faith will always contain an element of doubt. (No one's faith is perfect.)
6. Forgiveness is the most costly gift to give and the most overwhelming gift to receive.
7. Forgiveness releases them of the sin, and it also frees you of the pain.

Well, that brings us to today's Scripture passage.

## **INTRODUCTION:**

Mark's Gospel now moves into a series of conflicts between Jesus and the religious leaders for the last time.

And these conflicts all deal with the subject of **authority**.

And over the past year of studying the Gospel of Mark, we've learned about the Pharisees, Scribes, and the Sadducees—religious leaders **are** authoritative.

These men have real power.

But to call them “religious leaders” is a bit deceiving because they're not pastors/shepherds.

They are more like politicians, attorneys, and business owners.

At best, you could say that they are “religious businessmen.”

These men certainly didn't like the fact that Jesus came into the temple and disrupted the usual Passover traditions the day prior.

Jesus doesn't like the fact that they made His Father's house into a den of thieves.  
(Mark 11:17)

This is the second time Jesus took control of the temple. (John 2:14)

The first time, Jesus warned the leaders—it was a cleansing.

They didn't listen.

So the second time, three years later, Jesus takes control of the temple not to cleanse it—but to condemn it. He judges it. - Guilty

Why? The Jewish leaders keep doing what they've always done, and they don't realize, recognize—they can't see that they—have no authority among God's people.

They think they do—but it's just an illusion of authority.

Their authority has been transferred to the 12 Apostles. | 12 tribes

So today, we see Jesus square off with these so-called religious leaders.

In this corner, we have Jesus Christ, the Son of Man, and the Son of God...

In the other corner, we have the sons of the devil—See John 8:44.

Today is a classic story of good vs. evil.

Who's going to win the first round...let's find out!

*\*Please stand for the reading and honoring of God's Word.\**

**SCRIPTURE: Mark 11:27-33 CSB**

**Mark 11:27**— They came again to Jerusalem. As he was walking in the temple, the chief priests, the scribes, and the elders came

**Mark 11:28**— and asked him, "By what authority are you doing these things? Who gave you this authority to do these things?"

**Mark 11:29**— Jesus said to them, "I will ask you one question; then answer me, and I will tell you by what authority I do these things.

+ **Mark 11:30**— Was John's baptism from heaven or of human origin? Answer me."

+ **Mark 11:31**— They discussed it among themselves: "If we say, 'From heaven,' he will say, 'Then why didn't you believe him?'"

+ **Mark 11:32**— But if we say, 'Of human origin' "—they were afraid of the crowd, because everyone thought that John was truly a prophet.

+ **Mark 11:33**— So they answered Jesus, "We don't know." And Jesus said to them, "Neither will I tell you by what authority I do these things."

**\*\*These are the very words from God for us this morning.\*\***

+ **PRAY:**

+ **EXEGESIS:**

**Mark 11:27**— They came again to Jerusalem. As he was walking in the temple, the chief priests, the scribes, and the elders came

**They**—Jesus and the Twelve.

This is ~~still~~ Wednesday morning of Passion week.

Wednesday is a big and long day of ministry for Jesus.

*Weeks Now*

So let's review quickly...

Jesus entered Jerusalem on Monday.

It just so happens that Monday is "lamb selection day" for Passover.

And after the lambs were selected, they were tested for four days to ensure they are without spot or blemish.

This physical concept is repeated in our text today as a spiritual reality.

Other words

Just as the sacrificial animals were tested for four days,

Jesus, the Lamb of God, will be tested four times.

The first test begins in verse 27.

*the chief priests, the scribes, and the elders*—

So let's look at the players...

These men are the most powerful people in all of Jerusalem.

We have three distinct groups of men—notice the definite article.

*the chief priests, the scribes, and the elders*—

The priests were the Sadducees, and the elders are the Pharisees.

These men are representatives of the Sanhedrin.

The Sanhedrin is like the "The Jewish Supreme Court."

They controlled the temple, and they had their own police force to execute justice.

enforce

They also had the authority to oversee the political and financial affairs of the Jewish people.

In a way, these guys are middlemen—buffer zone—between Rome and the nation of Israel.

Although the different players of the Sanhedrin disagreed on many things—Think about putting democrats and republicans in the same room—trying to get them to agree on something.

Well, the Sanhedrin usually had the same issue—except when it came to Jesus.

The 71 members of the Sanhedrin wanted Him dead.

When these men first saw Jesus in the temple walking around teaching, they probably wanted to arrest Him on the spot, but the crowd prevents that.

So let's see what they say to Jesus...

+ **Mark 11:28**— and asked him, "By what authority are you doing these things? Who gave you this authority to do these things?"

Do you hear the disgust in their voice?

In other words, "Aren't you that carpenter from Nazareth?" Aren't you the son... of Mary?" (Mark 6:3)

**By what authority** —

They are asking about Jesus' credentials.

In other words, "What school of theology did you come graduate from?"

Now, this first question is easy because they already knew the answer.

+ John 7:15 - "the Jews were amazed & said, 'How is this man so learned, since he hasn't been trained.'" 2021-6-20

~~Jesus didn't have any formal theological training.~~

Jesus had no official priestly or scribal authority to do what he had done the day before, turning over the tables.

These men were questioning his legal rights to undermine their authority. The second question deals with the source of the training—Who gave you authority?

After asking about Jesus' credentials, they now want the name of the person who had given him that authority.

It's the same question.

These men may be talking over themselves with interrogating Jesus.

But don't miss this...these are legitimate questions from the Sanhedrin.

They've dealt with many rogue rabbis in the past.

But as we know, Jesus is not a rogue rabbi, but rather, the Lamb of God who came to take away the sin of the world! (John 1:29)

The central issue to the Sanhedrin is not simply what Jesus did but his right to do it.

Who gave him the authority to do what he did.

False authority in the temple is grounds for capital punishment.

The Sanhedrin's question deals with Jesus' external authority.

~~Because people don't have inherent authority to do whatever they want—except Jesus!~~

## Who gave you this authority to do these things?

They are pointing back to the day prior of Jesus turning over the tables of the money changers and the chairs of those selling doves.

“*These things*” could also refer to Jesus’ actual teachings over the past three years.

Because in Rabbinic theology, a teacher only teaches what was handed down to him by his teacher.

In other words, a Rabbi could not teach what he wanted.

Rabbinic literature says it this way— “A person must always transmit a tradition in the same words in which he received it from his teacher.”

Obviously, Jesus didn’t do that.

Let me get all geeky on you here for a moment.

There are two Greek words translated “authority” in the New Testament.

- ① *Dunamis* refers to power.
- X-U-See-uh
- ② *Exousia* deals with rights and privileges.

*Exousia* is the word used in verse 28.

**Question:** *Did Jesus ever ask for permission to do anything?*

No, why?

Because Jesus is not just a king. He is the King of Kings and the Lord of Lords.



His authority is infinite.

We've seen this time and time again over the past year of studying the Gospel of Mark.

Jesus taught with authority:

cf. **Mark 1:22**—They were astonished at his teaching because he was teaching them as one who had authority, and not like the scribes.

Jesus has the authority to forgive sin:

cf. **Mark 2:10**—But so that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins"—he told the paralytic—"I tell you: get up, take your mat, and go home."

Jesus has the authority over the powers of hell:

cf. **Mark 1:27**— ...He commands even the unclean spirits, and they obey him."

*It's one thing to command, it's another when they obey.*

Jesus has authority over life and death.

cf. **John 10:18**—No one takes it from me, but I lay it down on my own. I have the right to lay it down, and I have the right to take it up again.

cf. **Revelation 1:18**—I am the First and the Last, and the Living One. I was dead, but look—I am alive forever and ever, and I hold the keys of death and Hades.

*All that to say this*

*Authority x-u-see-uh*

The Sanhedrin doesn't realize that Jesus has been given *Exousia* by God the Father.

+ cf. **Matt. 28:18**—All authority has been given to me in heaven and on earth.

Here's the thing—Jesus has always had this kind of *Exousia*.

God the Father told us that the Son of Man would have all authority through the prophet Daniel.

+ cf. **Daniel 7:13**—I continued watching in the night visions, and suddenly one like a son of man—Jesus was coming with the clouds of heaven.

He approached the Ancient of Days—God the Father—and was escorted before him.

+ cf. **Daniel 7:14**—He was given dominion and glory and a kingdom, so that those of every people, nation, and language should serve him.

His dominion is an everlasting dominion that will not pass away, and his kingdom is one that will not be destroyed.

So we see Jesus' authority predicted in the OT, we see it revealed in the Gospels—His miracles prove His authority—but do we see it in the epistles?

In other words, do we see Jesus' authority in New Testament theology?

We do! It's all over the Epistles.

+ cf. **Philippians 2:9**—For this reason (Jesus dying on a cross) God highly exalted him and gave him the name that is above every name,

cf. **Philippians 2:10**— so that at the name of Jesus every knee will bow—  
in heaven and on earth and under the earth—

cf. **Philippians 2:11**— and every tongue will confess  
that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

*Now*  
So this question of authority is not just limited to first-century scribes and  
Pharisees.

*one of*  
It is the most important question that our unbelieving friends in the Verde Valley  
face today as well.

And that's why it's our job as River Bible Church to share the answer to this  
question. *3 circles*

**Mark 11:29**— Jesus said to them, "I will ask you one question; then answer  
me, and I will tell you by what authority I do these things.

Jesus' poses a counter-question.

This style of debate was a common teaching method among rabbis.

Jesus uses this method because He's not going to get into a debate about his  
credentials.

Arguing about who's smarter gets you no where.

Please note that Jesus is not dodging their question either —

What Jesus is trying to do—is point these guys in the right direction.

Otherwise, they're going down a one-way street the wrong way.

These men are on the broad road that leads to hell.

**Mark 11:30**— Was John's baptism from heaven or of human origin? Answer me."

In other words, Jesus asks, "Was John's ministry backed by God or not?"

Jesus does the same thing here to the Sanhedrin as He did to the Twelve Disciples last week when...

Peter said, "Rabbi, look the fig tree that you cursed has withered." (Mark 11:21)

And then Jesus answered, "**Have faith in God.**" (Mark 11:22) - odd response

We had to unpack that to figure out what Jesus was referring to.

We have a similar situation here.

Is Jesus evasive? It kind of sounds like it.

What does John's baptism have to do with Jesus' authority?

Let's find out..by turning to more Scripture.

cf. **Matthew 11:7**—"What did you go out into the wilderness to see? A reed swaying in the wind?"

cf. **Matthew 11:8**—What then did you go out to see? A man dressed in soft clothes? See, those who wear soft clothes are in royal palaces.

cf. **Matthew 11:9**—What then did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I tell you, and more than a prophet.

cf. **Matthew 11:10**—This is the one about whom it is written: See, I am sending my messenger ahead of you;

cf. MAL 3:1

he will prepare your way before you.

Yes, indeed, John's ministry was from God.

It was predicted <sup>3</sup> 500 years before John was even born.

Not only that, but John was filled with the Holy Spirit before he was born.

Luke's Gospel says this. *About John's baptism*

**cf. Luke 7:28**— I tell you, among those born of women no one is greater than John, but the least in the kingdom of God is greater than he."

Commentary from Luke...

**cf. Luke 7:29**— (And when all the people, including the tax collectors, heard this, they acknowledged God's way of righteousness, because they had been baptized with John's baptism.

**cf. Luke 7:30**— But since the Pharisees and experts in the law had not been baptized by him, they rejected the plan of God for themselves.)

It's in John's baptism where we learn that the Sanhedrin reject both John and Jesus.

It's also at John's Baptism where we see the authority of God the Father— *X-u-search*  
commissioning Jesus for ministry.

**cf. Mark 1:9**— In those days Jesus came from Nazareth in Galilee and was baptized in the Jordan by John.

**cf. Mark 1:10**— As soon as he came up out of the water, he saw the heavens being torn open and the Spirit descending on him like a dove. *Jesus*

**cf. Mark 1:11**— And a voice came from heaven: "You are my beloved Son; with you I am well-pleased."

I mean, DANG... how much more authority do you need? — *proof of* *spirit present* *God the Father speaking from heaven.*  
*More proof...*  
 cf. **John 5:31**—"If I testify about myself, my testimony is not true."

cf. **John 5:32**—"There is another who testifies about me, and I know that the testimony he gives about me is true."

cf. **John 5:33**—"You sent messengers to John, and he testified to the truth."

cf. **John 5:34**—"I don't receive human testimony, but I say these things so that you may be saved." *↳ theological training like you*

cf. **John 5:35**—"John was a burning and shining lamp, and you were willing to rejoice for a while in his light."

cf. **John 5:36**—"But I have a greater testimony than John's because of the works that the Father has given me to accomplish. These very works I am doing testify about me that the Father has sent me."

So during this hostile environment — Jesus is trying once again to teach the Sanhedrin the truth.

If they really want to know where Jesus received authority to do "these things," they must go back to John's baptism.

It was a brilliant question by Jesus.

A positive decision about John — is a positive decision about Jesus — and vice versa.

So let's see what happens...

**Mark 11:31**— They discussed it among themselves: "If we say, 'From heaven,' he will say, 'Then why didn't you believe him?'"

Pause...what do you think these men physically did at this point?

Did they did get into their little holy huddle and whisper?

What's Jesus doing while they're yapping? (Twiddle thumbs)

And how long did this holy huddle take?

**Mark 11:32**— But if we say, 'Of human origin' "—they were afraid of the crowd, because everyone thought that John was truly a prophet.

Just a quick glance at the OT reveals that a prophet has authority from heaven/God.

If John was a prophet from God, then Jesus was even more so.

Now when John the Baptizer became a martyr, it solidified John's prophetic status in the eyes of the Jewish people.

So the Jewish people considered John a true prophet.

If the Sanhedrin said that John was baptizing on his own authority, that would cause a riot in the crowd.

In fact Luke says this...

cf. **Luke 20:6**— But if we say, 'Of human origin,' all the people will stone us, because they are convinced that John was a prophet."

So they dare not say that.

They would have been killed for that answer.

The Pharisees, Sadducees, and Scribes always feared the people more than they fear God.

So that option is not good—what's the other?

If they said that the baptism of John was from God, Jesus would ask, "*Why don't you believe him?*"

John is the one who said...

***"Look, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!" (Jn 1:29)***

So this is amazing, after everything that Jesus has been through with these religious leaders...

Jesus is still inviting them to repent.

He is still revealing truth to them.

What's their final answer?

**Mark 11:33**— So they answered Jesus, "We don't know."

And Jesus said to them, "Neither will I tell you by what authority I do these things."

It turns out this was a great question for Jesus—a devastating question for the Sanhedrin.

Can you imagine being there and watching with your own two eyes these proud and smug members of the Sanhedrin saying, "We don't know."

That's like watching Fonzy on Happy Days trying to say, "I'm sorry."



The same thing is happening here with the Sanhedrin said, “‘We don’t know.’”

### KEYPOINT 1:

*Proud people don't usually say, "I don't know."*

*For the Sanhedri —*  
By the way, that's is not entirely true.

It's not that they didn't know; it's that they are unwilling to know.

I'm amazed that Jesus didn't call them out, saying, “Yes, you do. You know that John was a prophet.”

But Jesus didn't do it; He didn't embarrass them any further.

Because the Sanhedrin's reply alone proves them to be cowards.

The crowd knew that.

Regardless, the Sanhedrin decided to concede that round to Jesus. Why?

### KEYPOINT 2:

*Religious people love religion more than a relationship with Jesus.*

We could say it this way—People love their own version of God vs. the One True Living God.

Religion is easier, at first—to keep the rules.

Especially the rules that are easy for you to keep.

### PREACH:

Going through this narrative and focusing on the issue of authority, I was reminded of the OT prophet and military leader, Joshua.

**Background:** Moses had just died, and now Joshua was God's chosen man to administer authority for the nation of Israel.

Moses commissioned Joshua in front of all Israel (Deuteronomy 31:7)

Asymptotic new leader

+ cf. **Joshua 5:13**—When Joshua was near Jericho, he looked up and saw a man standing in front of him with a drawn sword in his hand. Joshua approached him and asked, "Are you for us or for our enemies?"

+ cf. **Joshua 5:14**—"Neither," he replied. "I have now come as commander of the Lord's army."

Wait, Joshua is the commander of the Lord's army.

humility & worship

Then Joshua bowed with his face to the ground in homage and asked him, "What does my lord want to say to his servant?"

-wow!

Josh does the very opposite of what the Sanhedrin did.

The Sanhedrin cling to the illusion of their authority.

They refuse to bow their knee to Jesus.

But notice what Joshua does when he finds out that that man is "commander of the Lord's army—AKA, the pre-incarnate Jesus Christ, Josh immediately submits.

How about you?



+ Are you a Joshua, or are you a member of the Sanhedrin?

It's been said that absolute authority—corrupts absolutely—but that's not true.

Because the only one who has absolute authority is Jesus Christ.

He came to serve and not be served. (Mark 10:45)

The truth is that we all have a problem with authority.

Rebellion is in our spiritual DNA.

We've all had problems with rebellion since Adam and Eve.

Cain murders Abel, and we've been killing each other ever since.

There used to be a divine chain of command for mankind— and it was glorious.

It's glorious because we can see the chain of command in the Trinity.

God the Son submits to God the Father, while the Holy Spirit submits to both.

And yet, God the Father, God the Son, and Holy Spirit are all equal different but equal.

*SAME substance - different roles - 3 in 1, 1 in 3*

~~Just~~ as men and women are different but equal.

We complement one another. *- our roles are different - that's where we see God's glory.*

But since The Fall, the divine authority structure is broken.

Man used to be under God, but now man is under Satan.

That is until Jesus made a way.

*+* cf. **Romans 10:9**—If you confess with your mouth, “Jesus is Lord,” and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved.

*+* cf. **Romans 10:10**—One believes with the heart, resulting in righteousness, and one confesses with the mouth, resulting in salvation. *in essence*

*Jesús came to pay your sin debt*

Now, ~~the~~ next week, we, as River Bible Church, are going to model a biblical example of authority. X-U-see-uh

Next Sunday, you will witness a [delegation of authority] with the commissioning of Brian Klimke as our new assistant pastor.

Brian will not act on his own authority.

You will see a public transfer of ~~the~~ pastoral authority (exousia) ~~delegated to the elders and me - to Brian.~~ X-U-see-uh

This is not something that the [real church] doesn't take lightly, and we don't. Five

Authority is a weighty calling.

A calling that no man can do on his own.

Now, by God's grace, God has gifted you all with some type of authority.

We see it in the home.

We see it in business.

We see it in the church.

**KEYPOINT 3:**

*Without people exercising authority and submitting to authority at the same time, there will always be chaos.*

Joshua did both, just as Jesus.

Practically, if we want to live a drama-free life, we must learn to love and submit to one another. (Eph. 5:21)

Many times we get ourselves in trouble because we assert ourselves where we have no authority.

**KEYPOINT 4:**

*Life is easier when you stay in your own lane.*

It's never a good idea to veer off into oncoming traffic.

**PRAYER ROOM:**

*- Got Questions?*

**PRAYER:**

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