

Title: Confrontation Over Authority

Passage: Mark 11: 27-33

Context of Passage:

Mark 11:15-19 (Jesus Cleanses the Temple)

And they came to Jerusalem. And he entered the temple and began to drive out those who sold and those who bought in the temple, and he overturned the tables of the money-changers and the seats of those who sold pigeons. And he would not allow anyone to carry anything through the temple. And he was teaching them and saying to them, "Is it not written, My house shall be called a house of prayer for all the nations'? But you have made it a den of robbers." And the chief priests and the scribes heard it and were seeking a way to destroy him, for they feared him, because all the crowd was astonished at his teaching. And when evening came they went out of the city.

- Compare: At start of Jesus' public ministry, He went to the Temple and cleared it.

John 2:13

The Passover of the Jews was at hand, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem..

Here in Mark 11, final confrontation between Jesus and the religious leaders before trials to crucifixion

Passage: Mark 11:27-33

And they came again to Jerusalem. And as he was walking in the temple, the chief priests and the scribes and the elders came to him, and they said to him, "By what authority are you doing these things, or who gave you this authority to do them?" Jesus said to them, "I will ask you one question; answer me, and I will tell you by what authority I do these things. Was the baptism of John from heaven or from man? Answer me." And they discussed it with one another, saying, "If we say, 'From heaven,' he will say, Why then did you not believe him?' But shall we say, 'From man?'"—they were afraid of the people, for they all held that John really was a prophet. So they answered Jesus, "We do not know." And Jesus said to them, "Neither will I tell you by what authority I do these things."

EXPOSITION

Authority (Key word)

Jesus repeated showed his authority - over:

- Doctrine
- Spiritual realm (demons),
- Natural realm (disease, death, nature)

Mark 1:22 (over doctrine)

And they were astonished at his teaching, for he taught them as one who had authority, and not as the scribes.

Mark 1:27 (over spirits)

And they were all amazed, so that they questioned among themselves, saying, "What is this? A new teaching with authority! He commands even the unclean spirits, and they obey him."

Matthew 8:29 (over demons)

And behold, they cried out, "What have you to do with us, O Son of God? Have you come here to torment us before the time?"

John 10:18 (over death)

No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of my own accord. I have authority to lay it down, and I have authority to take it up again. This charge I have received from my Father.

Mark 2:10-11 (over sin)

But that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins"—he said to the paralytic—"I say to you, rise, pick up your bed, and go home."

Mark 4:39 (Jesus' authority over nature)

And he awoke and rebuked the wind and said to the sea, "Peace! Be still!" And the wind ceased, and there was a great calm.

John 5:19

So Jesus said to them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, the Son can do nothing of his own accord, but only what he sees the Father doing. For whatever the Father does, that the Son does likewise.

John 5:26-27

For as the Father has life in himself, so he has granted the Son also to have life in himself. And he has given him authority to execute judgment, because he is the Son of Man.

- Jesus' authority was independent of any human institution or any of the religious leaders

OVERVIEW

I. Confrontation

II. Counter Question

III. Consultation

IV. Condemnation

I. CONFRONTATION

Mark 11:27-28

And they came again to Jerusalem. And as he was walking in the temple, the chief priests and the scribes and the elders came to him, and they said to him, "By what authority are you doing these things, or who gave you this authority to do them?"

Luke 20:1-2

One day, as Jesus was teaching the people in the temple and preaching the gospel, the chief priests and the scribes with the elders came up and said to him, "Tell us by what authority you do these things, or who it is that gave you this authority."

- religious leaders accosted Jesus with nefarious purposes.

Acts 17:5

But the Jews were jealous, and taking some wicked men of the rabble, they formed a mob, set the city in an uproar, and attacked the house of Jason, seeking to bring them out to the crowd.

- religious leaders were always jealous

John 2:24-25

But Jesus on his part did not entrust himself to them, because he knew all people and needed no one to bear witness about man, for he himself knew what was in man.

II. COUNTER QUESTION

Mark 11:29-30

Jesus said to them, "I will ask you one question; answer me, and I will tell you by what authority I do these things. Was the baptism of John from heaven or from man? Answer me."

"Answer me"

- purpose of counter-question was to expose their hearts
- Jesus commands the religious leaders (twice) to respond to Him.

Baptism of John

- John the Baptist? The greatest prophet who ever lived. Filled with the Spirit even in his mother's womb. He proclaimed and reached repentance.
- Meaning = referring to John's preaching and teaching.
- Question: was John's teaching from God or from man?

III. CONSULTATION

Mark 11:31-33a

And they discussed it with one another, saying, "If we say, 'From heaven,' he will say, 'Why then did you not believe him?' But shall we say, 'From man?'"—they were afraid of the people, for they all held that John really was a prophet. So they answered Jesus, "We do not know."

Discussed/reasoning with one another

- Religious leaders recognized they were caught in the middle with this question.

"If we say, 'From heaven,' he will say, 'Why then did you not believe him?'"

- This would affirm John's preaching was from God (including that Jesus is the Messiah)

John 1:29

The next day he saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, "Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!"

'From man?'"—they were afraid of the people, for they all held that John really was a prophet.

- Religious leaders were afraid of people's opinions of them.

"We do not know"

- religious leaders response
 - Acknowledged the limits of their knowledge

- Meaning = Unwilling to honor Jesus for who He is.
- Likewise, there are many today who aren't willing to follow Jesus. Why?

Why people aren't willing to follow Jesus - 3 reasons:

- They are not willing to submit to Jesus' authority
- They refuse to honestly examine the evidence
- They prefer to please men rather than please God (they fear man more than they fear God)

J.C. Ryle

- When a person says "I cannot", it really is "I will not"

John 5:39-40

You search the Scriptures because you think that in them you have eternal life; and it is they that bear witness about me, yet you refuse to come to me that you may have life.

- People reject Jesus because they are not being intellectually honest. If they were to actually look at the truth, they would see Jesus.

John 3:19-20

And this is the judgment: the light has come into the world, and people loved the darkness rather than the light because their works were evil. For everyone who does wicked things hates the light and does not come to the light, lest his works should be exposed.

- People who reject Jesus prefer their own sin, their own control over their lives.

Question: What is holding you back from Jesus?

- You refuse to make Jesus as your Lord,
- You refuse to honestly look at the evidence, or
- You fear man rather than God?

The problem is not external but rather internal (idols of heart)

- How respond?
 - Turn to Jesus as Lord
 - Look at the evidence
 - Fear God - the end will not disappoint you.

IV. CONDEMNATION

Mark 11:33b

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

Mark 4:24-25

And he said to them, "Pay attention to what you hear: with the measure you use, it will be measured to you, and still more will be added to you. For to the one who has, more will be given, and from the one who has not, even what he has will be taken away."

- the religious leaders had been given an opportunity to hear God's truth clearly and plainly.
- But they rejected Jesus.

Mark 12:1a

And he began to speak to them in parables.

- While God is ever patient to allow people to come to repentance, it is not limitless.

Genesis 6:3

Then the LORD said, "My Spirit shall not abide in man forever, for he is flesh: his days shall be 120 years."

Hosea 4:17

Ephraim is joined to idols; leave him alone.

- The religious leaders heard Jesus' teaching plainly but yet continued to reject Him.
- Thereafter, Jesus then shifted in teaching method to parables.

Luke 8:10

he said, "To you it has been given to know the secrets of the kingdom of God, but for others they are in parables, so that 'seeing they may not see, and hearing they may not understand.'

Jesus' Authority

- What do you think?

Matthew 7:24-27

"Everyone then who hears these words of mine and does them will be like a wise man who built his house on the rock. And the rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house, but it did not fall, because it had been founded on the rock. And everyone who hears these words of mine and does not do them will be like a foolish man who built his house on the sand. And the rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell, and great was the fall of it."

- the purpose of His teachings are never to condemn but a gracious warning for all to turn to Him.

God's judgment is here as a result of continued rejecting Him

Romans 1:18

For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who by their unrighteousness suppress the truth.

Romans 1:21-22

For although they knew God, they did not honor him as God or give thanks to him, but they became futile in their thinking, and their foolish hearts were darkened. Claiming to be wise, they became fools,

Romans 1:28

And since they did not see fit to acknowledge God, God gave them up to a debased mind to do what ought not to be done.

APPLICATION

What can you do?

Stay in God's Word

Psalms 119:9

How can a young man keep his way pure? By guarding it according to your word.

Psalms 119:105

Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path.

Stay on Your Knees

2 Chronicles 7:14

if my people who are called by my name humble themselves, and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and heal their land.

- pray on behalf of our nation, on behalf of the church, on behalf of others

Ephesians 6:18

praying at all times in the Spirit, with all prayer and supplication. To that end, keep alert with all perseverance, making supplication for all the saints,

Stay Connected With Other Believers

Hebrews 10:24-25

And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near.

Hebrews 3:13a

But exhort one another every day, as long as it is called "today,"

Stay Close to Christ

James 4:8a

Draw near to God, and he will draw near to you.

John 15:5

I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing.

Stay Thankful, Helpful, Faithful, Hopeful

1 Thessalonians 5:16-18

Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.

2 Timothy 4:7

I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith.