

57:54

[Resource: Map of Jerusalem and the Temple Mount](#)

### SUMMARY KEYWORDS

authority, temple grounds, Jesus, people, Christ, temple, verse, Sanhedrin, John, God, teaching, truth, preaching, ministry, condemn, hearts, Jerusalem, scribes, men, false religious system

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### Introduction

Mark chapter 11. We've been working our way through the Gospel of Mark and we are going to be finishing up Mark chapter 11. This morning, you can see the title of this sermon this morning is Conflict Concerning Christ's Authority.

Every religion in the world outside of true biblical Christianity is man-made. It's all man-made. The beliefs that drive these false religions, they stem from the mind of men. Man creates a belief and then they convince others to follow after them. And therefore, that man, or that man system becomes the authority over that religion. Just to name a few:

- The Mormons have Joseph Smith.
- Jehovah's Witnesses have Charles Taze Russell
- Islam has Muhammad.
- Buddhism has Siddhartha Gautama.
- Christian Science has Mary Baker Eddy.

And the list goes on and on of all of these false religions in the world that are started by men. And therefore, that man is the authority over that religion. But with every one of these false religions, the conflict and the dilemma is always about authority. That's what it's all about. Why? Because the one

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who has authority is the one who gets to set the rules. They're the one that gets to make up the beliefs. And they're the ones who get to demand from their followers what they are to believe, and what they are to do.

Since the beginning of time, we know that God is the One who has all authority. And He's given us His Word so that we know what to believe. And then how to behave, how to live that out. But here's the thing...man wants to be God. Man wants to be God. And this all started all the way back at the fall. In Genesis 3:5 Satan convinced Eve to eat of the fruit when he said, For God knows that in the day you eat from it, your eyes will be opened and you will be like God, knowing good and evil. And instead of submitting to God's authority, and telling Satan "no", what did she do? She saw that it was good for food, that it was a delight to the eyes and desirable to make her wise. And so she stepped out from under the authority of God, and out from under the authority of her husband, and she ate the fruit. And from that moment on, man has rejected God's authority. Why? Because man wants to be in charge. We want to be in charge. We want to make the rules. We want to call the shots. We want to be the ones who are in authority.

And when that authority is challenged, that is when the conflict begins. And in our passage here this morning, we're going to see this conflict that takes place over authority -- over the authority of Christ, who is God in the flesh, who is the creator of the world, and who has all authority.

But when Jesus arrives in Jerusalem, and begins teaching the truth, the Jewish leaders' authority is challenged. He challenges their authority in our passage, and let's see this conflict that arises over Christ's authority and how Christ handles this. Look at Mark chapter 11, beginning in verse 27.

27 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, 28 and began saying to Him, "By what authority are You doing these things, or who gave You this authority to do these things?" 29 And Jesus said to them, "I will ask you one question, and you answer Me, and then I will tell you by what authority I do these things. 30 Was the baptism of John from heaven, or from men? Answer Me." 31 They began reasoning among themselves, saying, "If we say, 'From heaven,' He will say, 'Then why did you not believe him?' 32 But shall we say, 'From men'?"--they were afraid of the people, for everyone considered John to have been a real prophet. 33 Answering Jesus, they said, "We do not know." And Jesus said to them, "Nor will I tell you by what authority I do these things." (Mark 11:27-33)

[See resource map of the temple and temple mount for context.](#)

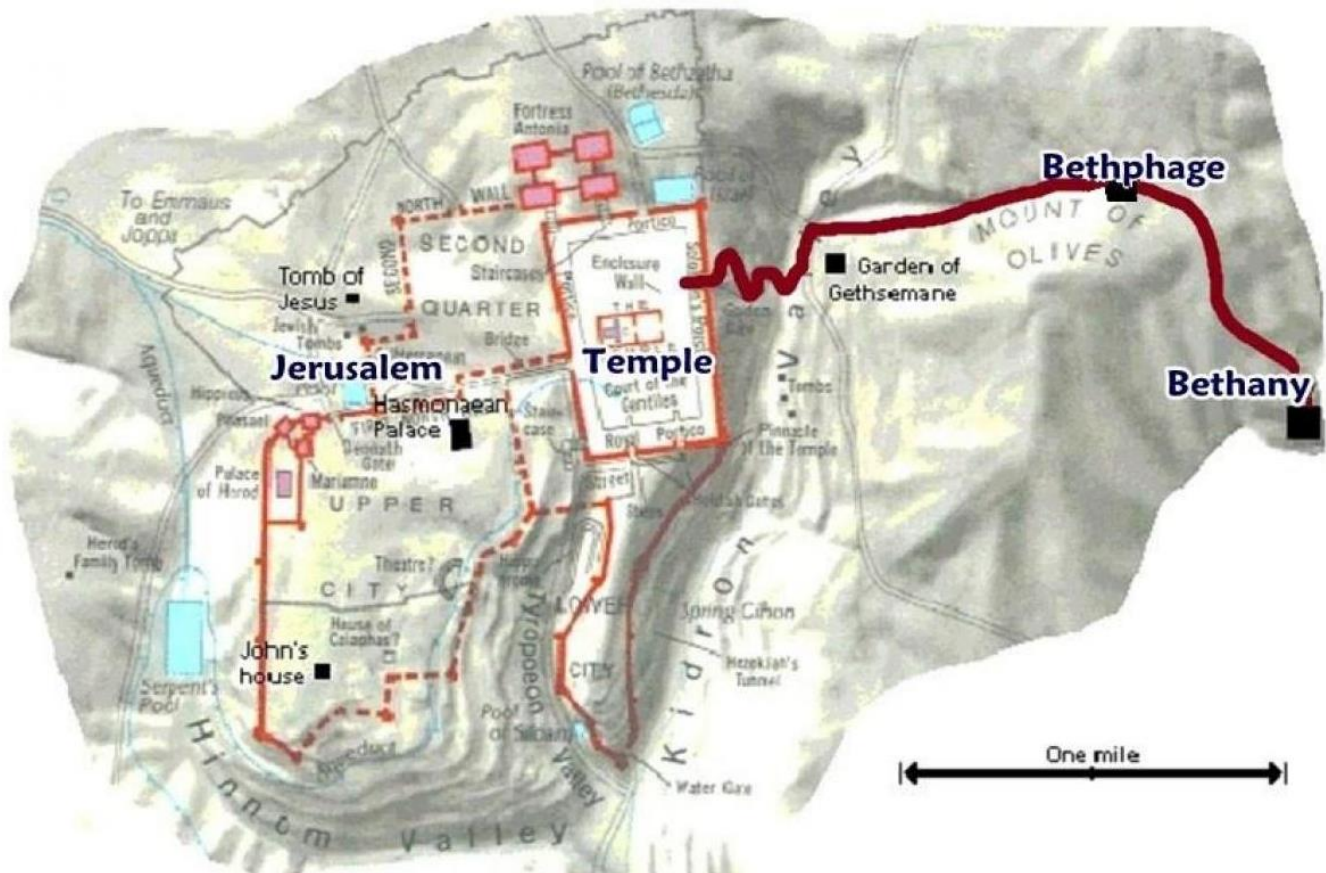
Now let's set the scene here, so that we can see what leads up to this conflict here with the Sanhedrin. Those are the ones that come to confront Jesus here. They're called the Sanhedrin. Remember, Christ came riding into Jerusalem on Monday morning, we call it Palm Sunday, but really, it's Palm Monday, we're not going to change tradition though. It's okay. We can still celebrate Palm Sunday.

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But Jesus comes riding into Jerusalem on Monday morning. And as he wrote in back in verse 9, it says that the crowds hailed Him, and they shouted out **Hosanna Hosanna! Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord.** (Mark 11:9-10)

Luke tells us that they shouted, **"BLESSED IS THE KING WHO COMES IN THE NAME OF THE LORD;** (Luke 19:38). And so they were hailing Jesus as the King. They recognize that Jesus is the King, and therefore as the King, he has all authority. And as Jesus enters in, Jesus then goes into the temple to see what the Jews had done to the temple.

Then He leaves and He goes back to Bethany and stays the night in Bethany, a two-mile trip back to Bethany.



But Jesus is not done at the temple. So He comes back on Tuesday, comes back on Tuesday, and that was when He cursed the fig tree. And then He went to the temple to destroy the system that they had set up. He goes in and overturns tables, and just completely destroys the temple. And everything that these Jewish leaders had set up on the temple grounds. They had turned the temple, which was supposed to be a house of prayer, into a marketplace.

Jesus also stopped the train of people who were using the temple grounds as a shortcut. He stopped all traffic from coming through the temple grounds. And then He stands up, and He begins to teach the people who were there. And the chief priests and the scribes were there listening to Him. And that's when they began to plot how they might destroy Him. And so, all that happened on Tuesday.

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Wednesday, after staying the night in Bethany again, they make their way back to Jerusalem. That was when they walked by the fig tree that Jesus had cursed the day before. And they were amazed. The disciples were amazed. And Jesus then taught the disciples about power and prayer. And we looked at that last week. And so it's still Wednesday. It's still Wednesday. And these guys have now come into Jerusalem, they've come into the temple, and that's where we pick up in verse 27.

And we'll break our passage here this morning, down into three parts, three parts.

## 1. Religion Confronted

The first part we will call Religion Confronted, Religion Confronted. Look at verse 27. "[They came again to Jerusalem](#)" stop right there. They make their way back to the city. They make their way back to the city. And remember, it's Passover week. It's the week of Passover. And so, there are 1000s of people who've come from all over to celebrate the Passover. And so, the city of Jerusalem is just packed with people to come to worship, and to celebrate the Passover.

But where does Jesus go? Verse 27 tells us and He was walking in the temple. Notice that He's walking into the temple. Jesus went to the temple, and what do you think Jesus was doing there? Well, Luke tells us in his account, exactly what Jesus was doing there, in [Luke 20:1](#) it says this, "[on one of the days while He was teaching the people in the temple and preaching the gospel](#)"... that would be this day on Wednesday as Jesus comes into the temple. That's exactly what He was doing there. He was teaching the people, and He's preaching the gospel on the temple grounds.

Now think about this. Think about this. What had the Jews done to the temple? What do they do to the temple? They had decimated the temple, and they had turned it into a marketplace. It was no longer a place of worship. It wasn't a place where people went to hear the truth. It was full of a false religious system that taught people that they were saved by works. It was all about good works. It was works-righteousness. And that's what was being preached there on the temple grounds. It was a complete show, and it was all performance driven. The truth wasn't taught. And there wasn't anyone left to preach the truth to the people, because they had taken the truth of God's Word. And they had twisted it into their own false religious system, which was a dead system. It was dead.

And Jesus conveyed that to His disciples when He cursed the fig tree. And they came by the fig tree. And that was the illustration of the Jewish system. It had withered, it was dead, it was no longer producing any fruit to dead system.

So, Jesus enters the temple grounds. And what does He do? He teaches the truth. He teaches the truth. He preaches the gospel to these people. And in preaching the gospel, He was confronting the Jewish leader's religious system that they had established. What do you think Jesus preached? Repentance, turn from your sin, and put your faith in God. Repentance and faith, that was His

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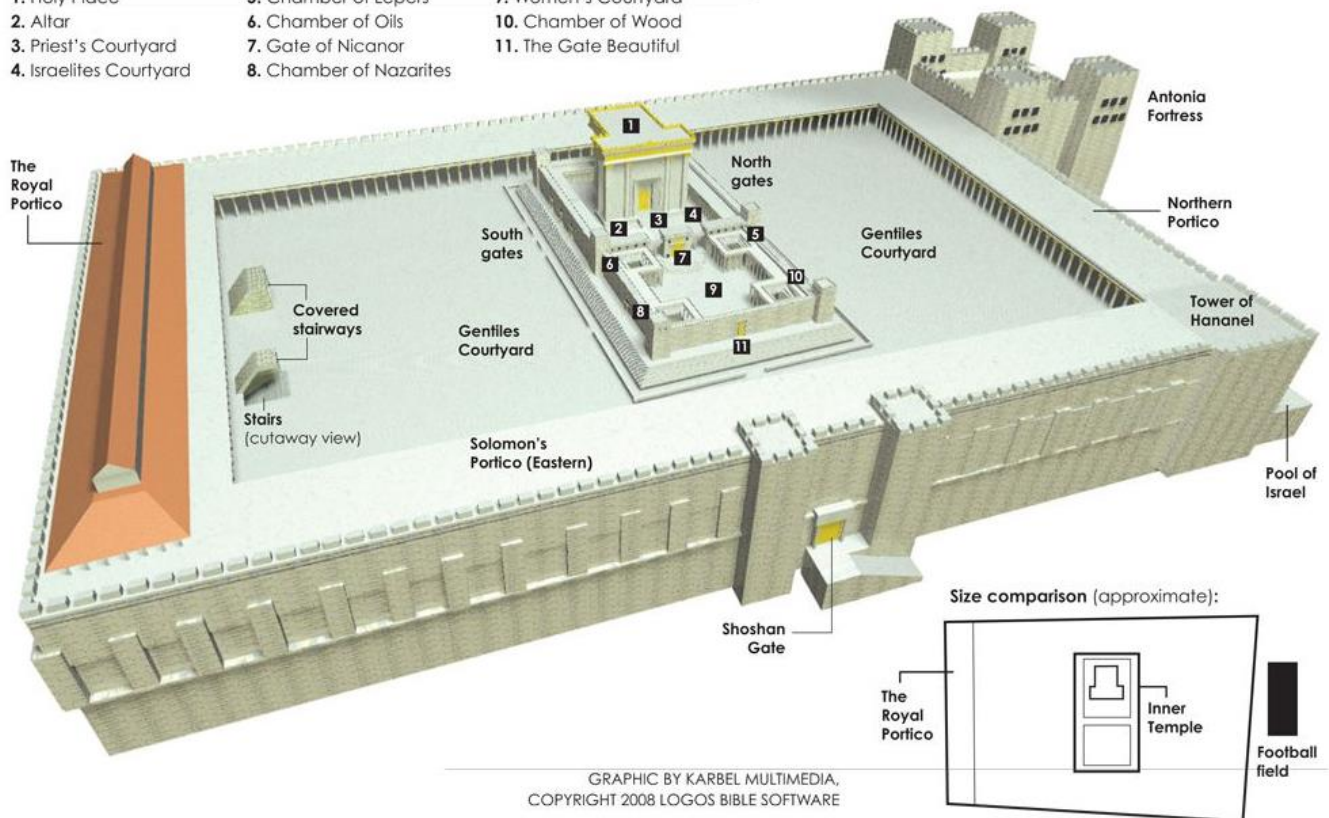
message. He is calling them to stop trusting in their works-righteousness, which will never save them. And He's calling them to trust in Him as their Messiah, because He is the Messiah.

But Jesus is there, and He's preaching the gospel on the temple grounds. And He's confronting their system and calling for these people to come to Him and receive salvation. That's what He was preaching.

# Herod's Temple

King Herod the Great began renovations on the Second Temple approximately 20-19 BC. The entire temple wasn't completed until approximately 62-64 AD, only to be destroyed by the Romans in 70 AD.

- 1. Holy Place
- 2. Altar
- 3. Priest's Courtyard
- 4. Israelites Courtyard
- 5. Chamber of Lepers
- 6. Chamber of Oils
- 7. Gate of Nicanor
- 8. Chamber of Nazarites
- 9. Women's Courtyard
- 10. Chamber of Wood
- 11. The Gate Beautiful



Now you have to understand what's going on here to see the impact that Jesus is having. The temple grounds there were massive. It was massive. This was a large place. Some say the Court of the Gentiles-- that the outer courtyard of the temple was the size of 10 football fields. Massive place 1000s of people. It's the week of the Passover. And Jesus is walking around these temple grounds. And He's teaching these people and He's preaching the gospel.

Think about the impact that He's making there, as He's preaching the gospel to all of these people who have come there to celebrate the Passover. They've come to give up their sacrifices, and to go through this ritual that they go through every single year. And all of a sudden, they're confronted with the truth. There's Jesus preaching on the temple grounds. He's got his own pulpit there... proclaiming the gospel to these people.

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And we know that when Jesus preached, Jesus didn't preach and teach like the scribes. In fact, if you remember all the way back in Mark 1:22, it says this,

**They were amazed at His teaching.** As Jesus started his teaching ministry, and He goes out and teaches and preaches the people were amazed. Why? **For He was teaching them as one having** -- listen to this -- **authority.** (Mark 1:22) He preached with authority, and not as the scribes. The scribes never taught with authority. Never. They always base their teachings off of other teachings that were passed down from other Rabbis. one commentator says about the teaching of the scribes. Their teaching was generally pedantic and dull, occupied with my new distinctions concerning Levitical regulations and petty legalistic requirements. That's what they're teaching. That's what the scribes are teaching to these people. And to these people, this was just dull and boring. They knew that it was not authoritative teaching.

But Christ comes in. And Christ didn't quote, other rabbis. He didn't give them dull and boring, Petty legalistic requirements of the Levitical law. He taught with authority. And He preached with authority.

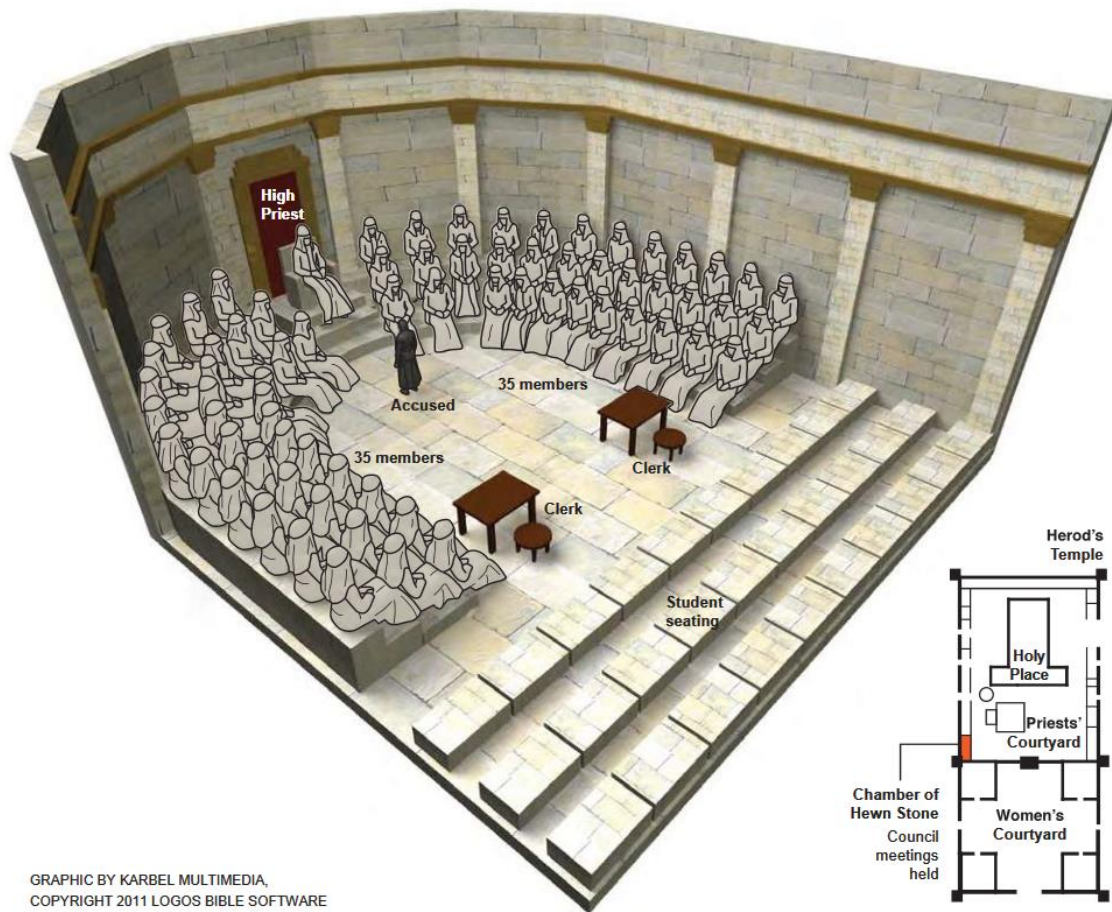
- And this was the one day where the truth reigned in the temple... the one day, one day that the truth shows up on the temple grounds. And with authority, Christ is there preaching and teaching the truth of the gospel to these people who have been lied to for years and years and years, as they've been engulfed in this false religious system.
- This is the one day where the glory of God is on display in the temple. Which is why it was built...for the glory of God to reign there. And on this day, the glory of God reigned in the temple, as Christ was there preaching and teaching with all authority. God's Word was going forth.

But at this point in Jerusalem, the truth didn't reign in the temple grounds because the Jewish leaders had established their own religion, and they had twisted God's Word to suit their own religiosity. But on this day, this was a different day. The people are there hearing the truth. And Christ is there preaching and teaching to these people with all authority. And the chief priests and the scribes and the elders, you think they like that? They didn't like that. So what do they do?

Well, look at the end of verse 27, it says "the chief priests and the scribes and the elders came to Him", they came to Jesus. And notice who came. There's three groups that are mentioned here, you have the chief priests, the scribes, and the elders, this is known as the Sanhedrin.

# The Sanhedrin

The Jewish high court of justice consisted of 71 men and was led by the high priest. The council could decide almost any fate of its people—except the death penalty, which was decided by the Romans. The court was located within the Chamber of Hewn Stone inside Herod's Temple.



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The Sanhedrin, made up of 70 members, who were the Jewish ruling council. And they were overseen by the high priest, so you had 71 guys. And Caiaphas was the high priest at this time. And they had the authority over the Jews and over the whole Jewish religious system. They were the ones who operated this whole thing. And they had this authority over the Jews. But that authority was given to them by the Romans, they were still under the Romans.

There were still things that the Sanhedrin could not do, such as put someone to death or condemn someone to death. They couldn't do that. But the Sanhedrin were the ones who were given the

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authority over the Jews, and therefore the teaching, and the ceremonies and all that was taking place there in the temple grounds. These guys were operating this whole system. They were running it.

But in comes Jesus. And there's Jesus, teaching the truth with authority on the temple grounds. So, what do they do? What did the Sanhedrin do? They approach Him in verse 28. Look what it says in verse 28, "they began saying to Him, by what authority are you doing these things?" (Mark 11:28) Or Who gave you this authority to do these things? And that now notice, they recognize the authority of Christ.

Notice that they recognize that there is authority there in His preaching, and His teaching, and what He is saying. They recognize that there is something different about Christ, and the way that He teaches these people. Because Christ came in and He taught with all authority. They just want to know where this authority came from. Who gave you this authority? They confront Him. And they asked Him by what authority He is doing these things. What things? What things are they talking about? Well, I think there's really two things that they're referencing here.

1. First, I think they're referencing his destruction of the temple the day before, the day before Jesus came in, and He's overturning tables, and they're going by what authority? Do you come into the temple grounds here and do that? And remember, it wasn't just a corner of the temple grounds. No, Jesus went through that entire temple, that outer courtyard there, and He was turning over tables, and He destroyed that whole system. By what authority? Do you come in and do that?
2. And second, they're also referencing His teaching. That is, who has given you the authority to teach this way? What way, let me give you an example of the authority and how Jesus taught with authority. In Matthew chapter 5 -- the Sermon on the Mount. Listen to this. Matthew chapter 5 in the Sermon on the Mount in verse 21, it says this
  - "You have heard that the ancients were told you shall not commit murder, and whoever commits murder shall be liable to the court. But I say to you, that everyone who is angry with his brother shall be guilty before the court." (Matt 5:21)
  - Then he goes on in verse 27, "You have heard that it was said, You shall not commit adultery", verse 28. But I say to you that everyone who looks at a woman with lust for her has already committed adultery with her in his heart." In verse 31. "It was said, Whoever sends his wife away, let him give her a certificate of divorce, verse 32. But I say to you that everyone who divorces his wife, except for the reason of chastity, makes her commit adultery." (Matt 5:27-32)

And on and on, it goes. And Jesus goes on in the Sermon on the Mount, and He says, You have heard it said, But I say to you, why does He say that? Because He has all authority. He's preaching and teaching with all authority. And remember, the day before, Jesus is there on the temple the day before, when He goes in to destroy the temple, not only did He destroy the temple, but He also stood up and began teaching the people.

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What do you think He was saying to them? I say to you, truly, truly, I say to you. He's preaching and teaching **with all authority**. And in verse 18, backup in verse 18, in Mark chapter 11, it says, the chief priests and the scribes heard this, that its they heard the teaching of Christ, and they began seeking how to destroy Him.

So, it was both of these things that not only put on display His authority, but it also challenged their authority. Jesus is there challenging the authority of the Sanhedrin. He challenged their entire religious system. And that's what leads to this confrontation. And what do you think that these Sanhedrin, these guys wanted Jesus to say, when they asked Him this question, [Who gave you this authority?](#) They were looking for a specific answer. They wanted Him to answer a specific way.

What did they want Him to say? They wanted Him to say, I do this by the authority of God. They wanted Him to say that. Why? Because then they could condemn Him of blasphemy. They would condemn Him of blasphemy. They wanted to get Jesus on the hot seat. Remember, they want to destroy Him. They're making a plot. They gather together, and they make this plan and they say, let's go while He's teaching out in the temple grounds, and let's go and confront Him. And we'll ask Him by what authority He does these things. We know what he's going to say. So let's pin Him. Let's get Him.

And when they ask Him "by what authority you do these things", they're not looking for the credentials of Jesus. They're not trying to see if he went to Rabbi school. They're not trying to see if He has some kind of PhD. They want him to say, I do this by the authority of God, because they want to pin Him with blasphemy, and then therefore they could condemn Him to death. Because listen to what [Leviticus 24:16](#) says

[16 Moreover, the one who blasphemes the name of the LORD shall surely be put to death; all the congregation shall certainly stone him. The alien as well as the native, when he blasphemes the Name, shall be put to death.](#)

They want Jesus to say, I do this by the authority of God. Because then they could condemn Him of blasphemy. Because the authority that He has displayed before them, has confronted their entire religious system, and they don't like it. They want to get rid of Him. He confronted them by destroying the temple. And He confronted it by His authoritative teaching. And now they come to confront Him about His authority.

And so first, we have Religion Confronted. Second, we'll call the second point here, Religion Challenged. Religion Challenged.

## **2. Religion Challenged.**

Look at verse 29.

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And Jesus said to them, "I will ask you one question, and you answer Me, and then I will tell you by what authority I do these things. 30 Was the baptism of John from heaven, or from men? Answer Me." (Mark 11:29)

Jesus knows exactly what these guys are after. He knows their heart. He knows their intentions; He knows exactly what they're trying to do. And I love how they try and pin Jesus on an answer. They try and pin Him down. But we see the wisdom of Jesus on display here, as He turns right back around and puts them on the spot. Brilliant. This is the wisdom of Christ. This was brilliant...this, this didn't throw Jesus off one bit. Their question, it didn't throw Him off one bit.

And think about this, who's gathered around there? Who's gathered around Jesus, you have the 12 that are there. And you also have this crowd of people who are there. Remember, the temple ground is packed full of people. And there's all these people that are gathered around Jesus at this time. And the chief priests and the scribes and the elders approach Jesus in the public square. And they planned it this way. They wanted to do this this way. Because they knew that there would be a crowd around Jesus. They wanted to make a public spectacle of Jesus. That's what they were after. That's what they wanted to do. Let's pin Him down, and ask Him by what authority does this, He'll say, by God, and then we'll pin Him with blasphemy, and we'll destroy Him. That's the plan. That's the plot.

But in front of all of these people, in front of all of these people that are there in front of the 12, and this massive crowd that's there, in front of these men, the Sanhedrin, who think that they have the authority, there in the temple. Jesus asked them a simple question. He turns it right back around on to them. And He asks them a simple question.

And He says, Look, I'll tell you, by what authority I do this. I'll tell you, you just answer Me one question. And it's a simple question. "Was the baptism of John from heaven or for men?" (Mark 11:30) And I love this. Jesus even commands them. And He says, "Answer Me." Answer Me. In the Greek, that word answer is an imperative, which means it's a command to these religious elite. These are the religious elite of the day. And Jesus comes in and He says, you guys, answer Me.

Think about the authority of Jesus on display here in front of this entire crowd. In front of all of these people, there's the religious elite who think they have all authority, and Jesus says to the religious elite, you guys Answer Me. Jesus turns around and questions them. And He shows His authority as He does that because no one would have the audacity to question these religious leaders in the first place. No one would question these guys. If they asked them a question, they would just give an answer back. But Jesus, because He has all authority tells these religious elite, no, you don't have authority? I do, and you answer Me.

And He puts His authority on display in front of these religious elite and in front of these crowds and commands them to answer Him. Talk about authority. He has all authority.

Why does Jesus bring up the baptism of John? What's this question all about? Notice, Jesus tells him, Look, I'll answer you. I will answer you. Jesus was honest, he was not lying to them. He says, Look, I'll

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answer you. You just answer my question first. And he brings up the baptism of John. And He says, Is it from heaven or from men? Why does He bring this up?

Well, the people that were there on the temple grounds, those people that were there, they all knew about John the Baptist and his ministry, John the Baptist was famous. He was a famous man. And everybody knew about the baptism of John, word spread about John. John the Baptist was popular. And the people recognize that John the Baptist was a prophet who was sent by God.

We even see that down in verse 32. That's when they're having this debate amongst themselves are whispering to one another, trying to come up with this answer down in verse 32. **They were afraid of the people, for everyone considered John to have been a real prophet**, the people that are there on the temple grounds. They all know that John the Baptist was sent by God. They knew that he was a real prophet. And when John the Baptist was doing his public ministry, the people flocked out to the Jordan River to go and see him and listen to him preach and be baptized by him.

And remember, what was John the Baptist's message? Repent! Repent! These people knew about John the Baptist, and they all flocked out to the Jordan River to go and listen and see John the Baptist in his ministry.

Think about this for a moment and side note, John the Baptist, **where did he do his ministry?** True biblical ministry, preaching the truth of the gospel, where did he do it? in the temple? Nope. He did it outside of the temple. They had corrupted the entire temple. And God sent him out to the wilderness. And people came to hear the truth as he preached the truth.

**Where did Jesus do His ministry?** In the temple? Nope. Outside of the temple, as He went out to all the regions of Galilee that we've studied up to this point, think about the ministry of Jesus. And where He did his ministry, the temple was corrupt. And they went outside, and they did their ministry, and people came and flocked to them. people flocked to John the Baptist.

In fact, Matthew 3:5 says, "Then Jerusalem was going out to Him, that is John the Baptist, and all Judea, and all the district around the Jordan, and they were being baptized by him in the Jordan River as they confess their sins."

As he preached repentance to these people, they were confessing their sins and being baptized. And even the religious elite went out to see him. Matthew 3:7 says, but when he saw (that is John the Baptist saw) many of the Pharisees and the Sadducees coming for baptism, he said to them, You brood of vipers, who warned you to flee from the wrath to come?

Pretty serious ministry, huh? Bold, proclaiming the truth of God's Word. And they all knew who he was. All the people knew. And the Pharisees and the Sadducees they all knew about John the Baptist and his ministry. And the people recognize that John the Baptist was a prophet sent from God.

Now why would this matter? Why would this matter? Well, if John was from heaven, if John was sent by God, as the people knew that he was, then Jesus would respond to the Sanhedrin and ask them "Then

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why did you not listen to John?" Why didn't you listen to him" Because what did John proclaim about Jesus? John proclaimed that Jesus was the Messiah. Remember, in [John 1:29](#), John pronounced "[Behold, the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world.](#)" There He is, there's the Messiah, that's Him, don't follow me, follow Him. And John's whole ministry was to point people to Jesus. And he called them to repentance, so that they would turn from their sin and prepare their hearts to receive Christ as their Messiah.

And so if the religious elite come back with their answer, and they say that John the Baptist was from heaven, then Jesus would say, then believe him. I am the Messiah. And therefore, My authority is from God. But there's a second part of Jesus question where He says, or was John the Baptist of men? Was he of men? If these religious elite pronounced in front of all of these people, that John the Baptist was just a man and not a prophet -- that his ministry was a manmade ministry -- then these religious elite knew that the people would turn on them...would turn on them.

And these religious leaders feared upsetting the people, because they knew that the people knew that John the Baptist was a prophet sent by God. And so, here's the challenge. This is the challenge to these guys, and their whole religious system. And listen, it was the duty of the religious leaders to evaluate and approve of, or inform the people of new religious movements, which John the Baptist was, right? No one was out at the Jordan River baptizing people that was new. And so, if these religious elite had allowed John's ministry to thrive, because of fear of the people, even though they believe that it wasn't a ministry of God, then the people would ask them, then why didn't you condemn John's ministry? You should have condemned it. But you guys didn't, you allowed it to go on at the Jordan River.

But they didn't condemn John's ministry, because John was a national hero. He was popular. The people knew, and they flocked out to John, they love to listen to John preach. John was popular in the eyes of the people, and everyone knew about his ministry.

And so, Jesus challenges these guys, and He puts them on the spot. And either these guys have to confess that John's ministry was of God, and therefore they need to believe what John said about Jesus. Or they have to confess that John's ministry was from man, and therefore they're guilty of allowing it to continue on. And for John to become a national hero in Israel. And deny that John was a true prophet of God, even though all of these people who are sitting in front of them knew exactly who John was-- that he was a true prophet of God. And they feared the people. Fear of men.

And that's the challenge. That's the challenge. Either you're going to get pushback from Jesus, if you answer the John was sent by God, or you're going to get pushback from the crowd, if you say that John's ministry was not of God, but of men. Because all of those people that were sitting there that all those people in that crowd that were sitting there, they believed, and they knew that John was a prophet sent by God.

And so Jesus there with all authority, challenges their religious system, challenges them and their authority that they thought that they had. And what did they do? What did these religious elite do? In football terminology they punted. They punted. Look, it's not even fourth and long. It's fourth in short.

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This is an easy answer. Come on, guys. You know what's going on here. But the brilliance of Christ question and His authority on display, causes these guys to punt.

### 3. Religion condemned.

Which leads to our third and final point. Religion Condemned, Religion Condemned. Look at verse 31.

They began reasoning among themselves saying, if we say from heaven, He will say, then why did you not believe him? But shall we say from men, they were afraid of the people, for everyone considered John to have been a real Prophet, answering Jesus, they said, We do not know. (Mark 11:31-32)

Notice this, these guys who are the elite leaders who are running this whole false religious system, they gather together, and they begin to discuss among themselves, because they're now in a dilemma. Jesus challenges them and puts them into a dilemma. Think about what's happening here. Jesus is there on the temple grounds, teaching and preaching the gospel, He has a crowd of people gathered around Him. The Sanhedrin are the ones who come up. And it's these guys who start this whole thing. They started it, they came up to ask Jesus a question.

And now, not just because of the brilliance of Christ in bringing up this question to them, but because of His authority that has now been put on display, they have to gather themselves together to discuss this matter amongst themselves. Guys, it's an easy answer. Just answer it, and then Jesus will tell you by what authority He does this.

Now, we don't know if it was all 70 of the guys of the Sanhedrin that were there. Or if it was just a representative group of the whole Sanhedrin who were there. But these are supposed to be the brilliant minds of the day. These guys are the brilliant minds of the day. They're the ones who are supposed to be speaking for God, and able to interpret God's law for the people. That the educated ones. They're the leaders of this whole operation that's going on there in Jerusalem and the temple grounds. And they have to gather together to discuss how they're going to answer this simple question from Jesus.

And they know they can't say that John the Baptist was from God, because then that will give testimony to the authority of Jesus. But they also can't say John the Baptist was just a man, because all the people gathered around there considered John to have been a true prophet sent by God. And if they say that, then they knew that the people would be upset with them, the people would turn on them. And so after deliberating amongst themselves, these so called brilliant men come up with their answer. "We do not know." We don't know. Brilliant men, religious elite. We don't know. At that moment, they lost all credibility, and authority. All of it was gone.

Why? Because they couldn't face the truth. They couldn't face the truth, which is what happens in all false religion. Leaders of false religions and false churches today don't want to face the truth. They

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want to build their own kingdoms, by their own authority, with their own power, and all of those kingdoms will come crumbling down.

And you just look at even what's going on in our day today, all of these churches that are being built up around men, by their own power and their own authority. They're all going to come crumbling down, and many of them already have, and it's just a matter of time before all these other ones come crumbling down. Why? Because they're not built on the truth. They're not built on the truth, and they're not built upon the authority of Christ.

And therefore, Jesus condemns these religious leaders in verse 33, when He says,

"nor will I tell you by what authority I do these things." (Mark 11:33)

We don't know. You're not going to give Me an answer. I'm not giving you an answer. You don't get an answer. And by Jesus saying, "nor will I tell you by what authority I do these things," this is a condemnation of their false religious system. They don't get the truth. They don't get to hear the truth. Jesus is not going to speak to these guys. Jesus doesn't give them an answer. Their hearts are so hard toward the truth, that Jesus is not going to even waste a breath and tell them the truth. He doesn't cast His pearl before swine. Jesus is not going to put the truth out there so that these guys could just trample it. He's not going to do that. Look, their trouble wasn't in the dullness of their mind, but in the hardness of their heart. These were hard-hearted men. And they didn't want the truth. They didn't want it. And Jesus condemned them and says, and you're not getting the truth. You're not going to get it.

Now, did they know the answer to Jesus' question? Of course they did. They knew the answer. They knew that John the Baptist was sent by God. But they knew that they would have to face the truth if they answered it truthfully. And so they lied. They lied. And they said, we don't know. You guys know. You know exactly what the answer is. But they lied. And they revealed in front of this entire crowd, that they are hypocrites. They're hypocrites. These men say that they are the leaders of God's people. But they show that they don't care about God, and they don't care about God's people.

And in this moment, Christ shows this crowd of people who truly has all authority. One commentator says, "Christ's refusal to answer is essentially saying that if they have no discernment in the ways of God, with reference to John, they have no authority or ability to judge the source of His authority." They had no authority, it was gone. He stripped it in a moment with a question in front of all of these people. Jesus stripped what authority they thought that they had, and Jesus shows them, I have all authority. This is my temple. And this is not what you do to the temple of God.

In closing, turn over to Matthew 28. Matthew 28, famous passage to us. This is after the resurrection of Christ, as He's there with the 11, no longer 12. But now 11, because Judas went and hanged himself after he denied Christ. And so there's 11. And in Matthew 28, in verse 18, it says this.

And Jesus came up and spoke to them, saying, "All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. 19 Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name

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of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, 20 teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age." (Matt 28:18-20)

Christ has all authority. He has all authority. And listen, there are a lot of religious people out there who have hearts, just like those Sanhedrin. They're prideful, they're puffed up and many have created their own reasons. They've created their own religion. And many even call their religion Christianity. But here's what they want. They want Christianity without Christ. They want the blessings of God, but they don't want God. They want to belong to somewhere, to the Church of Christ, but they don't love Christ. And many people have created their own religion of Christianity without Christ. And they will be held responsible.

- And they will have to stand before Christ one day, who has all authority, they will be judged. For Philippians tells us that "Every knee will bow and every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord." (Phil 2:10-11) That's not just speaking of believers, that means unbelievers as well. They will bow the knee to Christ, and they will confess Him as Lord.
- And He will say, I never knew you, Depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness. (Matt 7:23) You who have created your own religion, that you called Christianity, but you wanted Christianity without Me.

So what is our duty then as disciples of Christ? What are we to do? We've been given the truth. We have the truth. We have the authoritative Word right here in our hands. And our duty is to go and proclaim the gospel and call people to submit to the authority of Christ. We've been commissioned by Christ, who has all authority, to go out and tell others to come and to submit to the Lordship of Christ. We are to call them to repent of their sins, and to trust in Christ as their Lord and Savior. And listen, not just their Savior, but their Lord. We're to call people to submit to Christ as Lord.

Is He your Lord? Is He your master? Is He your King this morning? Does He have all authority in your life? Listen, when He becomes Lord of your life, then you're no longer in conflict with Christ's authority. There's no longer conflict in your life. Why? Because we, as believers who submit to the authority of Christ, we do it willingly, because we love Him. And then we live out our lives under the authority of Christ, and we live for His glory.

Spurgeon said, "I believe certain doctrines because God says they are true. And the only authority I have for their truth is the word of God. I received such and such doctrines not because I can prove them to be compatible with reason not because my judgment accepts them. But because God says they are true."

Now this is one of the best services we can render to God, you ready for it? To submit ourselves to Him in our belief of what He is revealed and ask Him to fix His truth in our hearts and make us obey Him. Father, make me obey You. I submit to Your authority. And here in this church... at Faith Bible Church... Christ has all authority here. This is not a church that's established on my opinions, not the opinions of the elders. It's established on the authority of Christ. He rules and reigns in this place. Because He is our king, because He is our master who has all authority, we should worship Him. And submit to Him and give Him glory and honor that He alone deserves. May we be people who have hearts that desire to submit to the authority of Christ, our King.

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Let's pray. Father, thank You for this amazing passage here, and putting on display for us the authority of Christ, our King. Father, I pray that You would help us to be, as Spurgeon said, people who submit to Your authority and I pray that You would make us obey You, that our hearts would be so fixed upon You, and Your Kingship, and Your Lordship and Your authority, that there is no other desire in our hearts, other than to submit and obey You. Christ, we thank You that You have built Your church, that You will promise to build Your church and that You continue to build Your church. And we know that the gates of hell will not prevail against Your church because You are the one who is the head of Your church, because You are the one who has all authority over Your church. Father, I pray that we would live as people who don't submit to our own opinions in the opinions of others, but we would be people who submit to the authority of You and Your Word. Father, I pray for anyone who is here this morning that doesn't know You, that has not submitted their life to the Kingship and authority of Christ. I pray that You would cause them to repent and put their trust in Christ, that You would soften their hearts and that You would grant them the gift of salvation here this morning. All for Your glory and Your glory alone we pray in Christ's name Amen.