

Lord in our lives leads us to salvation.

4 Or do you show contempt for the riches of his kindness, forbearance and patience, not realizing that God's kindness is intended to lead you to repentance? 5 But because of your stubbornness and your unrepentant heart, you are storing up wrath against yourself for the day of God's wrath, when his righteous judgment will be revealed.

- Romans 2:4-5 NIV

God has warned us about the consequence of a stubborn and unrepentant heart. He is gracious, compassionate, slow to anger and abounding in love. What is the response He is seeking from us? Why is it not enough to confess our sins?

Jesus' authority is not merely religious. He has the authority to judge, to heal, to free us from sin and death and to give us new life. Just as the persistent vineyard owner sent messengers time and again looking for good fruit, God sent us His Word, His presence and His people to call us to repent, to return to Him. Ultimately God sent us Jesus to reveal the depth of His love for us. He wants our hearts under His loving hand. We need to trust Him with our whole lives to receive that love.

WRAP-UP

Authority is essential for order, yet many in our culture reject it. Jesus' authority, however, is unique, rooted not in power or position, but in His identity as the Messiah and Son of God. Throughout Mark's Gospel, His authority is revealed through His teaching, forgiveness, healing, and command over nature. When the religious leaders challenge His authority Jesus responds with a question about John the Baptist's authority, exposing their stubborn and unrepentant hearts towards God. Through the parable of the vineyard, He reveals their rebellion and warns of judgment for rejecting God's messengers. Jesus' authority extends beyond religion—it encompasses all creation and calls for humble repentance, trust, and obedience to His loving rule.

MEMORY VERSE

4 Or do you show contempt for the riches of his kindness, forbearance and patience, not realizing that God's kindness is intended to lead you to repentance? - Romans 2:4 NIV

Challenge –

Ask God to show you any areas where you are resisting His authority and relying on something other than Him to guide your decisions.

Authority **Gospel of Mark Ch. 11 - Week 2**

INTRODUCTION

Authority is necessary to maintain order in our lives. But there has been a rejection of authority in our culture, perhaps due to its abuse. But Jesus' authority is different. It isn't maintained by exerting power or position over others. It is based on His identity as the Messiah of Israel. It is more than a religious authority; it is authority in all things. Throughout the Gospel of Mark Jesus authority has been demonstrated by His teaching (Mark 1:22), forgiveness of sins and healing (Mark 2:6-11) and over the chaos of nature (Mark 4:41). In this week's passage Jesus responds to the challenge to His authority by the religious rulers who ask, "By what authority are you doing these things? And who gave you authority to do this?" By using a parable, He exposes their hearts of rebellion, idolatry and unrepentance.

Ice Breaker

Who in your life has authority to say, "You're a Mess" and you will listen?

Key Passages

27 They arrived again in Jerusalem, and while Jesus was walking in the temple courts, the chief priests, the teachers of the law and the elders came to him. 28 "By what authority are you doing these things?" they asked. "And who gave you authority to do this?" - Mark 11:27-28 NIV

STUDY QUESTIONS

1. John's Authority

29 Jesus replied, "I will ask you one question. Answer me, and I will tell you by what authority I am doing these things. 30 John's baptism--was it from heaven, or of human origin? Tell me!" 31 They discussed it among themselves and said, "If we say, 'From heaven,' he will ask, 'Then why didn't you believe him?' 32 But if we say, 'Of human origin'?" (They feared the people, for everyone held that John really was a prophet.) - Mark 11:29-32 NIV

From our key passage we see that the religious leaders were questioning Jesus' authority. Jesus answers their question with this question- Was John's baptism from heaven or men? Jesus was not willing to defend His authority before this rebellious group, but rather He chose to reveal the motivation for their question.

Their two options were from Heaven or from Men. If they said, "from heaven", what do you think would have been the answer to the question they feared; "Why didn't you believe John?" If they said, "from Men", what would that reveal to the people about them?

33 So they answered Jesus, "We don't know." Jesus said, "Neither will I tell you by what authority I am doing these things." - Mark 11:33 NIV

1 "I will send my messenger, who will prepare the way before me. Then suddenly the Lord you are seeking will come to his temple; the messenger of the covenant, whom you desire, will come," says the LORD Almighty. 2 But who can endure the day of his coming? Who can stand when he appears? For he will be like a refiner's fire or a launderer's soap. 3 He will sit as a refiner and purifier of silver; he will purify the Levites and refine them like gold and silver. - Malachi 3:1-3a NIV

When the teachers of the Law said they didn't know the source of John's authority, they essentially said they didn't recognize or accept that He was the messenger prophesied in Malachi 3.

How is Jesus' authority as Israel's Messiah related to recognizing John as the messenger God sends in Malachi 3? How does Malachi 3:3 directly threaten those who were questioning Jesus? Do you remember the last time you had to admit that you were wrong and accept the consequences? Is it difficult to admit you are wrong, or can you quickly accept your mistakes, repent and ask forgiveness? Is this an area you still need God to work on?

For the teachers of the Law, being in control and appearing to be right were a higher priority than obeying God. We still face the same difficult choice—resist God's authority and do things our own way or humble ourselves and repent when we are wrong.

2. Parable of the Vineyard

1 Jesus then began to speak to them in parables: "A man planted a vineyard. He put a wall around it, dug a pit for the winepress and built a watchtower. Then he rented the vineyard to some farmers and moved to another place. 2 At harvest time he sent a servant to the tenants to collect from them some of the fruit of the vineyard. 3 But they seized him, beat him and sent him away empty-handed. 4 Then he sent another servant to them; they struck this man on the head and treated him shamefully. 5 He sent still another, and that one they killed. He sent many others; some of them they beat, others they killed. 6 "He had one left to send, a son, whom he loved. He sent him last of all, saying, 'They will respect my son.' - Mark 12:1-6 NIV

Parables are not always easy to understand. Thanks to the theologians who have studied the Bible over the centuries we have a better understanding than Jesus' original audience may have. This is the context we have come to believe applies to this parable; the Vineyard is Israel, the owner is God, the Servants are the prophets possibly including John the Baptist, the Son is Jesus and the renters the religious leaders.

The owner of the vineyard sent many servants and finally his beloved son. What does this demonstrate to you about God's character?

8 So they took him (the son) and killed him, and threw him out of the vineyard. 9 "What then will the owner of the vineyard do? He will come and kill those tenants and give the vineyard to others. 10 Haven't you read this passage of Scripture: " 'The stone the builders rejected has become the cornerstone; - Mark 12:8-10 NIV

1 I will sing for the one I love a song about his vineyard: My loved one had a vineyard on a fertile hillside. 2 He dug it up and cleared it of stones and planted it with the choicest vines. He built a watchtower in it and cut out a winepress as well. Then he looked for a crop of good grapes, but it yielded only bad fruit. ... 4 What more could have been done for my vineyard than I have done for it? When I looked for good grapes, why did it yield only bad? 5 Now I will tell you what I am going to do to my vineyard: I will take away its hedge, and it will be destroyed; I will break down its wall, and it will be trampled. 6 I will make it a wasteland, neither pruned nor cultivated, and briers and thorns will grow there. I will command the clouds not to rain on it." 7 The vineyard of the LORD Almighty is the nation of Israel, and the people of Judah are the vines he delighted in. And he looked for justice, but saw bloodshed; for righteousness, but heard cries of distress.

- Isaiah 5:1-2, 4-7 NIV

12 Then the chief priests, the teachers of the law and the elders looked for a way to arrest him because they knew he had spoken the parable against them. But they were afraid of the crowd; so they left him and went away. - Mark 12:12 NIV

Based on a similar parable in Isaiah, what bad fruit did God find and what good fruit was He seeking from His vineyard? The teachers of the law would have been familiar with Isaiah's story of the vineyard. It appears that they realized that Jesus was referencing this prophetic picture through His parable (v. 12). What disastrous consequences would they expect to follow for them (v 5-6) that might cause them to seek to arrest Jesus?

3. Critical Warning: Judgment

In His parable Jesus exposed the hearts of the religious leaders. He still does the same today with us. And just as in His parable, the rejection of His authority in our lives results in judgment while the acceptance of Jesus as