

**The Authority of Jesus**  
**Mark 11:27-33**

It's always wonderful to recount the specific work of Christ that grants us access into that holy place, that holy of holies of relationship with God that we have. It's wonderful to be able to sing that and to approach that even in Mark's gospel. As we are getting near the end in Mark's gospel, we are tracking on into the final week here of Christ's ministry and His life here on this earth. We will be in Mark 11:27-33.

It's no doubt that you have experiences with people from time to time. Maybe you've had your own experiences where you have to work with authority that's been placed over you. Many of us have been in these environments whether that's in a family, in a classroom as a student, in a job as a worker, or having an employer - simply living in this country and having a government. Alright? All of those things have been our experiences of having authority over us, and everyone handles it a little differently. Some people are fine with it, and they're able to go along with the flow, to fit in, to fall into place, to follow the instructions given. But there's always times where you have people that have a hard time with that. They have a problem with authority, and they rise up, and they can't stand it any longer. They have this problem with authority. So much so, that they have to speak. They have to make a stand. They have to rebel in some way against the authority that is over them. They have to make their position known, and no doubt, we've all experienced these people. We've seen them and what they've done, and often, how it does not go well with them when they have this problem with authority.

What we're going to find today is the beginning of several controversies between Jesus and the religious authorities, the Jewish leadership. We've been seeing from time to time, a little bit in Mark 2 and 3, a little bit in Mark 7, these clashes with Jesus, but it has not been much. But this morning, we see the beginning, the beginning of kicking-off these controversies that take place, and it all centers around this very idea - they struggle with and will not obey the authority of Christ - they have a problem with authority. They have a problem with authority, and understandably so because they think they're the authority. They're the religious leaders. They're the people that have been taking this nation and trying to maintain its practice of devotion to

God as it was set up in the Old Testament. They think that they have the control, the ability, the authority, and that kind of opportunity even here. And Jesus comes, and they're challenged, and they do not let it happen in this casual fashion, but they rise up because they have a very massive problem with His authority. That's what we're going to find this morning and realize that in the same way that these religious leaders have a problem with the authority of Christ, so too does the world around us, the lost. This is the lost. This is the condition of those that are not saved. They too have a problem with authority. They have a problem with bowing down to the ultimate authority of God through Christ Jesus in their lives.

So, let's look at this beginning of these many controversies that will begin to unfold in Mark's gospel. 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.' " This is how we kick off the beginning of the controversies that will unfold here in this passion week as we have seen.

Why is it coming to a head? Why are we going to see this this morning and more of this to come? Because of the time, the nature of the time of the year; it's Passover, and all the Jews are coming to Jerusalem. They're coming to the temple. They're coming for this week leading up to the Passover meal and the celebration here. And so, there's now a close proximity between all the Jews, whether they're from Galilee or Judea, coming in to this temple, coming in to this city, that puts Jesus closer to these religious authorities, and in these moments, it causes them to rise up and to have a problem with His authority, that's what we see from the very beginning. In verses 27-28 is how we kick it off with their dare - the dare that they have that they would come up to Jesus and question His authority.

To set the scene, we see it's Jesus and His disciples who are again in Jerusalem. They came to Jerusalem again. This is what they've done. As this week unfolds, they set up camp outside of Jerusalem. They're staying at someone's house in Bethany, and then they'll come in. About a mile away, they'll come in to Jerusalem for the day's activities, for the opportunity to interact, to kind of engage and to take part in what is taking place during this week of Passover. So, here they are again, no surprise to us, back in Jerusalem for this day. And notice, they're walking in the temple, and the last time we were in Mark's gospel, we had Jesus interacting in the temple, and it wasn't a pleasant, normal interaction. It was definitely one of, you could even say, some hostility and tension as Jesus made a scene from Jesus cleansing as it's properly and popularly known. He cleanses the temple just the day before this, and now, He's back the next day, and He and His disciples are walking in the temple.

I wonder what's it like? I wonder what the scene is like given the fact that Jesus was just there making a scene. Essentially, one man stopped the operations on the temple, not just the building there, but the Temple Mount, that area. He Himself kind of had it on lockdown. No one was walking back and forth. No one was doing business anymore. He was flipping over tables. He Himself had control of the temple area. So, here He is back in the next day. More than likely, people are starting to get the hint, and you have this scene where He is now starting to run the place, and people are realizing who He is, and are not going to even try and test Him. They don't want to try and do their business. They don't want to try and take over again. They're letting Jesus be there more than likely as He's walking with His disciples. Obviously, not everyone's okay with this, the leader's themselves have a big problem. Look at these leaders that we see mentioned here; "...the chief priests and the scribes and the elders came to him..." This coalition joined this alliance that's pretty massive. When you think about all the people involved, the chief priests, naturally so because this is the temple, and the priests were operating there with the temple duties and the sacrifices and the system of worship that has been set in place even since the Old Testament. So, the chief priests there are concerned about what's taking place with Jesus. The scribes, these aren't the ones that just mindlessly copy, these are the experts in the Law. They know the Scriptures well. They're lawyers. They know the details. These are the ones that people look to for the answers to all their questions. And then the elders, those that have

established themselves as leaders over time and have this kind of sage-like ability, they are the wise men that are there.

And so, all of these come together, the leaders that actually make up what is the Sanhedrin, that kind of Jewish council, the Jewish religious leaders that have this council of seventy-one men almost functioning like a supreme court system for the Jewish people. If they could not handle things in their cities, if they could not handle things in their towns, and as these religious came to arise and came to a higher level of importance, then they would come to these men, the Sanhedrin, to the chief priests, to the scribes, to these lawyers and to these elders - these are the people that are responsible for leading the nation, these religious leaders, and they are banding together. They're coming together to approach Jesus, not in a pleasant fashion at all. They're coming together with this daring confrontation ;“By what authority are you doing these things, or who gave you this authority to do them?” And you think, where is this coming from? Just think what's taken place the last couple of days. A couple days ago, Jesus comes into Jerusalem on a donkey. Everyone's laying down branches and cloaks and giving Him the royal entrance like a king. They're calling Him the Messiah as He comes into the city. And then the next day, Jesus is cleansing the temple. He attacks the temple and pronounces judgment on what's taking place there.

These are massive things, not just catching the attention of the average person walking around, this is stirring up everybody including the very ones who thought they had control over this, the ones who are known to be the authorities over what's taking place in Jerusalem, but they have to come and they have to rise up and they have to address Jesus and they do with this confrontation; “By what authority are you doing these things, or who gave you this authority to do them?” Essentially, who do you think you are? You're just going to waltz in here and act like you own the place? Who do you think you are? Is this your house? Is this your city? Obviously, we know the answer is yes, it is. He owns it all. It's His. It rightfully belongs to Him. But these men, thinking that they're the authorities feel offended and have to address Him and have to confront Him. Notice how they do it with these two questions; “By what authority are you doing these things...” and “...who gave you this authority to do them?” What is it that you've done? What makes you qualified to come in here and act like this Jesus, or who gave you the permission? Because it wasn't any of us. We're all looking at each other

here. As we're the leaders, we're the ones in control (or so we think), and none of us gave you the okay to come in here and start acting like this.

What've you done or who told you you could do this, obviously dramatic irony in that because the question, "What has Jesus done?", is a slap in the face; "By what authority..." Let's think what's happened the last three years. Has Jesus really operated in a vacuum the last three years? Absolutely not. Even though the bulk of His public ministry was in Galilee, He, no doubt, did miracles, and He did teaching and healings in other places in Israel. On top of that, the fact that people were hearing about Him from outside of Israel, not just from the south in Judea, but from even northern cities and northern nations and were coming to Him, gives you an indication that people knew about this. So, these men are not exempt. They knew. They knew the kinds of things that Jesus was doing over the last three years. They knew fully well that Jesus was qualified to be not just a prophet, not just a man of God, but the Messiah, just by nature of what He was doing.

And the other irony too is, who gave you this authority? Who gave you permission Jesus? Once again, think about the baptism when Jesus went out to John the Baptism and was baptized, and you had a voice from heaven, God Himself, giving authentication to who Jesus was as the Messiah, His own Son, identifying Him for who He was, again not just a holy man, but the Son of God, and again as some of the disciples were privileged to see as when Jesus was transfigured up on the mountain, and they saw His glory, and God again confirmed this is My son, this is the reality. Jesus has had plenty and ample evidence to lay before the people of who He was, what He had done, how qualified He was and who gave Him that authority - God Himself. Yet here are the men, here are the men who think they're in charge - here are the chief priests - here are the scribes - here are the elders - saying, who do you think you are? We own this place, this is our operation. What are you doing here? They're presenting the challenge to Jesus. They have a problem with authority. They will not, they cannot, accept the authority of Christ.

And in the same way, in a very parallel fashion, this is the case for those that are lost, for those that are not saved, for those who have not believed in Christ. It's because they have a problem with authority. They challenge this very message you and I bring. We preach a message of Christ, and the world asks, who gives you the right to do that? How dare you tell me what to

believe. How dare you impose. How dare you try to bring your religious convictions upon me. We warn the world about eternal consequences of their sin, and the world tells us back off. I know what I'm doing. I like my life. We proclaim a holy and perfect God who justly punishes sin, and the world writes it off as such a God as just primitive and ancient and that's out of vogue. I can't. You still believe in something like that? We announce that salvation is found in Jesus alone, and the world questions such exclusivity. Only one way to heaven? How dare you speak of such things. We declare the need for complete faith and trust in Christ, and the world prefers to hope that their good outweighs the bad that they've done. The world has a problem. It's the same problem that these men have. They have a problem with authority. They know plenty. They have tons of information available to them. Their hang-up is they're not willing to submit, and so they challenge. How dare you tell me what to believe. How dare you tell me what is true.

This is the challenge that is being brought to Jesus. Obviously, we get His response in our text in verses 29-30 when He comes back at them with a demand. They have their daring challenge, and He comes back with His demand to them. Verses 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.'" Jesus comes back and decides that He's the one that asks the questions around here, not them. Sorry, you want to be in the driver's seat? You want to think you have the control? You want to think you're your own authority? But that's not the case. He doesn't engage on their level. He's not going to take time to answer such lame questions. What gives Me the right? Who gives Me the right to do these things? Are you blind? Can you not hear? Have you not seen what has taken place, what Jesus has done? Instead, He responds in the form of a question. And there's a possibility here where Jesus is engaging in the type of dialogue that they liked to do with the rabbis, as they would speak to one another. And they would use this question as kind of a model of someone posing a question, but someone posing their superior intellect by asking another question that not only addresses that question, but takes it to another level. And the conversation would continue to pile up with more questions that would go back and forth, and it's possible that Jesus is doing this, beating them at their own game, beating them at their own style. Nonetheless, just from the straight forward understanding of this question and how they respond, you get an exposure of their heart. You get

an exposure of who they really are, and you have Jesus revealing this, not just for His disciples, but for everyone that was in this dialogue.

If they could answer this question, then Jesus would tell them the authority He has to attack the temple and why He can do so. This is His question, “Was the baptism of John from heaven or from man?” ... “Was the baptism of John from heaven or from man?” Jesus recalls back to John the Baptist and his ministry. And His question is simple. Let’s just talk about John the Baptist in general, a man of God sent from God? Or, just a crazy person, a mere man, a mere man doing what men do trying to gain a following? Of all the questions, why this one? You think, Jesus has an opportunity to respond. He could do it any way He wants to. Why does He pick this? Why does He do a question with this? Why does He ask them about John the Baptist?

Well, on one level, there’s a simplicity to the fact that you have to ask yourself, well, where did John the Baptist do his ministry? He was located in Judea. He was there in the south. He was not far from here. He was not far from Jerusalem. He was out in the wilderness, but he was out by the Jordon River, not very far from Jerusalem, doing his preaching ministry and baptizing. So, do the people in Judea know about John the Baptist? Were they aware of his ministry? Absolutely. We saw people streaming out to him when we briefly looked at his ministry in Mark 1. People from all over knew about him. In fact, in the book of Acts, we found out that John the Baptist’s ministry was spreading beyond Israel. It was going to other places in the world. John the Baptist had an impactful ministry. No doubt they would have heard of this and had to have some thoughts about John the Baptist. So, Jesus addresses something that is very obvious and very clear, but even more so, John the Baptist’s baptism, his ministry, it recalls the very beginning of Jesus’ ministry over these past three years. It kind of takes them back to the start. It takes them back to the beginning. Rather than Jesus engaging with, well, you know, about a week ago, I can tell you some of the miracles I did. Or, here’s what I did the other day. Or, let me show you a fig tree that I cursed and what happened to it. He could do that, but instead, He goes all the way back to the beginning when Jesus went public, when Jesus began His ministry, no doubt always being the Son of God, but these last three years of His life being the obvious and well-known preaching and teaching, healing and miracle working ministry of the Messiah. And that all kicked off with Him getting baptized by John in the Jordon River when John the

Baptist baptized and commenced Jesus public ministry. Jesus goes back to this. He goes back to the very beginning of His own ministry.

If you've been alive, if you've had a pulse (right?), if you've actually been awake, then you would know about everything that has happened since the baptism of Christ. You would know of everything that's taken place and how the people are amazed and in awe of Christ and what He's doing, and there's no sufficient answer for it other than He is the Messiah. But Jesus just goes back to the beginning and says, if you can't figure out what happened with John, then you do not understand Me. If you can't figure out, and if you can't understand what John was doing, then you have no idea what I am doing. It's simple. It's simple. Jesus again aligns Himself with John the Baptist, coming right in his wake. John the Baptist, the necessary and prophesied forerunner, and Jesus being the Messiah who is coming. He goes back to the beginning of His public ministry when John the Baptist baptized Him. He turns the tables on them and says, how about this? Here's an even more basic question for you. Everything that's been happening over these last three years, kicking off with this baptism of John, what is it? Is it from God or not? Is it just man's work or is it the work of God? He turns the tables on these religious leaders.

He puts the ball back in their court and has them answer a way more basic question that they needed to answer. It's possible that there was even a pause after He asked the question that He has to say, "Answer me." He's in complete control now. These men band together, the Sanhedrin coming together, a group of them larger than Jesus and the twelve coming up to Him, asking Him the question, challenging His authority, and now Jesus has completely flipped it on them. So much so, that He tells them, "Answer me." And they have to take a time out and get into a huddle. They don't know how to play the game. They're not even ready to respond to Him. Jesus has a response for these accusations and these challenges. In the same way, we too have a response when the world, when the lost, when the unsaved, start to make these challenges against us and what we believe. We too can turn the tables lovingly, and we too can ask them an even more basic question. They're going to sit there and try and poke holes in our belief system and our world view, then we can come back at them and ask them questions, more basic questions that they have to answer.



We can ask the world who has revealed His power in His creation of all things so that mankind is without excuse. Where did everything come from that we see? You have to answer that question. We ask who has written His law on the hearts of mankind so that the world actually has a sense of good and evil, right and wrong, a conscience? Where does that come from? We ask who has written eternity on the heart of mankind that the world actually acknowledges the eternal; there is more than just this life but also a life to come? Where do these things come from? Who's responsible for them? Answer us. You must answer. You have to answer those basic questions. You can sit and be the sceptic all day, but you need to have an answer for those basic questions of creation and conscience and eternity in man's heart. The world cannot answer such necessary and obvious questions without admitting to the existence of God Almighty. They have to. They have to come to that conclusion.

Of course, in our passage, as we see, we get to see these authorities. We get to see them fumble this and try and respond, and what we find is this dilemma that they are in, in verses 31-32, the dilemma that has been posed for them. Jesus has put them in their place; "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." And thus, we enter into their world. These men who thought they were in control, who thought they had the authority, who have now been put in their place and can't even answer this most basic question about John the Baptist. They had to actually discuss it with one another and consider their options, and in their consideration of the options, we realize the dilemma they're in. If they affirmed that John the Baptist and his ministry is from God, then they'll look like terrible leaders because they didn't believe him, and they didn't follow him. They weren't baptized in his ministry. If they affirmed John the Baptist, really, then this conversation wouldn't be happening because they would be following Jesus. It's that simple. If they truly believed that John the Baptist and his ministry was from God as Jesus is asking, then they would be following Jesus already. They'd be bowing down to His authority. Clearly, they don't believe that.

"But shall we say, 'From man'?'—they were afraid of the people, for they all held that John really was a prophet." The second part of their dilemma stems from short-changing John the Baptist and saying he was just a man.

He was just a crazy man that had to go out into the wilderness and dress in weird outfits and try and kind of be a radical that got the people stirred up. That's their other option. Then, this really is what they thought. This was in fact the truth of what these religious leaders thought about John the Baptist, but obviously, for them to take such a stance means a falling out with the people as Mark shows us so clearly. It means them losing the control they have, losing the authority they have, losing their leadership ability over this nation. In fact, Luke 20:6 in parallel passage, we read, "But if we say, 'From man,' all the people will stone us to death..." This is how massive this was. There was a lot at stake. It's not just that the people would go, aw, and public opinion would go down. It would get hostile real quick if they said anything against John the Baptist; "...for [the people] are convinced that John was a prophet." The people were right. The people recognized this. I mean they probably even knew this just from the very fact that after the Old Testament prophets stopped speaking and you had these years upon years and decades and centuries of silence until finally God comes, and what does He do? He announces the birth of John the Baptist. The people caught this. The people get it. This is a big deal. God getting our attention again, announcing this forerunner John the Baptist, to come and then soon after him the Messiah. The people got it.

And you think, here Jesus has asked a basic question about someone that is so well known, John the Baptist, and He's asking it to the elite, the intellectual elite, those that are leading the people and should know how to govern them and point them in the right direction spiritually speaking. He asks them about this prophet that came and they have to sit there and deliberate. Are you even leading these people? Do you know what you're doing? What does that tell you about their leadership? They have no idea what they're doing. They have to actually have a huddle. They have to actually form an opinion about John. What've they been doing? Just ignoring Him, maintaining their control? Now they're in this dilemma, and they look silly. The reality is too, when we think of the lost and those who are not saved, they run into a parallel and similar dilemma. If they acknowledge that there is a Creator behind creation, if the world admits that there is a moral law-giver who has written His Law on the hearts of mankind, if unbelievers and the lost grant that there is an eternal One who has given mankind the concept of eternity, then they must explain why they aren't worshipping Him. If they're willing to go, true creation's pretty obvious there is a God, then why aren't you worshipping Him? And clearly,

that's not what they want. The world is looking for new ideas to discuss, not the truth, because it would then demand the total devotion of their lives. They've got a problem with authority. They don't want to have to bow down to what they think is the obvious and what they might find if they grant that there is a Creator. Just like the religious leaders, they're not willing to say John the Baptist is from God, otherwise, guess what? Jesus is in control now, and you've got to bow down to Him.

For unbelievers today in the world, on the other hand, if they deny the God of the Bible, if they reject Christianity all out, then they will fall out of popularity with mankind. Why, do you say? Because this is the day and age that you and I live in. Mankind has trumpeted the beauty of coexistence and tolerance. That is the battle cry of our day. That is the motto of our generation - get along, no matter what your background, no matter what you believe, no matter what your convictions are. Let's all find a way to come together and just be one and just get along and coexist. Tolerance is the idol. You see, so for unbelievers, if they choose to actually say that is false and throw out the Bible and throw the ideas of Christianity, then they run the risk of committing the very same hate speech that they condemn Christians for committing. They think you and I are practicing hate speech when we stand up for Christ as the only way of salvation. Well, they would do the same thing if they say Christianity's false. So, they're in this dilemma. What do we do? Admit that evidence seems to point that there is a God? Well, no, because then we have to worship Him. Go the other way and claim it's false? Well, no, because people aren't liking that. That's not what people do. We need to be tolerant. Yeah, we need to all get along with one another. And this is why the world is not yet comfortable completely denouncing Biblical Christianity. For now, they care too much about what others think, and it's the same position that the chief priests and the scribes and the elders are forced into.

And it comes to verse 33 where it's a disappointing position that they take, a very disappointing outcome, an opportunity for sure presented right before where they have the chance to confess, to bow down, to worship, but instead that is not what they decide. In verse 33; “ ‘We do not know.’ And Jesus said to them, ‘Neither will I tell you by what authority I do these things.’ ” This is their answer; “We do not know.” After all the discussion, after the time out that they have taken, after all their learning and memorizing, after all their experience as the leaders of the Jewish people, after all their

exposure to John the Baptist and his ministry, they have this huddle. They convene. They talk, and their answer is, “We do not know.” What are we paying you for? What’re you guys doing? You’re the leaders, and that’s the best you can come up with? Jesus simply asks this question, and you say, “We do not know”? Obviously, unwilling to accept John the Baptist authority because if they did so, they’d have to accept Jesus’ authority. They’re not going down that path. They did not want to submit to the authority of Jesus. They have a problem with authority. They also do not want to lose their favor and standing with the people. So, this is their genius response; “We do not know.” This is the best that they can do.

Honestly, what we’re looking at right here in our text is the same exact thing with what you find with the world and the lost today. This is the smartest answer unbelievers can come up with today. This is the best that they can do; “We do not know.” We don’t know what to do with all this. We’d rather keep this position where we’re in touch with mankind, and we’re all getting along, and we say who knows, maybe a little bit of Christianity, maybe a little bit of this religion, maybe a little bit of this idealism and thinking - it all can kind of maybe work together. We just don’t really know. “We do not know.” That’s the genius position that the lost can hold. That’s the best that they can do. At best, man in all of his wisdom can confidently assert that he is agnostic. That’s the best he can do. He becomes like one who has his feet firmly planted in mid-air. That’s what he can do. That’s what he can come up with, and this is exactly the case. I’m not just talking about average people in the everyday world, and those that are lost. I’m talking about those that are the researchers, those that are the intellectual elite today. You press them, and you ask them these questions, and you have them respond to you on the very basics of life and origin and where this all came from, and what is the greatest answer they can give to you? Well, we just don’t know where that all came from. All your learning, all this time, all this research, you don’t know? That’s it? That’s what you got? Why? It’s not because you need more information; it’s because you have a problem with authority. It’s because you are not willing to submit to the God of the universe. It’s not that you need more information. I don’t need to bring more evidence to you. You just need to bow down and worship Him, but you’re not willing to do that because you like ruling your own life. You like being your own boss, and you cannot come to that position of bowing down to Him. So, what do you say? Let’s just do what’s popular among the people. We just don’t really know, and we’ll keep researching.

“And Jesus said to them, ‘Neither will I tell you by what authority I do these things.’” Why is it that Jesus refuses to answer their question? Because He obviously could. It’s not that hard. What authority does He have? He could say I got the authority based on the fact that I’m the Messiah. I’m the Son of God. He’s the One that gave Me this authority, but really if they’d answered Jesus’ question honestly about John the Baptist, if they had taken the view that is true and that the people upheld, then they would get their question answered from Jesus regarding His own authority. Because once you get the answer about John, then you get the answer about Jesus. The people recognize this. It should’ve been simple to recognize that Jesus had the same authority that John did which was from God.

So in one sense, Jesus doesn’t need to answer their question because it’s obvious. It’s clear. It’s evident. Of course His authority is from God. On the other hand, Jesus not answering their question is consistent with how He treats those who should’ve known better. This is how Jesus has interacted from time to time with those that have been the leaders, the shepherds of God’s people, those that should have known. They’re responsible for this. They’re responsible for not just knowing God and His Word but teaching it and leading the people. They should know this, and Jesus says I’m done interacting with you. The fact that they were even asking and challenging Jesus at this point in His ministry is laughable. It’s ridiculous that they couldn’t get it. If you think about it, this is how Jesus responded to the Pharisees back in Mark 8 when they came and said we know you’ve done many miracles but give us a sign to show us that You are the Messiah. So then we can give You the stamp of approval and say it is true. You’re the Messiah. After Jesus had done countless signs and countless miracles in His Galilean ministry, what does He say? Oh, sure, let Me whip one up real quick for you. No, He says you don’t get a sign. There’s been plenty, “...no sign will be given to [you]...” and this “...adulterous generation...” that is not satisfied with the amount of miracles that I’ve done. They had lost the privilege of conversation with the Messiah. They had lost the privilege of Him giving them more information because they had all the information they needed. They did not need more info.

In the same way for the world today, that is the lost, for the world today that is in this position, where they don’t know God has decided you will not be on trial with the scoffer or the mocker or the sceptic. Instead, what God does

when people have consistently time and time again turned their back on the obvious, not admitted that there's a God, not acknowledge His handiwork and creation all around us, when people have done this time and time again and said no and rebelled and not given over to His authority, God, in turn, gives them over to more of their sin. This is what takes place for the lost. They have failed to worship God, and God allows them to run headlong into their sin, to indulge into their desires. God allows them to even get leaders for themselves and teachers that are false and say exactly what they want to hear and itch their ears. This is what God has done with those that are lost in the world to this extent, like these chief priests scribes and elders.

See, the reality is when we look at this passage and see the problem with these men, it's the same problem that we have with the lost today, the mission field that we're trying to reach, they don't have a problem with information. They don't have a problem with evidence. They have a problem with authority. They're not willing to admit they're not willing to bow down. They're not willing to accept the obvious and clear authority of God over this earth and their body. They're not willing to. Just like these men, they had an opportune moment here. They could confess. They could humble themselves. They could acknowledge it is true. You do have authority. You are the King of kings. And they have the knowledge to do it, but they didn't because they had a problem with authority. This is the best that mankind can do, take an unsatisfying position of agnosticism and say we just don't know. We need more information. A nice smoke-screen for the real problem - the real problem that they will not bow down to the authority of Christ. And the tragedy of such a position is that it comes across like it's winsome. To the world, it comes across like it's almost a position of humility, like, wow, that's amazing that they'd be willing to say, you know, we just don't really know yet, and we're still working at it. And that's a nice humble position for them to have. The reality is that doesn't quite cut it for God. That's not good enough.

God's not going to accept those that are uncertain about His existence. Aw, you know, I'll give you a little grace because you were still thinking about it. You're not sure. That's not how God operates. God has made it clear. Who does He accept? The one who has believed in His Son Jesus Christ. Those are the ones that He receives into His family, not the ones that're still working it through or still thinking about it, still not sure, on the fence so to speak. These men make it look like they're on the fence, but the reality is

they just don't even want anything to do with the authority of someone else over their life. They don't want God to call the shots. They want to call the shots, and that's our mission field, the people that you and I are reaching out to. They're blinded by Satan, following what the world has put before them. You are your own boss. You are your own king. And so we pray that God works a miracle in their life, and the Holy Spirit comes in and softens them, and they realize that to live in such a way, to live for yourself, is to receive eternal destruction from the true God that does exist and that has revealed Himself in His Son. How much more boldly we need to proclaim this message to them, to continue to put this before them, for them to be reminded time and time again of the truth that Jesus is the only way to the Father. If they would just come, and if there's anyone here even now this morning that's on the fence, if you would just come and bow down and no longer call the shots in your life, but let God be the King, let Christ rule over your life. Do not try to hang on and have control because you'll lose it all in the end. Instead, give it all over to Christ now so that you may gain a relationship with Him and eternal life with Him in the end. Let that be our prayer for those that are lost all around us in this city that we live in, and let that be our commitment to continue to push this before them, that they respond to a greater authority, a more important authority, the authority of Christ the King.