

# The Question of Authority

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[0:00] Thank you, Mrs. Johnson. Appreciate that. Take your Bibles over to Mark chapter 11. And whenever I hear that song, I always think of Brother Dart and just being able to spend time with him.

And it's good memories, as the Dart used to come and sing here. And it was just always a blessing to be able to have them here with us.

But they're now singing in a much better place. Amen. And so we're thankful for that and just the things there. But in Mark chapter 11 here this morning, as we're going to continue in our series through the book of Mark, we find now it is Tuesday morning and the religious leaders in Jerusalem, at this point, we're probably hoping that Jesus would not return to the temple.

You know, after the previous two events of the previous two days, I'm pretty sure that all the leaders within the temple in the area were saying, we don't want him to show up again today because we don't know what's going to happen.

But you know what? We're going to find here that Jesus did return. And we're going to find out what took place because in his previous visits, I mean, they were still causing a stir among the people.

[1:11] Stir amongst the leaders in his previous visits. When you think about as he entered into Jerusalem on that Sunday morning, as the people had put down their clothes and he rode upon the donkey all the way through town there and people were proclaiming and crying out just as Zechariah the prophet foretold, saying, Hosanna, blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord.

You know, when we understand that they were honoring him as the one that God had sent as the Savior, the one that was going to deliver them. And Jesus accepted that praise to him.

And we find the following day after he goes back to Bethany, he comes back and he comes back to the temple and he disrupts everything going on in the temple on Monday.

You know, if you remember, he overturned the tables. He changed out the money changers. And he taught in the temple that day and all the things that took place.

And it caused quite an uproar. I mean, it's pretty obvious. It was probably causing much people to talk. I mean, if there were social media in that day, that would have been what lit everything up. You know, everybody would be talking about Jesus, what he did in the temple.

[2:23] You know, and they'd be making the newsreel and the TikTok and everything else.

Everybody would be talking about it, about what was happening. I mean, it was that type of event that Jesus did in the temple.

That it would have stirred people up, if nothing else, to ask a question. They would end wondering, who is Jesus? Who is the one that did this?

Who is the one that came in and caused this uproar? So we find here is Jesus. We're going to look here as Jesus returns to the temple on Tuesday morning.

I can just imagine, as I was reading this and thinking about it, you know, oftentimes I try to think about, you know, how are people responding? And I was just thinking, you know, I just imagine the chief priests and the scribes and the elders that are going to come and confront Jesus when they see Jesus come in.

They're thinking, not again. Just that element of, okay, here we go, you know. They're trying to put together, how are we going to deal with this?

[3:26] Because he had disrupted everything about what they were doing. Because we have to keep in mind, this was Passover week. It was the week of Passover and they had certain things that they would do throughout the week in preparation for Passover.

And Jesus had disrupted the normal. Now the thing was, we need to remember, there was a problem with normal. What they were doing is not what they ought to be doing.

But we need to understand that it is. It's just like us. When our normal gets shaken out, it kind of disrupts everything, doesn't it? Kind of gets us on edge and we find that dynamic.

But this is where we find the chief priests and scribes and elders see Jesus coming into the temple and taking his place out there in the promenade in the outer perimeter there.

And I can just imagine Jesus sitting down and the crowd see him. And they begin to gather and they come together. And this is where we're going to pick up here in chapter 11 here this morning in verse 27.

[ 4 : 30 ] And so if you found that in your Bible, let's go ahead and stand together for the honor of reading of God's word. And we'll pick up here in verse 27 and read down through the end of the chapter.

And we're going to have everybody read responsibly here this morning. And so I'll read verse 27 and you guys will read verse 28. Okay, so we'll just go back and forth, okay? And so let's try this together here this morning.

And it says, And as he was walking in the temple, there came to him the chief priests and scribes and the elders and say unto him, By what authority doest thou these things?

And who gave thee this authority to do these things? And Jesus answered and said unto them, I will also ask of you one question and answer me, And I will tell you by what authority I do these things.

The baptism of John, was it from heaven or of men? Answer me. And they reasoned with themselves, saying, If we shall say from heaven, He will say, Why then did ye not believe him?

[ 5 : 41 ] But if we shall say of men, They feared the people, For all men counted John, That he was a prophet indeed. And they answered and said unto Jesus, We cannot tell.

And Jesus answered and saith unto them, Neither do I tell you by what authority I do these things. Let's pray. Heavenly Father, as we come before you this morning, Lord, we're just thankful for your word.

We're thankful for all that you provide for us. Lord, we're thankful that you are the one in authority. And you came with authority. Lord, we pray just to help us understand how we respond to that authority.

Lord, especially your word and with you. Lord, as we see here this morning, The need that something must be done. That needs to be addressed of your authority in our life, Of what you're doing.

And Lord, we pray we might not deny or delay. Lord, we might just accept who you are and what you've done. And Lord, we pray just to have your hand upon each heart here today, Lord, that we might consider that place of your authority in our lives here today.

[ 6 : 50 ] And Lord, we just ask all these things in your precious name. Amen. May be seated. You know, I think the scene here would have been something to behold. As you see, Jesus was walking in the temple, getting ready to teach.

And people would have been following him. And all of a sudden, you begin to hear a rumble in the background. The rumble of many little feet coming across the temple there.

And we find that this group that was coming to meet Jesus, We see here where the chief priests and the scribes and the elders of the people. And we find as these inquisitors drew closer, This would have been quite a crowd of individuals that came to meet Jesus.

It wasn't just one or two. It was like a whole crowd that would have been there that day to meet Jesus and to confront him. There would have been many there. So they would have made a noise coming across the temple area there.

You know, I don't think it was carpeted like we have here. You know, it was a stone building. So you would have heard people coming in the ruckus that was about to happen. And these three groups of Jewish leaders converge here to confront Jesus about what they had, all that had taken place.

[ 8 : 08 ] And we're going to look at their demand because they had a demand about his authority. You know, and oftentimes we look at this, but I want you to understand as the chief priests and the scribes and the elders came that day, they were the ones that if there was a problem, they were the ones that had a position of authority within the temple to deal with different things.

So in other words, it wasn't like a wrong crowd confronting Jesus in that sense, but why they were confronting him was a problem. And we're going to look here because the chief priests, just to kind of give you a little layout here of who these were, you know, the chief priests, the administrative staff over the priests of the temple, you know, they kind of oversaw all that, the temple things, the

things the priests were to do with the sacrifices and to take care of the showbread and to take care of all the lamps and all the things that were necessary.

That was their responsibility. They had oversight of that. And so they were, Jesus was, you might say, was in their quote-unquote territory of responsibility.

You know, and so when Jesus would come, then you had the scribes. Now the scribes, those were those responsible for studying the Hebrew scriptures and they served as those who would copy the scriptures and they were editors and teachers and jurists.

They were ones who would look at the law and try to keep track of it and understand those things. And then you have this other group, the elders. Now we don't know for sure how many came in the chief priests group or the scribe group, but we do have a pretty good idea how many showed up with the elders.

[ 9 : 49 ] Because we know from the Old Testament some things about this group and where they got it. You know, we find here the elders, this group was also known as the Sanhedrin. It was comprised of 70 men from among the people.

And now these men, their responsibility is they would take care of the moral and ethical questions of the day. You know, we think today we just, we're the only generation sometimes that have moral or ethical questions that come up, but how do we deal with it?

But you know, as human beings throughout time and as you grow and mature and as cultures change and different things impact it, we have different moral and ethical questions we have to answer.

And that was the saying, this elder's job was to kind of look through and kind of come to a consensus. Okay, this is where we're going to be. This is where we're going to land on this. And we find they get that from Numbers 11 when Moses put together the 70 to help rule Israel. And that was kind of their pattern. So we know already there was probably between 80 and 100 people came to meet Jesus.

[ 10 : 53 ] That's the reason I'm saying you could hear him coming. I mean, when 80 people are moving across the room together, you can hear him. I mean, that's a pretty sizable group of individuals. I can see them coming here and we're going to find here as they come and confront Jesus and these questioners demand that the Lord answer them regarding the authority to do these things.

Now notice here in verse 28 in our text, it says, And say unto him, By what authority doest thou these things? And the follow-up to that, and who gave thee this authority to do these things? You know, those are two pretty good questions they asked. There was nothing wrong with the question itself that they were asking. Because remember, they were responsible for what took place in the temple.

So them asking the question itself was not the issue. The question itself isn't the problem. But we're going to look here this morning. The problem was their attitude and their perception that led to the question.

Because we can ask a question for the wrong reason. You know, sometimes we can ask questions and say, You know, this is important. I need to know more about it.

[ 12 : 15 ] I need more information. I need more substance of what's going on here. But I want you to understand, as we look at this, we're going to find that these men that confronted Jesus this day were not there to get more information.

They were there to try to discredit Him. They were there to try to say, He's going to say something that's going to give us ammunition against Him. You know, we're going to catch Him in a question here on this question of authority.

And so they asked Him, And who, you know, why do you do these things? And who gave you authority to do it? Because you think about, Jesus took a lot of authority when He came into the temple and He began driving out all the those that bought and sold and overturning the tables in the temple.

That was something somebody had to have some authority to do. It wasn't just something you throw in. You know, if you think about, if you go in some place you're not supposed to be and you start doing that, you're going to get kicked out pretty quick. You know?

I want you to understand that they had a question about His authority because the way people were gathering and looking and honoring Jesus, and we're going to look at what was going on, here this morning.

[13:33] Because Jesus here, by accepting the claim, when they said, Hosanna, and that He came in the name of the Lord, and He was the one, they're basically saying, He's the one that came to save us.

He's from God. That's a big claim. The next day, He comes in and cleans out the temple and wouldn't let anybody pass.

That's a big claim of authority. Why can you do this? Or why are you doing this? The leaders were upset because He accepted the praise and the honor, and He took authority to cleanse the temple and to prepare the place for the Passover that week.

You know, they did not come with an honest inquiry, but their question was in the basis of who gave you the authority that we have?

Why are you questioning my authority? That's really what they were asking Jesus. They're saying, hey, listen up, we have the authority. Who do you think you are?

[14:49] Now, this is an important reality because these two questions still impact us today.

Because when the gospel is proclaimed, there's a question, by what authority do you declare what the gospel is to people?

Because the gospel contains authority. Because the authority is God's assessment of an individual. You know, you can accurately assess an individual by God's Word.

God says His Word is a mirror. It reflects directly. And God reveals to us very clearly that we are all sinners and have all come short of the glory of God. I want you to understand, we understand that I'm a sinner and you're a sinner.

How do we know that? I don't have to see what you do. God already declares it to be so. And when we understand the gospel, when somebody's confronted with the gospel, they're confronted with the question, who gave you authority to assess me?

We don't assess them, but God's Word does. By God's authority, it's a declaration. You know, when we understand the big picture here, because the problem is most of the time people think they're a good person.

[16:15] You know? Most people look at themselves and look at their own righteousness and say, I'm not as bad as. The problem is there we often look at the wrong thing.

You know? We look at the wrong assessment because our measurement isn't your neighbor. Your assessment isn't against the person you don't like.

We're being measured by God Himself. He is the standard. Jesus Christ is the standard by which we're measured. It doesn't take long to figure out you fall short.

You don't measure up. It's a question of authority. My authority or God's authority. You know, Isaiah 5:21 tells us this.

It says, Woe unto them that are wise in their own eyes and prudent in their own sight. You know, it's really easy to think highly of ourselves.

[17:19] and we understand that when the gospel is presented, when the demand is made of authority, we have some questions that need to be answered.

Now notice, they demanded an answer already assuming they could discredit it. Notice what they tell him here. And they, and he says, they tell him this and ask in verse 28, By what authority doest thou these things?

And who gave thee this authority to do? These things. So Jesus responds here in the next verse. His response to them is not a direct answer in a sense, but an indirect answer.

And there's a reason for that because remember, they were looking for ammunition. They were looking for something to discredit him. You know, we can learn a lot from Jesus about a little tact. because Jesus could have openly declared, I do it by my own authority because I and the Father are one. But that would have created a problem at the moment because the timing was not yet right.

[18:39] Because the scribes and elders could have said, he assessed himself to God. By our law, we can stone him. Now we know that Jesus is and Jesus didn't deny that he wasn't.

But notice how he deals with the situation. He looks at them and asks them a question. He says, you answer this first and then I will tell you by what authority. And we'll look a little later in the weeks to come, we're going to see that Jesus gives them an answer through parable.

and when you finish reading in chapter 12, you'll find out that they understood the answer. Jesus didn't give them ammunition, he gave them an answer that they didn't like.

But it was an accurate answer. And they didn't doubt what he said. But we find here that Jesus, look at Jesus' question.

He said, verse 29, I will also ask of you one question and answer me and I will tell you by what authority I do these things. And he asked him a very simple question.

[ 19 : 48 ] He looks at him and says, the baptism of John, was it from heaven or of man? simple question.

But it was a question also of authority. Because by what authority did John come? These men that were there before Jesus were struggling with that same question.

They struggled with John. John was a problem to them. They sent people out to investigate John.

They went out to try to catch John in something that they could hold against him.

These are individuals who looked at John's ministry and to say, what was going on? The baptism of John. And Jesus says, was it from heaven or of man?

Jesus gives them a reverse question of authority. He says, what authority did John come by? Now, we're going to see the dilemma that Jesus put him in.

[ 20 : 59 ] Because Jesus didn't ask this question just to get out of answering. He asked this pointed question back to them to make them process the thought of authority.

Let them consider how were they thinking? Were they perceiving things correctly? Because the answer of authority rested in the answer to Jesus' question about John.

John. Because, you know, John, like I said, had made quite a stir. And his ministry had stirred up many things. And we hear now and understand that John, those that heard him personally were many among this group.

And they had heard his message. because John came proclaiming the one that was going to come. But I want you to understand there's no separation between John's message to the people and Jesus' message to the people.

The two are perfectly aligned. Consider Matthew chapter 2, or Matthew chapter 3 and verse 2. John the Baptist here, this was his message, Repent ye for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.

[ 22 : 17 ] He said, Repent ye for the kingdom of heaven is at hand. Then you have Jesus' statement at the beginning of his ministry when he began his ministry here. We find over there in Mark chapter 1 and verse 15.

And Jesus and saying, The time is fulfilled, the kingdom of God is at hand. Repent ye and believe the gospel. the messages were the same.

The problem with the people that came, they had rejected John's message and they didn't like Jesus' version of it any better. Because it gave the same assessment when they had rejected the message of John the Baptist and now they had rejected that same message of Jesus.

Because notice here in verse 31 it brings to light the gravity of the situation because this reveals the heart of these individuals. Because they really weren't seeking for an answer, they were seeking on how they could maneuver.

How they could protect themselves, how they could keep themselves in a good light. You know, it's no different from us today. Have you ever noticed how we're masters at trying to maneuver to make sure we look good?

[ 23 : 31 ] I mean, it's just something that comes part of our nature to say, I want to prop myself up to look good.

I don't want to have to deal with uncomfortable things about myself. It's much easier to point out other people's uncomfortableness. Things that they did. You know, it's always easier to point the finger than it is to look back at us.

But we find here that they begin to analyze the question, the dilemma that we're in. Look here in verse 31, it says, and they reasoned with themselves, saying, now notice what they were saying, because it's the question that got them caught up.

Because this decision put them in a dilemma of what they were going to do. Because they were caught between two places of authority.

Because what they said here revealed a lot. Now notice that it was not just a personal debate, but it was something they did together.

[ 24 : 44 ] It says they reasoned with themselves. So you kind of look at the scripture there, and this is kind of what I picture in my mind, that Jesus confronts them with this, and they look at Jesus and say, just a minute. And they turn around and they all huddle up, you know, and going, okay, what

are we going to do here?

How do we answer this? They reasoned with themselves, saying, how do I deal with it? How are we going to deal with this question?

This is a good, tricky question Jesus posed to us here, because it has implications. There's a lot of things implied by how we say something here, because notice what they do here.

Verse 31, saying, if we shall say from heaven, he will say, why then did you not believe him? But if we say of men, they feared the people, for all men counted John, that he was a prophet indeed. So the first two parts of their dilemma here were very clear. they had a real dilemma on their hands. They're like, well, John's a hard one to answer here, because if we say from heaven, Jesus can look at us and say, well, why didn't you believe him?

[ 26 : 02 ] You're the ones that are supposed to be looking for the things from heaven. You're the ones that are supposed to be guiding people to heaven. You're the ones that are supposed to be overseeing all that God is doing here.

You have a responsibility from heaven. You have a responsibility to respond correctly. I can just see their minds strolling, you know, spinning around in there going, okay, how do we get out of this one?

Because they say if it's from heaven, we have a big problem because we rejected John. Because you have to keep in mind, John had been beheaded at this point. So his ministry was passed. In other words, they couldn't do anything different about it now. But they did have to make a decision about it. Because it carried with it, the first was to agree that John was sent by God. In other words, that he was from heaven. The implications here, if John was sent by God, then his religious leaders, why did they not believe him? And his call to repent and to believe the gospel, to believe in the Messiah that was coming.

[ 27 : 15 ] And God was the same.

There was a direct parallel here. to say, if I accept that, then I have to accept Christ also. That at least he was from heaven.

They had to recognize who he is. You say, why is that? Well, John had openly endorsed Jesus saying, all my message is the one I'm pointing to. That's him.

So if you accepted John as from heaven, it was the same as saying, I acknowledge that John was the forerunner that was prophesied that pointed to Jesus. You know, John made it very clear.

The gospel of John in chapter 1, verse 29, tells us this. It says, the next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, behold, the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.

[ 28 : 24 ] That's a pretty bold statement. For John to point at Jesus and make that statement, that's a big proclamation. A big acknowledgement saying, hey guys, the one I've been telling you about, that's him.

The one that God sent me to proclaim and to tell you he was on his way, he has arrived. But considering they'd already rejected him as savior, and rejected John as being from God, there was a problem.

They had a dilemma on their hands. You say, well, what was the dilemma there? Well, the dilemma was the other side. Because notice the other side of their dilemma.

The second, if they rejected, John was sent by God, but what is we say of men? Notice what he tells us here in verse 32.

It says, but if we shall say of men, they feared the people. Because what their desire was to say, John was just somebody doing something on his own.

[ 29 : 40 ] In other words, men endorsed him which gave him authority. But that was a problem because the people, the very same people that recognized their authority as priests and scribes and the elders, those same people recognized John as not just somebody sent by man or somebody that they promoted.

The people looked at John and said, he is a prophet. prophet. Now by saying that, I want you to understand that basically it's telling us this, the prophets of old that are recorded in the Old Testament, in the people's mindset, they looked at John and the prophet he is equal to them.

He was a prophet sent by God to our day. that's a pretty powerful thing amongst a quarter. To understand the word of God, a prophet in the Old Testament carried a lot of clout.

To the people, John was a prophet and John was a prophet sent by God. The people were accurate in understanding who John is, but these leaders didn't like it because John challenged their

authority.

You know, if you read through the scripture you'll find that John wasn't very kind to them a lot of times when they would come out and he would expose them for who they were. Now you've got to remember something very important here.

[ 31 : 28 ] We talk about this today. You know, today we talk about insiders. You've got to remember what was John's father's job. He was a priest.

priest. In other words, John knew all about the inner workings of what was going on behind the scene. You know? And I don't think it made him very comfortable when he called them out. Because the problem is if somebody calls you out and you know they don't really have a clue, it doesn't bother you that much. But when somebody calls you out and you know they're accurate, that's a problem. And John had dealt with them and so we see this consideration of what they, if John was from heaven, then we ought to have believed him, but we can't say we didn't believe John was from heaven because then the people would be a problem and we're scared of the people too. Because you've got to understand they were in authority because the people accepted it. And they were in authority because the people accepted it. they feared the people. Fear of people directed their decision regarding John and Jesus. That's the other reason you'll find that they didn't just, we'll read here a little later, they didn't just come and take Jesus right where he was.

[ 32 : 57 ] They waited to take Jesus in the middle of the night. Why was that? Well the Bible says because they feared the people. They didn't want the uproar.

So here they have, they can either accept or they can reject. And so they picked the third route. Now it's kind of funny that they picked this because in everything else they always had the answer. because remember what crew are we talking about? We're talking about the chief priests, the scribes, and the elders. They were basically the oversight of everything that went on. They were supposed to be the smart ones that could determine, you know, what was right and what was wrong. they were looking at Jesus and say, well, we cannot tell. now I want you to understand it was kind of a cop out but it was also a problem because their third response was indifference.

[ 34 : 18 ] They didn't want to be embarrassed by the situation because no matter what they did, they were going to, you might say they were going to have egg on their face. because publicly they were either going to be, have to admit they were wrong about that John was sent by heaven or they're going to have egg on their face from the people declaring he was from men.

Indifference is often a way just to prevent embarrassment. To prevent having to make a decision that needs to be made. You know, we see here that they use this as an expedient answer. Not a principled answer but an expedient answer. It was playing it safe rather than standing up for truth. Because the reality is just like these men that day had to make a decision about Jesus, when it comes to the authority of Jesus in your life you have to make a decision.

You have to make a decision about where you are and where Jesus is in your life. Because a choice has to be made regarding his authority and regarding his person. Because he is either the son of God sent to take away your sin that you might be dressed in his righteousness and holiness to be able to stand before God or he's not.

[ 35 : 46 ] to be indifferent towards Christ doesn't gain you anything. It might save you face with men and people but it will not save your soul.

They had to make a decision. Notice here in verse 33 when he says and they answered and said unto Jesus we cannot tell.

And Jesus answering saith unto them neither do I tell you by what authority I do these things. You know that response of indifference led to basically the reality of it was denial.

They wanted to be able to deny that Jesus is who he said he is. They wanted to be able to deny that he was the one that was sent by God. He was the one that was foretold that was going to come all the way through the scripture.

The one who was going to come and he was going to die for our sin upon the cross to shed his blood for you and me. That our sin might be covered.

[ 37 : 03 ] He came to pay the price that we could not pay. Each one must decide for themselves about Jesus and his authority and his authority in your life.

Because Jesus has authority. The question is what are you going to do with it? How's that authority impacting you? You know some follow the crowd.

You know we find some these men were like well we don't want to upset the crowd. The men that were around that thought John was a prophet and if we say not then we're going to upset the crowd. You know sometimes we fail to make a decision for Christ because we're worried about the crowd.

Where is it going to make others think about us? We need to understand very clearly this morning that if you allow others to influence your decision about Jesus you're in trouble.

because we cannot let others impact that. They were not willing to face being rejected by others.

[ 38 : 25 ] You know both the religious crowd and the worldly crowd will keep you from following Jesus and the authority of his words. You know today we have many religious people who their authority is in religion.

religion. I want you to understand our authority is in the word of God. It's not in a religion. It's in understanding our relationship to God.

And our responsibility because of that opportunity of relationship. relationship. We need to make a decision. We can't stand in the middle.

You know even this morning in people's minds I guarantee you there's a fear of men and others is a real thing. You know have you ever heard somebody say I don't care what others think?

they might put on a good show but I guarantee you they still consider what other people think. What other people think impacts them.

[ 39 : 37 ] It's part of being around people. The question is what impact are they going to have?

What impact do you allow them to have?

You know we make decisions based on how others will respond. Fear of man and not by faith in the word of God. Revealing a respect for God above all else is critical.

Think about what Jesus tells us over in Matthew chapter 10. Matthew chapter 10 in verse 28 he says this and fear not them which kill the body but are not able to kill the soul but rather fear him that is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.

In other words he's telling them very clearly they might be able to take your physical life but eternity is much more critical. One day your life here is going to end.

You know the Bible tells us we all have an appointment and you might look and say if you're young well that appointment is far off. I want to let you know that you might be young but it doesn't make it far off.

[ 40 : 50 ] You might be old but it doesn't mean it's tomorrow either. The situation is you have to deal with it now because you don't know what tomorrow brings.

To deal and to make a decision I don't know is not a decision. I don't know says I'm indifferent or too scared to do what I need to do.

It's a denial of what's before us. When you trust the Lord you have something more. You know the Bible tells you I want to encourage you on the reality of who Jesus is because I want you to understand what he tells us.

Isaiah 51 in verse 7 says this hearken unto me ye that know righteousness the people of whose heart is my law. Fear ye not the reproach of men neither be afraid of their revellings.

And so I want you to understand God says if we have him we have what we need to stand. Matter of fact Hebrews chapter 13 and verse 6 tells us so that we may boldly say the Lord is my helper and I will not fear what man will do shall do unto me.

[ 42 : 09 ] I want you to understand God gives us the ability he is our helper to do what we need to do. To stand for him and today we need people that are going to stand in the authority of God.

Not to stand in your own authority or somebody else's authority but to stand in the authority of the word of God. To stand upon the truth. You know this morning you have an opportunity to make a decision regarding the Savior.

I want to encourage you today if you don't know him as Savior I want to ask you a little question what's hindering you? What's keeping you from recognizing and calling upon Jesus as your Savior?

Is it fear of others? Is it fear of what somebody else might say or do or fear of being embarrassed?

You know the devil uses embarrassment to keep us locked in a lot of things.

The word of God tells us to confess it and forsake it and Jesus will cleanse it. You know today if you're a believer I want you to ask yourself another question.

[ 43 : 35 ] That's the question of authority. authority requires priority. Jesus' authority is present. Jesus' authority is real but what priority will we give to it? We have to give it the priority, make a decision. What has the priority? Is it religion? Is it the fear of others? Is it the fear of embarrassment? I want to encourage you today to don't let those things keep you from trusting Christ and his authority today. As heads are bowed and eyes are closed this morning. You know when it comes to making a decision, Jesus always pointed them to say you need to make a decision. this morning each one of us in here is making a decision. Yes, the reality is you're making a decision right now.

[ 44 : 43 ] Is that decision going to be I'm going to keep my authority? I'm going to give others authority in my life? Or if I'm going to get God and his word authority?

authority. You're making that decision today whether you want to or not. That's just the reality of how you respond to the truth of God's word.

Don't let other things keep you from coming to him. Heavenly fathers, we come before you today. Lord, we just thank you and praise you for the day. Lord, you know each heart here this morning. Lord, you know the problems that we face that question about who you are and how others think. Lord, the dilemma is real in the lives of individuals, but Lord, help us to make a decision towards you.

Lord, you know each heart, each life here today. We might hide from one another, Lord, but there's no hiding from you. Lord, I pray just work mightily in this opportunity, Lord, that we might get serious with who you are today.

[ 45 : 52 ] Lord, we ask it all in your precious name. Amen. As heads are bowed, and eyes are bowed.