Grace to You :: *Unleashing God's Truth, One Verse at a Time*

The Confrontation Over Authority
Scripture: Mark 11:27-33
Code: 41-59

Let's turn to the Word of God together, Mark chapter 11...Mark chapter 11. As you can see, this is the end of the eleventh chapter but it is the beginning of a confrontation between Jesus and the religious leaders of Israel, a confrontation that starts here on Wednesday and ends on Friday with His crucifixion.

The confrontation really was inaugurated by something our Lord did. If you go back one day to Tuesday and earlier in chapter 11 and look at verse 15, we'll have the setting for this confrontation. They came to Jerusalem on that Tuesday morning from Bethany where Jesus and the Apostles had been staying at the home of Mary, Martha and Lazarus who had been friends and our Lord had even raised Lazarus from the dead. They came to Jerusalem as He entered the temple on that Tuesday of Passion Week, began to drive out those who were buying and selling in the temple, and overturned the tables of the money changers and the seats of those that were selling doves and He wouldn't permit anyone to carry merchandise through the temple. "And He began to teach and to say to them, 'Is it not written, My house shall be called a house of prayer for all the nations, but you have made it a robbers den.' The chief priests and scribes heard this and began seeking how to destroy Him for they were afraid of Him for the whole crowd was astonished at His teaching."

That act on Tuesday precipitated a confrontation the next day on Wednesday. As we pick up the reading in verse 27, it's Wednesday morning, and we read this. "They came again to Jerusalem. As He was walking in the temple, the Chief Priest and scribes and the elders came to Him and began saying to Him, 'By what authority are You doing these things? Or who gave You this authority to do these things?' 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. Was the baptism of John from heaven for from men? Answer Me.' 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.' And Jesus said to them, 'Nor will I tell you by what authority I do these things.'"

Obviously the key word here is authority. Authority is the word that gives meaning to this confrontation. The Greek word is *exousia*, it really means freedom to act, liberty to act. To have authority is essentially to have the right to act, to exercise your will, to exercise force, to determine, to decide. That's authority. And no one who has ever walked on this planet has ever had such authority as Jesus Christ. He had ultimate authority, absolute authority, divine authority and He exercised it. In

Matthew 28:18 He put it this way, “All authority is given to Me in heaven and earth.” That is why Paul says, “He is far above all authority,” Ephesians chapter 1. He wielded an authority the likes of which no one has ever possessed in this world. We’ve already come into contact with His authority. In Mark chapter 1 and verse 22, “They were amazed at His teaching, for He was teaching as one having authority, not as the scribes.”

The scribes never taught based upon their own authority. They always quoted others as their authority. Seventy-five times in the gospels, Jesus said, “Truly I say unto you...” Rabbis didn’t talk that way. He didn’t need to quote anybody, He was the ultimate authority.

In chapter 1, also in Mark and verse 27, the people commented that there was a new lesson that they were seeing in Christ with authority because He commands even the unclean spirits and they obey Him. He had authority over doctrine. He had authority over demons.

In the second chapter in the tenth verse, it says, “The Son of Man has authority to forgive sin.” We saw many occasions where He exercised authority over disease and even over death. And He had the authority to give up His life and to take it back again. In John 1:12 He has the authority to save, in John 5:27, the authority to judge all; John 10:18, the authority to rise again from the dead.

Looking at this in a negative way, just to make the point even stronger, Jesus never asked permission from anyone to do anything...no one. Never asked permission from anyone to do anything, He was not under any earthly authority, He possessed all authority in Himself as the divine Son of God. The only authority in His life was that perfect harmony with the Father and the Spirit so that He did what was the Father’s will in the Spirit’s power.

He makes this clear to us in the gospel of John, in particular, in the fifth chapter of the gospel of John and verse 19. “Truly, truly I say to you....there it is again, speaking for Himself, saying the truth, quoting no one...Truly, truly I say to you, the Son can do nothing of Himself unless it is something He sees the Father doing, for whatever the Father does, these things the Son also does in like manner. He does what the Father does in the same way the Father does it.”

In the same chapter in verse 27, “The Father gave Him authority to execute judgment.” In verse 30 He says, “I can do nothing on My own initiative. As I hear, I judge and My judgment is just because I do not seek My own will but the will of Him who sent Me.” He does the Father’s will, He does what He sees the Father do in the way the Father does it.

In the eighth chapter of the gospel of John, verse 28, Jesus said, “When you lift up the Son of Man, then you will know that I am He and I do nothing on My own initiative, but I speak the things the Father taught Me and He who sent Me is with Me. He has not left Me alone, I always do the things that are pleasing to Him.”

He had only one authority in His life and that was the divine will which He knew perfectly as the divine Son. Our Lord never consulted the Pharisees. He never consulted the scribes. He never consulted the rabbis to get permission to do anything. He never consulted the Sanhedrin, the ruling body of Israel, on anything at all. He acted solely on His own authority. Everything He said came from Himself. Everything He did came from Himself. Every action He took was motivated, initiated, inaugurated and completed by His own will. He had the ultimate freedom to do and say whatever He wanted to do and say and it was always right, and it was always true. Better, it was always perfect. He was the ultimate authority. He wielded ultimate power. He not only had the authority to say what He said and the authority to do what He did, He had the power to pull it off. He rejected the Jewish authorities. He never consulted them because they were apostate. They had defected from the true religion. They didn't know God. They didn't represent God. They were illegitimate. It was as if they didn't exist. Sure, they were the earthly purveyors of a corrupt Judaism, they ran the temple and turned it into a robbers' den. They had no real power and no real authority at all. They were enemies of God, enemies of the truth, enemies of the gospel.

Jesus' teaching without their approval and Jesus' action without their permission struck a massive blow to their formidable spiritual pride, devastating their imagined privilege and power. And it just continually infuriated them. They had developed a vicious hatred for Him because He demonstrated such scorn toward their religious positions. That is ultimately what led to them having Him murdered at the hands of the Romans.

The issue here is this issue of authority. Who in the world gave You permission to do what You did in this place yesterday? They could have asked, "Where did You get the authority to teach what You teach because it's not what we teach?" It wasn't what the Pharisees taught, or the Sadducees, the conservatives or the liberals. It wasn't what the historic rabbis had taught. In fact He even said, "You have heard it said, but I say to You." What He was teaching was in contradiction to what the rabbis had said.

But the big issue was what He did. I mean, it was tough enough for them to swallow, that He came into town on Monday with massive crowds there for the Passover who were saying, "Hosanna to the Son of David. Blessed is the One who comes in the name of the Lord." Throwing messianic titles and names at Him and He never ever refused to receive them. In fact, He took them. Even days later in the temple, little boys, maybe the sons of Levites scrambling around the temple were saying, "Hosannas" to Jesus when He was teaching in the temple, Tuesday, Wednesday, and He received it. That was aggravating enough infuriating enough. But the real issue was His action on Tuesday when He tore up the temple and threw all the merchandisers out.

Now you have to understand, that's nothing new. He began His ministry doing the same thing. Second chapter of John, He's just getting started in His ministry, does a miracle up in Cana, turning

water to wine. Comes down to Jerusalem for the Passover. Does exactly the same thing. Goes into the temple, verse 14, finds those there selling ox and sheep, doves, money changers seated, tables, made a scourge of cords, drove them out of the temple with the sheep and the oxen, poured out the coins of the money changers, overturned their tables. And to those who were selling the doves, He said, “Take these things away, stop making My Father’s house a place of business.” And in verse 18, notice this, “The Jews then said to Him, ‘What sign do You show us as Your authority for doing these things? Who gave You permission to do this?’” The same question is asked again at the end of His ministry in His Passion Week that they asked at the beginning.

Well, of course, it’s a natural question. “Who do You think You are? You can’t....” Imagine you doing that? You might feel the right to go into a Buddhist temple down at the end of the street here and just reek havoc and damn the whole false religion that damns the souls of men and start throwing things all over everywhere. Somebody would grab you by the neck and say, “Wait a minute. You have no right to do this.” This is not an unnatural question. This is an obvious question. This inaugurates the final conflict with these leaders. It’s been going on since the beginning of His ministry. Well, of course, He inaugurated His ministry by doing the same thing. And then they dogged His steps through the first year of His ministry in Judea to the year plus in the Galilee and then back to the final months of His ministry in Judea and in Perea. They were after Him day after day, after day, after day and they had hated Him the whole while and they were looking for ways to destroy Him from the very beginning. But this is the final confrontation. This is Wednesday, He’ll be crucified Friday.

The confrontation begins there as we read in 11:27, but it really goes all the way through chapter 12. It goes to the fortieth verse of chapter 12. And what we’re going to see in chapter 12 when we get there is a series of stories and events that focus on these religious leaders and each of these stories and events pronounces judgment on them, final judgment on them and their religious system and consequently the nation that followed that system.

I just want to say at this point something you have to understand. These religious leaders had many conversations with Jesus for three years, many conversations, many different groups of them for there were many of them scattered throughout Israel. There were rabbis everywhere. Pharisees everywhere, scribes everywhere, they had many, many conversations with Jesus. But listen to this, never did they come to Jesus to find out the truth from God...never. That’s the nature of false religion, particularly the ensconced leaders. They never came probing for truth. They never came as legitimate seekers. They never came scrutinizing their theology and His words to determine what was right. It was all an attempt to discredit Jesus openly and publicly so that they could have reason to execute Him. They were hard hypocrites, stone-cold hard hypocrites, stubborn unbelievers. They were not men of religion in the honest sense. They were not spiritually minded, seeking truth. They hated the truth. Their conclusion early on, Mark chapter 3 verse 30, is that Jesus is from Satan. He has a demon. He has an unclean spirit. He’s right out of hell. Even though for three years He did everything to prove He was from heaven, they were locked on and fixed in that immovable position of hard

hypocritical unbelief.

Hard to imagine, isn't it, to have the living God in your presence, to have the truth incarnate, to have Him speak the truth, tell you the truth about everything, and have absolutely no interest in the truth at all. That's how hard they were.

Well, the chronology here puts us, as I said, on Wednesday. Saturday He had arrived for the Passover with His followers and His Apostles and they stayed in Bethany at the home of Mary, Martha and Lazarus on Saturday. They stayed there again on Sunday and a large crowd came out to see Jesus and the risen Lazarus. On Monday He came into the city in that false coronation of the true king that we talked about. On Tuesday He came to Jerusalem, cursed the fig tree, assaulted the temple and then went back to Bethany. It is now Wednesday morning, He is back in the city. That's where we pick up the story in verse 27. "They came again to Jerusalem on that Wednesday."

Well, we would expect, right, that as soon as He showed up in the temple, in the morning, the leaders of the temple would be after Him for what He had done the day before. I mean, it was devastating. The confrontation begins right here and it goes all the way through chapter 12.

By the way, chapter 12 begins with a parable of judgment against the rulers and then it's followed by three different conversations. One targets the Pharisees, one targets the Sadducees, and one targets the scribes, and those are the three groups that made up the Sanhedrin. They had all come together in one group but in conversations with each of the three groups, He pronounces judgment on them. This then is the final collision between Jesus and the authorities of Judaism. It climaxes three years of vicious animosity. Go back and start in chapter 2 of Mark, read chapter 2, chapter 3, chapter 6, chapter 7, chapter 8, chapter 10, jump over to chapter 14 and you see that the whole book of Mark features this animosity. And the issue was that Jesus was saying things and doing things without their permission, contrary to their teaching and their will.

This is a huge issue. They think they've got Jesus now because of what He's done, doing what He did to the temple without permission because this constitutes, mark this, this constitutes blasphemy in their minds of an epoch proportion. I mean, if ever there was a blasphemy doing this in the temple must be that ultimate blasphemy. They were convinced that He was the ultimate blasphemer.

In the gospel of Mark, that comes out, verse 64, Mark 14:64, Jesus has said when they had asked Him, "Are You Christ, the Son of the blessed one," verse 61, and Jesus said, "I am. And you shall see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of power and coming with the clouds of heaven." Oh, what a claim. So what does the High Priest do? He starts ripping his clothes. "What further need do we have of witness, you have heard the blasphemy. How does it seem to you?" And they all condemned Him to be deserving of death. Blasphemy was basically a capital crime. A hundred and fifty years later, the Jewish leaders put together a hundred and fifty years after Christ, put together a codification of

Jewish law called the Mishnah, 150 years later. In the Mishnah, the death penalty is required for blasphemers and one of the definitions of a blasphemer is this, one who assumes false authority.

One who assumes false authority. They only put that down in the Mishnah 150 years later, but it was already in force here...already in force here. He was a blasphemer. Now they thought, “We have Him. Guilty of the crime of blasphemy. Unauthorized action against God and His holy temple.”

Well with that as a background, let’s look at the story. It will unfold easily. First the confrontation, as He was walking in the temple. Have to stop there in a minute. You’ve got to get the picture, folks. The temple is massive, acres and acres and acres, massive, massive courtyard. This is a very rabbinic way to teach. You kind of move around. He’s walking through, milling around with huge crowds that have come back into the temple, certainly with an amazing amount of excitement, having experienced what they did the day before. He’s moving through the temple. This is really important. I’m glad Mark told us this. The other writers tell us He was walking everywhere, through the colonnades and the porches, all throughout the courtyards. For one day, this was His temple. For one day it belonged to Him, it was His classroom, His pulpit, it was God’s house for one day and for one day the truth would ring in the courtyards of that temple where they hadn’t rang for hundreds of years. One day. Luke 20, the parallel passage to this, Luke has a parallel account, Matthew has a parallel account, Matthew 21, Luke says, “He was teaching the people and preaching the gospel.” The truth reigned for one day.

Jesus took center stage in the temple courtyard, and He preached the gospel and the truth came for one day. He must have preached the truth about sin, the wretchedness of it and the folly of hypocritical religion. He must have preached about judgment, the inevitability of hell for those who refused to believe in Him and to come to God by faith and not works. He must have preached righteousness, the hopelessness of trying to achieve and attain your own righteousness. He must have talked about humility, the need for brokenness and meekness and a sense of one’s spiritual bankruptcy and crying out for something you do not have and cannot earn. He must have spoken of the great compassionate love for God for sinners. He must have spoken out about the forgiveness of sin and peace and grace and eternal life. He must have warned them about false prayers, vain repetition, hypocritical giving, doing religious deeds to be seen by men, false humility, spiritual pride. He must have talked to them about the true Word of the true and living God, about honesty. He must have talked to them about the price of discipleship, about denying yourself, taking up your cross, following Him. He must have talked to them about eternal glory, the kingdom, heaven. He must have warned them that this was a narrow way and that the temple was the broad way that leads to hell. All this while He was walking, literally in command of His Father’s house for one day...for one day.

It was, no doubt, the most compelling day in the lives of the people who happened to be there. Listen to what it says in Luke 19:47, “He was teaching daily in the temple,” that would be Tuesday and Wednesday, “but the chief priests and the scribes and the leading men among the people were trying to destroy Him and they couldn’t find anything that they might do for all the people were hanging on to

every word He said." Now if ever there was a teacher on whom you should hang with every word, it's Him. Compelling teachers captivate me. Can you imagine how captivating Christ's teaching would be? They were paralyzed to act cause He had captivated the people.

Back to verse 27, "While He's walking in the temple, the chief priests and the scribes and the elders came to Him," those are the three groups that make up the Sanhedrin, and those are the three groups that are sorted out and have individual conversations with Jesus in chapter 12 and are therefore indicted and upon whom judgment is pronounced. They come to Him.

Luke's parallel account says, "They came," but he uses a different word, he uses *ephistemi* which can mean to attack and that's a better understanding. They came to attack Him. They came after Him. Obviously.

Well that was not a good thing to do because they were no match. But they couldn't hold back. "They began...in verse 28...saying to Him, 'By what authority are You doing these things? Or who gave You this authority to do these things?'" That's what it's all about. You can't just do this. Where did You get the authority to do this? You can't just walk into the temple and do what You did. Obviously they would be horrified at this action, though they had seen it before. They know what the answer to the question is. They know what He would give as an answer. When they said, "Where is Your authority?" They know what He would say. "My authority comes from God." They know that. They know He has claimed that. He has claimed to be God in their presence, the gospel of John says it. He made Himself equal with God and they knew it. They want that answer. They want Him to say, "My authority comes from God," and then they can say He is, for sure, a blasphemer. They didn't want the gospel preached in the temple, of course. They didn't want the truth taught in the temple, of course. They didn't want their system dismantled by Him. But it was more important to get Jesus condemned and dead than anything else.

The truth is, Jesus isn't the blasphemer, they are the blasphemers. In the 22 chapter of Luke, there is an interesting statement made in verse 65, the ones who are holding Jesus prisoner there, are mocking Him, blindfolding Him, hitting Him beating Him, all this, and they were saying many other things against Him blaspheming. The blasphemers were the people against Jesus, not Jesus.

Where is Your approval for Your action, Your teaching and Your action against this temple? They didn't expect Him to give them rabbinical credentials, they knew He didn't have those. They knew He hadn't gone to any school, gone through any ordination process. They want Him to say, "My authority comes directly from God," and they would spin that as the final straw in His blasphemy. But He was too wise for that. And so we go from the confrontation to the counter. Here's His counter, verses 29 and 30.

“Jesus said to them, ‘I’ll ask you one question.’” That was a very typical rabbinical way to teach, answer a question with a question. “I’ll ask You one question and you answer Me, and then I will tell you by what authority I do these things.” That is honest, that is not contrived. That is a matter of fact offer that Jesus makes to them. I’m going to ask you a question if you answer the question I ask you, I’ll answer the question you ask Me. Here’s My question, verse 30. “Was the baptism of John from heaven or from men? Answer Me.”

That, my dear friends, is to put you in the place that we all know of as between the rock and the hard place. He didn’t resent their question. He just knew their phony intentions. Again, they never sought the truth, they never wanted reality. The baptism of John.

What do you mean the baptism of John, John?” The Baptist...John the Baptist was the forerunner of the Messiah, the greatest prophet who ever lived up until His time, the one chosen by God, filled with the Holy Spirit from His womb, the one who was conceived miraculously by Elizabeth and Zacharias because of the miracle plan of God. John the Baptist who was in the wilderness preaching repentance and preparation for the coming of Messiah. And one day the Messiah shows up and Jesus comes and John says, “Behold the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world.” The baptism of John engulfs John’s whole ministry. He was preaching repentance, preaching preparation for Messiah, preaching that Jesus is the Messiah and he was baptizing with a baptism of repentance, people saying that I want to be prepared and giving an outward symbol of inward heart preparation by letting John baptize them in the Jordan River. This was his ministry to prepare people for the arrival of Messiah.

So what He’s talking about here is all of John’s ministry...his preaching, his teaching, his calling of the people to preparedness and repentance and most importantly his declaration of Jesus as the Messiah. “He must increase,” John said, “and I must fade away.”

So, the ministry of John the Baptist, the prophetic ministry of John the Baptist...was it from heaven or from men? It was either of men or of God. Answer Me.

Strong challenge. Our Lord is stunningly brilliant. They’re really on the hot seat. If they said the ministry of John is from God, then they have to admit that Jesus is the Messiah because that’s what John said. If they say the ministry of God is not from God, it’s from men, then they’ve got a problem because all the people knew that John was a real prophet. You see, it’s a package deal. You can’t take John without Jesus. And you can’t throw away Jesus without throwing away John.

In Luke, I think it’s chapter 7 and verse 28, Jesus says, “I say to you, among those born of women, there’s no one greater than John.” Verse 29, “When all the people and the tax collectors heard this, they acknowledged God’s righteousness, having been baptized with the baptism of John, but the Pharisees and the scribes rejected God’s purpose for themselves, not having been baptized by

John."

They didn't want anything to do with John and they didn't want anything to do with Jesus. The people, they embraced John as a true prophet and they were willing to embrace Jesus as the Messiah, at least on Tuesday. The leaders wanted nothing to do with Jesus and they certainly wanted nothing to do with John who said that Jesus is the Messiah. They have a big problem. And Jesus nails them when He says, "Answer Me." They had to have a meeting. Verse 31, "They began *dialogizomai,* they had begun dialoging among themselves, debating even, saying, 'If we say from heaven, He will say...Then why didn't you believe Him when He said I am the Messiah? And we can't say that. We can't say He's from heaven or we're dead because John said Jesus is the Messiah. We can't say that. But...verse 32...shall we say from men?'" And then there's just kind of a blank ellipses on Mark's part and we can easily fill in the blank that they were afraid of the people. But the blank is in Luke 20 verse 6, "All the people will...get this one...stone us to death."

What? If you say that John the Baptist is not a prophet of God, you are a blasphemer. You are blaspheming by discrediting a true prophet of God and there will be mob reaction and they'll stone us to death for...or because everyone considered John to have been a true prophet.

Now you understand the dilemma, right? What are they going to do? The praise of men was everything to them. It was absolutely everything, power, prestige, privilege, honors. They wanted the chief seats always in the synagogues, didn't they ? The high places in the banquets. They wanted to be given titles and honor and recognized in public as holy, lofty elevated sacrosanct men. Just the opposite would happen to them. They're stuck if they say John's ministry is from God, then they have to embrace Jesus and that they cannot do. If they say it's from men, they're liable to get stoned to death and they can't let that happen, and so they were reduced to the worst possible thing that can happen to somebody who has intellectual pride. They were forced to say in verse 32, "We do not know."

Boy, that must have come out hard. How did they ever spit that out? "We do not know." So much for their omniscience. It's your duty to know. It's your duty to observe. It's your duty to evaluate. It's your duty to search the evidence. But again I say what I said earlier. Never did they have any interest in the truth in dealing with Jesus...never. This is the way of false religion, folks. Not necessarily the victims of it, but the purveyors of it.

They're self-indicted. And that leads to the final point, from the confrontation to the counter, to the condemnation, verse 33b. "Jesus said to them, 'Nor will I tell you by what authority I do these things.'"

You don't ever want to be in that position where Jesus says, "I'm through communicating with you." That's what that is. "I'm done. I'm done. I have said all I am going to say. You're not entitled to any further information." He would not cast His pearls before swine to have the truth again trampled. Their

blind dishonesty revealed their hearts. It is over. The curtain has fallen on them, they're forever damned. Reject the light, ultimately the light goes out. Scripture warns us about this again and again, doesn't it? Today is the day. Believe while the light is here for the time will come when the light is gone. My Spirit will not always strive with man. Jerusalem, Jerusalem, Luke 19:31 to 44, How often I would have gathered you as a hen gathers her brood, but you would not therefore your house is left to you...what?...desolate. I'm done.

Hosea the prophet, chapter 4 verse 17, "Ephraim or Israel is joined to idols, let them alone." Wow, you don't want to hear that! You want to hear, "Ephraim is joined to idols, call him back." Let him go.

God's grace does have its limits...does have its limits. This is the most tragic situation that could have ever happened, to have the Son of God in your presence to have trailed Him and tracked Him for three years only for the purpose of killing Him. And in the very end, this sentence falls, I have nothing more to say to you.

Dear friends, you don't want your life to get to that point. If you've become comfortable rejecting Jesus Christ, you don't ever know when the Lord will just say, "I am through."

One final truth. This unique authority that Jesus wielded to say whatever He wanted to say and do whatever He wanted to do, amazingly was delegated to the Apostles. That's right. It was delegated to the Apostles. In Luke 9 it says He gave them authority over demons and over disease and to proclaim the Kingdom of God. Isn't that wonderful?

You say, "Well how could they do that with the same authority?" Because they spoke the same truth and they wielded the same power. He delegated it to them. They had authority over demons. They had authority over disease. And they had authority to preach the truth of the Kingdom which God had revealed.

Did it end there? Well a portion of it. There were unique elements of that authority given to the Apostles, signs and wonders and miracles. But listen, the authority to proclaim the truth has been passed down to us. Paul writes to Titus in Titus chapter 2 and verse 15 and says, "These things speak with all authority. And let no one disregard you." Titus, you're just a man, you're not an Apostle, but you are a believer and you need to speak the things that are sound, as he says in verse 1, sound doctrine and speak them with authority.

My dear friend, you want to understand as a Christian your place in the world? You speak authoritatively when you say "Thus says the Lord." I've been confronted on that many times, particularly in secular interviews, newspaper interviews, radio interviews, TV interviews, many times on The Larry King program, where do you get the authority to say these things? How can you possibly be dogmatic? You think you're right about everything. How can you say that?

And I always say, “God already said it, I’m just quoting God. I’m not the authority, I don’t have any authority. My education gives me no authority. My intellectual abilities, as limited as they are, give me no authority. My friends who surround me with love and encouragement, they give me no authority. My education gives me no authority. The only reason I ever speak with authority is because I speak what has already been revealed from God. I’m not able to say truly I say unto you, but I can say truly God says unto you. I can say that my whole lifelong as long as what I say is from His Word. And that’s true for you as well.

You talk about lives that matter in the world, and all the cacophony of chaos and bad ideas and misrepresentations that float around the world, here we are and we can say, “Truly God has said this.” The most important thing that can happen in the world is people hear the truth. The only place they’re going to hear it is through the instruments in which He has deposited His Spirit and His truth...that’s us.

And, by the way, when we get to the Kingdom in the future, the glorious kingdom of Christ, Listen to this, Revelation 2:26, “I will give the one who overcomes...that’s us...I will give him authority over the nations and he shall rule them with a rod of iron as the vessels of the potter are broken to pieces as I also have received authority from My Father.”

The Father has authority, He gives it to the Son, the Son delegates to us in the Kingdom. What a glorious reality.

Well His authority surpasses all authorities. This was a monumental confrontation. We’ll see the rest of it in chapter 12 when we gather again. I’ll be gone for a couple of Sundays to go back east, but we’ll pick it up when we return. Just a word about tonight. We’ll continue our series on the Christian’s responsibility in government. Let’s pray together.

Father, we thank You as we bring this to its end that You have planted Your Holy Spirit in us so that we have anointing from God and we don’t need men to teach us because we’re taught of God. We don’t need to lean on men for the truth. It comes from You. We thank You that we can speak it with authority, with grace but with authority, with love, but nonetheless with authority. What a privilege as we hold this book in our hands, we hold the source of the truth, we hold the truth itself. Make us faithful communicators of that truth and models and examples of that truth. I pray, Lord, for those who have not yet embraced Christ, but who have heard and heard and heard the truth. Lord, would You save them before it’s too late, before they reach the point where You have nothing more to say to them and the light goes out. Place within them the fear of that reality and may they run to You and to Christ. All to the glory of Your Son for whom we live and whom we serve. Amen.

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