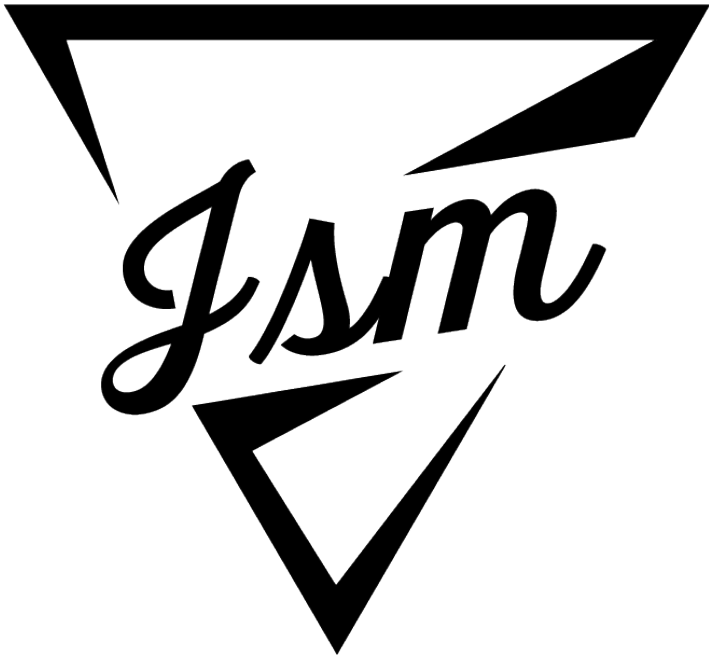


GOSPEL OF MARK

JOURNEY STUDENT MINISTRIES

BIBLE STUDY GUIDE



PRAY TOGETHER

Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on me, a sinner.

Amen.



READ THE TEXT

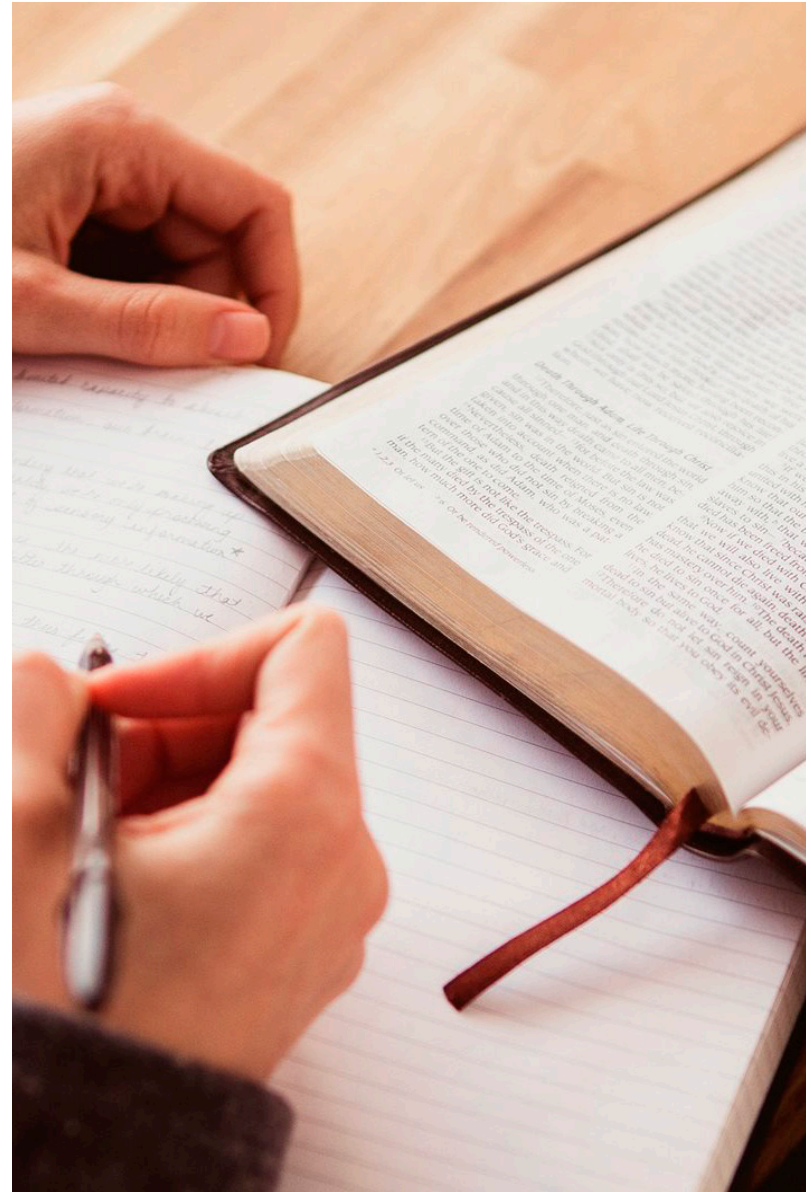
Mark 11:27-12:12 NIV

27 They arrived again in Jerusalem, and while Jesus was walking in the temple courts, the chief priests, the teachers of the law and the elders came to him. 28 "By what authority are you doing these things?" they asked. "And who gave you authority to do this?" 29 Jesus replied, "I will ask you one question. Answer me, and I will tell you by what authority I am doing these things. 30 John's baptism—was it from heaven, or of human origin? Tell me!" 31 They discussed it among themselves and said, "If we say, 'From heaven,' he will ask, 'Then why didn't you believe him?'" 32 But if we say, 'Of human origin' ..." (They feared the people, for everyone held that John really was a prophet.) 33 So they answered Jesus, "We don't know." Jesus said, "Neither will I tell you by what authority I am doing these things."

12 Jesus then began to speak to them in parables: "A man planted a vineyard. He put a wall around it, dug a pit for the winepress and built a watchtower. Then he rented the vineyard to some farmers and moved to another place. 2 At harvest time he sent a servant to the tenants to collect from them some of the fruit of the vineyard. 3 But they seized him, beat him and sent him away empty-handed. 4 Then he sent another servant to them; they struck this man on the head and treated him shamefully. 5 He sent still another, and that one they killed. He sent many others; some of them they beat, others they killed. 6 "He had one left to send, a son, whom he loved. He sent him last of all, saying, 'They will respect my son.' 7 "But the tenants said to one another, 'This is the heir. Come, let's kill him, and the inheritance will be ours.' 8 So they took him and killed him, and threw him out of the vineyard. 9 "What then will the owner of the vineyard do? He will come and kill those tenants and give the vineyard to others. 10 Haven't you read this passage of Scripture: "The stone the builders rejected has become the cornerstone; 11 the Lord has done this, and it is marvelous in our eyes'?" 12 Then the chief priests, the teachers of the law and the elders looked for a way to arrest him because they knew he had spoken the parable against them. But they were afraid of the crowd; so they left him and went away.

TALK IT OVER

- 1) Why do you think the religious leaders ask Jesus about authority?
- 2) How does the teachings of John the baptist conflict with those of the temple cult?
- 3) What is the vinyard allusion to in Jesus' parable? Who are the servants an allusion to in the parable? What about the son?
- 4) What is the point of Jesus' parable?



THINGS TO NOTE

The question of authority is, at its root, a questions of Jesus' relation to God. Only God had authority over matters of the temple, forgiveness of sins etc. and Jesus has continually spoken and acted with a sense of authority over these things (most recently in Mark 11 when he overturns the tables in the temple)

It was at John's baptism of Jesus that Heaven was opened and Jesus received power from the Father. If the Sanhedrin wants to know whence Jesus received authority to do "these things," it must reconsider John's baptism. A decision about John is a decision about Jesus. If John's baptism were solely "from men," that is, fully explainable by empirical science, then the Sanhedrin may be justified in its accusation of Jesus. But if John's baptism was "from heaven," that is, divinely inspired—as the crowds believed and as the Sanhedrin evidently feared—then Jesus' authority exceeds mere human authority and must be explained by the authority of God.

APPLY THE TEXT

- 1) How do you view and understand the authority of Jesus in your own life? Are there certain areas in your life that you struggle to submit to Jesus' authority?
- 2) What might God be inviting you to learn from these stories and implement in your own life?

