

Mark 11:27-33

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[0 : 00] To be here this morning with my church family and to have the privilege and honor to be able to share his word with you this morning. I have to thank you all for just for being willing to support me and my family and allowing us to have our child in the service.

That means so much to us here. The Webb family really appreciates this church. And we don't really know that we could be in another place other than here to be able to keep our child in the service.

And we appreciate that. I know other families appreciate that about Christ's family as well. If you would, turn with me to Mark chapter 11. Mark chapter 11.

And while you're turning there, I have to commend some of our CFC students. I talked to a couple of them this morning just to get the full story of what was going on. But we have several of our students here that are involved with a campus organization called Students for Life.

And among other things, they raise awareness about abortion, the number of deaths that occur each year. They stand up for their conviction that abortion is indeed murder. And this week they stirred things up a bit with some sidewalk chalk on campus where they wrote out some statistics.

[1 : 17] Staggering statistics, by the way. 3,500 deaths caused by abortion each day. Every single day.

And along with that, they included, confirmed 3,500 hearts on the sidewalk. To represent each of these lives that died.

That died every single day as a result of abortion. And even though the rain on Friday washed it away, I assure you it didn't go unnoticed. It was very, very much noticed.

Their reaction on social media was remarkable. I don't know if any of you follow any of that. But the reaction on social media was remarkable. There was some positive. But the backlash was noticeable as well.

And I think the entire situation was really a stark reminder of two things for me. The first is that the moral deterioration of our country is growing at a rapid pace. And people are becoming more and more bold about their immorality.

[2 : 17] And about voicing immorality in our culture. Number two is that if you stand up for biblical truth, you are going to receive backlash.

You're going to see conflict with our culture. That's the way that it's going to be. And I'm proud of our students for standing up for what they believe in. For standing up for biblical truth.

In fact, Jesus told us that it would be this way in Mark 13, 13, saying, You will be hated by all because of my name. But the one who endures to the end will be saved.

There's no mistake that these words are recorded in all four Gospels. These words of Jesus telling us that we will be hated because of his name. Because Jesus knew that we would encounter conflict.

And Jesus was the one who was familiar with this conflict. Coming into conflict constantly with the culture that he was teaching in. And Jesus knew that we would encounter these things.

[3 : 15] He was familiar with it. And it happened to him over and over again throughout the Gospels. And in the passage that we find ourselves in this morning. It's happening to Jesus. We're going to see the beginning of the final conflict.

Not the beginning of the conflict. But the beginning of the final conflict that would lead up to the death of Jesus. It would lead us up to the cross. A couple of weeks ago we saw Jesus confront the money changers in the temple.

And this week we want to see Jesus being confronted by the Pharisees on account of what he did. The confrontation in our text this morning was caused by Jesus' reaction to the money changers in

the temple.

So Jesus overturns the tables as best as we can tell on Tuesday of what we have termed as Passion Week. This week that were the final days of Jesus that would lead him to the cross. Lead him ultimately to his death. And we've come to Wednesday here in our passage in verse 27 of Mark 11. Read along with me if you have a copy of God's Word in your hands. And they came again to Jerusalem.

[4 : 21] 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 do you do these things? Or who gave you the authority to do them?

And Jesus said to them, I'll 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 do you not believe him? But shall we say from man?

They were afraid of the people. For they held that John was really a prophet. And 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.

Let's pray together. Heavenly Father, we thank you for your Word that was written for us, for our ears to hear, for our hearts to be compelled into action.

[5 : 24] So, Father, this morning I do not pretend to stand up here alone to do these things on my own authority. But I stand up here being only on the authority of the Word of God.

We thank you, Father, for your Word that it pierces as far as joint and marrow, as far as the division of soul and spirit. And we pray, Father, this morning that you would pierce us deeply and convict our hearts through your Spirit.

My words are not convicting, but your Spirit can convict our hearts for your glory and in your name. We pray these things in the name of your Son, Jesus Christ. Amen.

So what's the key word in this passage here? It's authority. Exousia. It literally means freedom to act or liberty to act. To have authority is essentially to have the right to act, to exercise your will, to exercise force, to determine, or to decide.

That's what authority is. And no person has ever had such authority as Jesus Christ did. He had ultimate authority, absolute authority, divine authority.

[6 : 36] And He exercised it. In Matthew 28, 18, He put it this way, All authority has been given to me in heaven and on earth. That's why Paul says, He is far above all authority in Ephesians 6, chapter 1.

In Mark 1, 22, it says, They were amazed, for He was teaching as one having authority, not as the scribes. So what we're seeing here is the same thing that we've really been seeing throughout the entire Gospel of Mark as we've been walking through, chapter by chapter through Mark.

We've been seeing that Jesus' teaching is different. There's something about this man. And it's very noticeable. Jesus teaches unlike anyone else. When I teach, or when Nathan teaches, or when Clay teaches, or when anybody teaches here at CFC, we don't stand on our own authority.

There's nothing that gives us that authority. We stand on the authority of the Word of God. But Jesus is the spoken Word of God. He is the authority.

And no less than 75 times in the Gospels, Jesus said, Truly I say unto you, and then you can include the dot, dot, dot, because He gives an incredible truth after each time that He says these things.

[7 : 51] He wasn't quoting anyone. And the rabbis didn't talk this way. Rabbis during this day typically would quote other Scriptures or other particularly well-versed rabbis. But Jesus didn't have to.

Why? Because He was the ultimate authority. He was God's spoken Word. Along with this, just to make the point even stronger, Jesus never asked for permission from anyone to do anything. You'll notice throughout the Gospels and throughout the life of Christ, He never asked permission. 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. That He completed the Father's will and the Spirit's power. Jesus makes it clear to us in John 5, 19, saying, Truly I say to you, and there it is again, Him speaking on His own authority for Himself, not quoting

anyone.

He says, 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.

[9 : 06] So in other words, He does what the Father does in the same way that the Father does it. He is under the submission to the Father. And we also see in Scripture that the Spirit is in submission to the Son.

This, by the way, is one of the many theological truths that author William Young gets simply wrong. And it's a wildly popular book, *The Shack*. Anybody read *The Shack*? Anybody want to? Yeah, we have some *Shack* readers. It was wildly popular about seven years ago. Now that it was released, it's still maintained some popularity.

And I have to warn you about it. Read it with some. If you ever read it, read it with great reservations, knowing that it has a lot of theological problems in it. It is a fictional piece of work that is intended to have theological implications.

And when you're writing a piece of work like that, you have to be very careful. And I don't believe that he was very careful. It didn't handle the theological implications very well. And this is one of the many things.

[10 : 09] On page 124 of his book, he writes from the perspective of God. He has characters that are supposed to explain the Trinity. And one of his characters is God the Father. He has a character for God the Son.

He has a character for God the Holy Spirit. And from the perspective of God the Father, this is what he writes. So you think that God must relate inside a hierarchy like you do.

But we do not. And this is simply untrue. We see the Trinity. Even inside the Trinity, there is a hierarchy of the persons of God acting.

All over the Gospels, Jesus submits to the Father. And we see the Spirit falling in submission to the Son. And so Jesus answered to only one authority in his life. And he never consulted the Pharisees. He never consulted the scribes. He never consulted the rabbis to get permission to do anything. He acted solely on his own authority. Everything he did, everything he said, every action that he took, it came from his own authority.

[11 : 13] He wielded ultimate power. He rejected the Jewish authorities. He never consulted them because they were apostate. They had defected from the true faith in God.

They didn't know him, and they were illegitimate, and it was as if they didn't even exist to him at times. Sure, they were the earthly purveyors of a corrupt Judaism. They ran the temple, and they turned it into a robber's den.

But they had no real power and no real authority in their lives. They were enemies of God, enemies of truth, and enemies of the Gospel. So you can see why there was some conflict here.

You can see why there's some dissension between Jesus and these people. When you read through the Gospels, you kind of want to cheer Jesus on through these conflicts because on the one hand, you have a prideful group of people, the Pharisees and the Sadducees, who think that they are God's gift to creation.

They really do. They believe in their minds that they know better than anybody else, and they have this spiritual pride that's unparalleled. On the other hand, you have the Son of God who is holy, who is righteous, who is indeed God's gift to mankind.

[12 : 29] And they begin to clash. They begin to see these reactions that Jesus has, and it's amazing because He just keeps kindly telling them off and sending them on their way because He is just and holy, and He is all-wise, and He knows how to handle their arguments.

But in their perspective, Jesus is just teaching away without their permission, without their authority, without their approval. And this just struck a massive blow to their spiritual pride for a man to walk into their temple and to begin to teach as if He knew everything in their minds.

And it continually infuriated them. They had developed a vicious hatred for Jesus because He demonstrated such scorn toward their religious positions.

And this is what ultimately led them to hand Him over to the Romans to die on the cross. So the key issue here in this passage is authority. Who in the world gave you permission to overturn the money tables, Jesus?

Where do you get off? They could have asked, where did you get the authority to teach what you teach? But that's not what they said, is it? Because it was going deeper at this point, further past

what He actually said.

[13:48] It was what He was doing. I mean, it was tough enough for them to swallow that He came into town on Monday with massive crowds, by the way, arriving into Jerusalem for the Passover.

And they are bowing down to Him and singing praises at Him. Hosanna, Son of David. Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord.

Hosanna in the highest. And throwing messianic titles and names at Him. And He never refused them. In fact, He took them. Even well into Tuesday and Wednesday, He received praises from the people.

So as if that wasn't infuriating enough, Jesus walks into the temple on Tuesday and begins to disrupt everything they've got going on, begins to disrupt the money changers, overturns the tables, and kicks the merchandisers out.

So naturally, they're asking the question, Who do you think you are, Jesus? You see, these men truly believed in their hearts that they had everything right.

[14:54] They believed they had everything right in their lives, that they were the holy ones, they were the ones who were supposed to be the spiritual leaders of this time. And they had placed all faith in their religious rituals and believed that their obedience to the law had earned them righteousness on their own.

It's a very dangerous place to be. They were so focused on earning their own righteousness that they couldn't see that the Son of God was staring them right in the face. And we, by the way, have people like that in every church across this country, including this one this morning.

I'm here to tell you today, stop trying to earn righteousness on your own. You can't do it. It's impossible.

You can't live life good enough to earn God's grace. There are some of you in this room, if you would just let go of your pride and stop looking at the issues in everyone else's life and begin to work on your own sanctification in Christ Jesus, you would begin to see the world in a whole different way.

And you'd begin to see church in a whole different way. You'd begin to see your life in a whole different way. You'd begin to see God in a different way. And you'd become more like Christ in your own life.

[16:11] The Pharisees and scribes and elders, they didn't get it because they were lost in their pride. And while this is certainly not the first confrontation that Jesus had with the Sanhedrin, it was the beginning of the final series of confrontations that Jesus was going to have.

As we move into chapter 12, we're going to begin to see, all the way through the 40th verse of chapter 12, that Jesus is in conflict with these people. And this is the beginning of it.

We're going to see a series of stories in chapter 12 where the events that will focus on these religious leaders, and Jesus is going to tell a series of stories and events that's going to pronounce judgment on these people.

So if you're like me and you don't really like conflict, you better buckle up over the next couple of weeks. There's going to be conflict. Isn't it true that in general, we generally try to avoid conflict? I know in my life, I generally try to avoid conflict. Sometimes it's unavoidable though. Sometimes people will ask you a question that relates to biblical truth and they're not going to like your answer because you know for sure this is what the Bible says.

[17:15] This is what God has told us. There's times we have to tell them the hard truth, the hard reality of what Scripture tells us. And it may not be what they want to hear, what they want us to say.

But nonetheless, we have to stand up for truth. We have to stand up for what's right. We have to stand up for righteousness. We have to teach truth to a culture that's lost any sense of truth. We generally don't like conflict, but there's going to be conflict sometimes in our lives and that's what we're seeing going on here in our passage this morning as we move into chapter 12. as well. So after three years of conflict, Jesus comes to the temple.

He disrupts everything that they're doing. And don't miss this. These Pharisees, they believe in their hearts that Jesus is the blasphemer.

In their hearts, in their minds, they believe that Jesus is the blasphemer. This is how far removed they are from truth. This is how deep they've delved in their pride.

[18:23] They believe that Jesus' actions in the temple were an act of blasphemy to epic proportions. So with all of that as background, let's take a look at this story.

It will unfold easily for us this morning. The first thing that we're going to see is the confrontation. The confrontation. As he is walking in the temple, you've got to get the picture here.

This temple is massive. One of the walls for this temple, just to give you an idea, stretches four football fields long. It's a big area and that's just the outer wall.

You have the inner part. In between, you have a courtyard. So Jesus is likely walking around through this massive courtyard, acres upon acres of massive courtyard. And he's teaching them as he's moving through the temple.

This is really a very rabbinic way of teaching. They taught as they walked around. And Jesus is sharing truth as he moves about the temple. The parallel passage in Luke chapter 20, by the way, Luke tells us that he was teaching the people and preaching the gospel.

[19:24] So for one day, just to get this imagery, for one day, the temple is his and his alone. The truth began to ring out in a place where it hadn't rung out for hundreds of years.

So for one day, the temple is his. And no doubt, he was using his time wisely, teaching a gospel of repentance and turning away from the sin and the consequences of sin being death.

And then, the free gift of God, which was him, himself. Luke 19.47 records that he was teaching daily in the temple. The chief priests and the scribes and the principal men of the people were seeking to destroy him, but they did not find anything that they could do for the people were hanging on his words.

If there is ever a teacher on whom to hang every word, it is him. It is Jesus. Compelling teachers captivate me. I don't know about you guys. I love to listen to a compelling teacher.

I would just get captivated. But imagine the Son of God teaching. How captivating he was. These people are captivated by his teaching here. Back to verse 27.

[20:42] And he was walking in the temple and the chief priests and the scribes and elders came to him. Those are the three groups, by the way, that make up the Sanhedrin. These are the three groups also that we're going to see the primary conflict in chapter 12, in the next chapter.

They came to him not as ones who are captivated by his teaching, but as ones who are trying to incite him. They're trying to trip him up. They're trying to create a conflict that's going to make him look bad.

Not a good idea, by the way, because they were no match for Jesus. He was smarter than them. He has better rhetoric than them. And they said to him in verse 28, by what authority are you doing these things?

Or who gave you authority to do them? So this is the primary issue that they're having, is authority. It's authority. By the way, this is the primary issue that all unbelievers have with Christianity and with the Gospel.

It's authority. They don't want to submit their lives to any type of authority other than themselves. And really, they might give you a hundred reasons why. They might say that they were burnt by church.

[21:50] They might say many, many various different reasons, but ultimately, it's about authority in their lives. Somehow they can't, they're not willing to or they cannot somehow in their hearts submit to his authority.

And so these people were having trouble with his authority. They're saying, you can't just walk into the temple and do what you did because they don't believe that he is the authority. And by the way, they knew what his answer would be if he had answered them directly.

In fact, they may even hope that he would answer them directly. They may even hope that he would say that my authority comes from me and me alone or from God the Father and him alone.

Because then they can say, aha, we've got you. You're committing blasphemy. And they could convince the people that he was a blasphemer. That wasn't going to happen.

They didn't want him to gain followers. They didn't want him to be teaching in the temple and they certainly didn't want them to dismantle their entire system. See, the truth is that Jesus wasn't the blasphemer.

[22:55] They were the blasphemers. This is a classic example of literary irony. See, some of you in here, you think that the Scripture is boring, right? I know some of us probably don't.

I see some smiles on some people's faces probably bringing up some thoughts in your mind. A lot of us probably really love the Word of God, but there's probably a fraction of us in here that think it's just kind of mundane and boring.

This is so far from the truth. Because Scripture contains literary elements of the best novels that we read, of everything that we read. It's got deep plot structure, rich character development.

We see epic battles, romance, conflict, protagonist, antagonist. There's lots of symbolism in there. There's even monsters and dragons and angels and demons for the sci-fi fans, right?

And so, we see that this is not just based on a true story. It is the true story. And God, our God, is right in the middle of it all, guiding history.

[23 : 55] Because that is what it is. It is His story. He was there in the beginning. He will see it through to the end. He is the Alpha and the Omega. And in the end, He will be glorified into eternity.

But there's things that must happen before the end is to come. And this conflict where we find Jesus must happen before God's plan of redemption is to play its full course.

And we see here that the Pharisees had no chance. Jesus is so much wiser than they are. Here's this counter in verse 29. Jesus said to them, I'll ask you one question.

Jesus knew what they were doing, by the way. He was wise enough to know. He puts the burden of answering back on them. He says, Answer me and I will tell you by what authority I do these things. And this is really an honest response. His offer is to answer their question if they're willing to answer his question. And by doing so, he's leveling the playing ground.

[25 : 00] They may have asked him an unfair, trapping question. But he says, Okay, if you're willing to answer this question, I'll answer yours. So here's the question in verse 30. Was the baptism of John from heaven or from man?

Answer me. And in no uncertain terms, Jesus puts the ball back in the Pharisees' court. He's doing the same thing that they did to him. And it's what we might call being put between a rock and a hard place.

He didn't resent their question. He just knew their ill intentions. And I love the command here because he's demonstrating his authority over them. He demands for them to answer him. Isn't that great?

They didn't demand an answer from him, but he's demanding an answer back. I just want to pause here for a second to talk about Jesus' question because you may be thinking, Why in the world, out of all the questions that Jesus could have asked, why is this question about John the baptizer?

Why would he choose John the baptizer to ask a question? And I thought the same thing. I wondered the same thing as I was doing my preliminary studying for this passage. But what do we know about John the baptizer? We know that he was a forerunner to the Messiah.

[26 : 12] He was possibly the greatest prophet that ever lived up until this time. He was foretold in the Old Testament prophets. And this is key because these people that Jesus is talking to would have known these documents very well.

He was conceived miraculously by an aging couple, Elizabeth and Zacharias. because of the plan of God. And he preached in the wilderness a message of repentance in preparation for the coming Messiah.

And one day, Jesus shows up and John says, Behold, the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world. It's a bold statement.

everything that John did pointed back to Jesus. And everyone in the temple knew it. So was the ministry of John the baptizer, the prophetic ministry of John the baptizer, was it from God or was it from man?

Answer me. Strong challenge. And Jesus was brilliant when confronted. He was brilliant. He never lost in a debate or an argument. He put them in the hot seat.

[27 : 29] If they say that the ministry of John is not from God, then they've got a problem because all the people knew that John was a real prophet. All the people there believed that he was a real prophet.

If they say that his ministry is from God, they have to affirm that Jesus is the Messiah. Something that their pride and ignorance couldn't let them do. You can't take John without Jesus and you can't throw away Jesus without throwing away John.

So they have a serious problem. So serious in the fact that they have to have a side conversation. So they begin dialogosumai. There we go. Greek there for you.

Dialogosumai. They begin to dialogue among themselves. They begin to talk and discuss among themselves. And I have no idea what this looked like. I can only picture it in my head as them being like, okay, we need to think about this.

Come on, let's go over here. Let's get in the huddle. But apparently they're not talking quietly enough for people to not hear them because we have the recorded words here in Scripture, right? [28 : 26] So apparently somebody must have overheard them or maybe they're just guessing what they were talking about. I don't know how this went down but imagine them kind of getting together and talking about this among themselves and they're saying, if we say from heaven, he will say, why did you not believe him?

Meaning, why did they not believe John when he says Jesus or when he affirms Jesus as the Messiah? But shall we say for man, it's their only other option.

It's the only an either or type of question. But they're realizing, well, we can't say for man either. Why? The text tells us they were afraid of the people for they all held that John was really a prophet.

There's a minor detail that Mark leaves out here that Luke includes. They weren't just afraid of the people because of what they would say or how they would view them.

Luke 20, verse 6 tells us that all the people, and get this one, all the people will stone us to death. So now we're getting the full picture of what's going on.

[29 : 36] They didn't want to be the blasphemers. They wanted Jesus to look like the blasphemer. And they're realizing that Jesus has turned the tables on them and he's put them in a position where no matter what they say, they're going to have a tough time answering.

So now you understand the dilemma. What are they going to do? The praise of men was everything to these people. It was absolutely everything. Power, prestige, privilege, honors. They would pray long prayers in the streets in public just to look like they were highly spiritual. spiritual. They wanted man to see them in a good light. They wanted everyone to know they were right, that they had a special connection to God. And they wanted to be recognized in public as the holy ones.

So if John's ministry is from God, they have to embrace that they've been wrong for three years. For three years that they've been in conflict with Jesus. That they were somehow wrong.

What's more is that they would have to accept the fact that this man that they've been opposing for three years has been right. And how could the spiritual authorities in this time be so wrong for so long?

[30 : 45] It's something they just weren't prepared to accept. If they say it's for men, they're liable to get stoned. And that's not just death, that is a shameful death. A disgraceful death.

So they reduced the worst possible thing that could happen to someone with intellectual pride. And that's to say, I don't know. There you have it.

The religious leaders of the day. That must have been hard for that to spill out of their mouths that we do not know. So much for their omniscience, right? It's their duty to know.

It's their duty to observe. It's their duty to evaluate. But never, never in their dealings with Jesus did they ever come to him seeking truth. They were always seeking to entrap him.

They were always seeking to trip him up. And this is the way of false religion. Not necessarily the victims of false religion, but the purveyors of false religion. And so this leads us to Jesus' answer.

[31 : 47] They were confronted, they went to the counter, and now we see the condemnation. Jesus said to them, neither will I tell you by what authority I do these things.

false. So Jesus refused to answer their question, and this is important this morning because we're about to turn a corner. You don't ever want to be in the position where Jesus says to you that I am through talking with you.

Because that is what's going on here. Jesus is saying, I am done. I've said all that I have to say to you. you are not entitled to any further information.

And when you continue to reject the light, eventually the light's going to go out. It's the reality of it. Jesus had already given them a stark warning, a grave warning in Luke 13, saying, Oh Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the city that kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to it.

How often I would have gathered your children together as him gathers her brood under her wings. But you were not willing. Behold, your house is forsaken.

[33 : 05] The words of the Son of God cast out upon the city. You see, God's grace does have limits. You say, well how can a loving God allow a well-meaning person to suffer eternity in hell?

And it's true that our God is infinitely loving, infinitely kind, and infinitely good. But as a good and holy and righteous God, He is also necessarily just.

And justice must prevail for Him to maintain holiness in His life or in His being. And even the best, most well-meaning people on this earth are guilty of sin.

Romans 3.23 tells us, for all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God. There is not one person in this room that is free of sin. We are all, we are all sinners.

We've all fallen short of His glory. And that's why Jesus is so important. That's why His life is so important. That's why His death is so important. He lived a perfect life and gives His life up as a perfect sacrifice for our benefit, for our behalf.

[34 : 16] And ultimately so that He would be glorified. He hung a gruesome death on the cross. and provided payment for the sins of those who would give their lives to Him. The Pharisees and elders and scribes, they were all looking for some evidence.

They were all looking for a source of authority. I'm telling you, you might not ever find a scientific source of authority or a scientific evidence of God in your life.

There might be difficult to come by for you to come by scientific evidence because it's all about faith, placing faith in Christ Jesus.

And I'm confident this morning that there are people in this room that have been struggling and struggling with the authority of Christ in your lives. Some of us in here may even be among the redeemed and saying, I know that I believe Christ is the authority of this area of my life and I'm happy with that.

But there's some stuff over here that I'm hanging on to. I'm not going to let Christ have authority in my life in this area because this is making me feel good. This is making me have some temporary happiness in the short term.

[35 : 30] But this area over here I'm happy about. This area I'm going to keep for myself for a little while. It's all or nothing. You either give Him all the authority in your life or nothing.

There's some people in here who have never been able to submit, you've never been able to find the gumption or the will to submit your whole life over to Him ever. And if that's you this morning and I just want to plead with you, plead with you, don't let it go another day without taking action in your life on this.

If you still have questions, come talk to me, come talk to Nathan, come talk to somebody who's an elder here or somebody who understands the Scriptures, understands God's plan of salvation. will be happy more than overjoyed to talk with you about this. But God is calling you to Himself. He is calling you to salvation that can only come through His authority in your life over sin.

There's one final truth this morning and that's that this unique authority that Jesus wielded to say whatever He wanted and to do whatever He wanted to do was amazingly delegated to the apostles.

[36 : 41] apostles. It's truly amazing what happened. In Luke 9, Jesus gave them authority over demons, over disease and to proclaim the kingdom. How could they do these things with the same authority?

Because they spoke the same truth and they wielded the same power. So did it end with the apostles? Well, a portion of it did. A portion of it did end with them.

There were signs and wonders and miracles they were able to do during this time. There was a gift of the Spirit that Jesus had imparted on them. But don't miss this brothers and sisters in the room this morning.

The authority to proclaim the truth has been passed down to us. We are designed to be proclaimers of God's Word and God's truth.

Jesus' final recorded words in Acts 1, you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you and you will be my witnesses in Judea, Samaria and to the ends of the earth.

[37 : 40] Paul writes to Titus in chapter 2, young church leader, Titus, chapter 2, verse 15, these things speak with all authority and let no one disregard you.

Let no one disregard you. I feel a special burden this morning to speak to the young people in the room. Teenagers, college students, young professionals in the room here.

Do not think for a second that you are too young for God to use you. And do not let people discourage you because you are young. God has historically used young people to start incredible

movements.

Martin Luther nailed the 95 Theses to the door of Wittenberg in 1517, starting a reformation. He was only 34. Nicholas Zinzendorf witnessed the birth of the 100-year Moravian prayer revival in 1727, when he was only 27 years old.

Jonathan Edwards was only at the age of 31 in 1734, when his church experienced a revival that led to the conversion of half their town. George Whitfield launched what some call the greatest single evangelistic tour in New England in the first Great Awakening when he was only 25.

[39 : 03] Some of you are coming up to that age. Some of you are already at that age. At the age of 23, Samuel Mills led a group of peers to what would be the birth of foreign missions in America.

God uses people young and old. I don't mean to be discouraging old people. God uses old people too. God uses people young and old, but do not think that you are too young to do something great for the glory of God.

Mary, mother of Jesus was likely a young teenager when she raised and nurtured the man that would become the cornerstone to every great movement of God for the rest of history.

So young people, do not believe for a second you are too young for God to use you as a catalyst for revival. And pray for revival. We need it so desperately.

We need it so desperately in our country. So for all of us, young, old, as we go away from here this morning, remember that we live in a fallen and broken world that desperately needs the authority of Christ in their lives.

[40 : 17] I think about all the terrible things that are happening in this world and my heart breaks. You've got the conflict going on between Syria and Russia, where people are being killed meaninglessly. There's an ever-escalating conflict in Israel and Palestine.

there's the Islamic State, or whatever they're calling themselves this week, Islamic State, ISIS, whatever it is, they're killing Christians among other minority religious groups for apparently no good reason.

There's the voices of feminism, homosexual rights activists, proponents of abortion that are growing ever louder in our culture. We have all the chaos, all the bad ideas, all the misrepresentations that are floating around our world.

And yet God has placed us here in North Georgia to impact a culture for His glory. Let us never forget that.

Let us never forget that the most important thing that can happen in this world is for God to be glorified through His truth being made known, both here and abroad, both locally and to the nations.

[41 : 24] God's. And the only place that they're going to receive this truth is through the instruments in which He has deposited His Word and His Spirit.

And that's in us. See, in this passage, Jesus comes up against a great conflict and He's promised us that if we're going to follow Him radically, if we're going to share truth, if we're going to represent Him locally and to the nations, then we're going to come into conflict.

There's going to be times of discouragement. There's going to be times of joy. There's going to be times of difficulty and times of happiness. And we can expect confrontation as we carry the light of the gospel truth to the world.

But I want to leave you this encouraging passage that this light and momentary affliction is preparing us for an eternal weight of glory that is beyond all comparison.

Let's pray together.