

## Small Group Guide: The Authority of Jesus

Based on Mark 11:27-33

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### Opening Prayer & Icebreaker

**Icebreaker Question:** Have you ever had to deal with someone in customer service who didn't have the authority to make a decision? How did that make you feel? How does that contrast with Jesus' complete authority?

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### Sermon Summary

This week we explored Jesus' authority and where it comes from. The religious leaders questioned Jesus' right to teach and perform miracles, but Jesus revealed that His authority comes directly from heaven. We examined four key aspects: Jesus addresses the question of authority, the origin of His authority, the issue of evading authority, and the consequences of rejecting authority.

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### Key Scripture References

- **Primary Text:** Mark 11:27-33
  - **Supporting Texts:**
    - Daniel 7:13-14
    - John 3:35; 17:1-5
    - Matthew 9:6
    - 1 Corinthians 15:27
    - 1 Peter 3:22
    - Genesis 3:1-7
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### Discussion Questions

**Understanding Authority (15-20 minutes)**

1. What does the word "authority" (exousia) mean, and why were the religious leaders so threatened by Jesus' authority?
2. Read Mark 1:22, 27. What made Jesus' teaching different from the scribes? How do people today respond when they encounter Jesus' authority?
3. Why do you think Jesus answered the religious leaders' question with another question about John the Baptist? What was He trying to reveal?

#### **The Origin of Authority (15-20 minutes)**

4. At Jesus' baptism, all three persons of the Trinity were present (Father, Son, Holy Spirit). Why is this significant for understanding Jesus' authority?
5. Read Daniel 7:13-14 and John 17:1-5. How do these passages confirm that Jesus' authority comes from heaven and not from human institutions?
6. The sermon mentioned that Jesus has authority over sin, sickness, death, and all creation. Which aspect of His authority do you find most comforting? Why?

#### **Evading Authority (15-20 minutes)**

7. The religious leaders knew the right answer but were afraid to give it. When have you found yourself evading God's authority because you feared the consequences or what others might think?
8. Discuss Genesis 3:1-7 (Adam and Eve's fall). How did evading God's authority lead to humanity's greatest tragedy? What are some ways we still try to evade God's authority today?
9. The pastor mentioned that we often try to fill the "God-shaped hole" in our hearts with other things. What are some common substitutes people use today? Why do they ultimately fail to satisfy?

#### **Rejecting vs. Accepting Authority (15-20 minutes)**

10. The sermon described three types of people: believers, rejecters, and "need-mores" (those always needing more proof). Which category do you think describes most people you know? Where would you have placed yourself before accepting Christ?
11. The religious leaders tried to appear "indifferent," but Jesus saw through their defiance. Why is there no neutral ground when it comes to Jesus' authority?
12. Read John 14:6. How does this exclusive claim challenge our culture's belief that "all paths lead to God"? How can we share this truth with grace and love?

### Key Takeaways

- ✓ **Jesus has complete authority** given to Him by God the Father over all creation, sin, death, and salvation.
  - ✓ **There is no neutral position** regarding Jesus—we either submit to His authority or reject it.
  - ✓ **Evading God's authority** leads to emptiness, pain, and separation from the life He intended for us.
  - ✓ **Salvation comes only through Jesus**—there is no other name under heaven by which we can be saved (Acts 4:12).
  - ✓ **God desires to restore us** to the relationship He intended from creation—walking with Him in fellowship.
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### Practical Applications

#### This Week's Challenge:

**REFLECT:** Spend time in prayer asking God to reveal any areas where you're evading His authority in your life. Be honest with yourself and with Him.

**RESPOND:** Identify one specific area where you need to submit to Jesus' authority this week. Share it with an accountability partner or your small group.

**REACH OUT:** Think of one person in your life who is a "need-more"—always seeking but never finding. Pray for them daily this week and look for an opportunity to share how Jesus has satisfied your deepest needs.

#### Daily Devotional Guide:

- **Monday:** Read Mark 11:27-33. Journal about areas where you question God's authority.
- **Tuesday:** Read Daniel 7:13-14. Meditate on Jesus' eternal kingdom.
- **Wednesday:** Read John 17:1-5. Reflect on Jesus' prayer and His authority.
- **Thursday:** Read Genesis 3:1-7. Consider the consequences of evading God's authority.
- **Friday:** Read Romans 8:38-39. Find assurance in what cannot separate you from God's love.

- **Saturday:** Read Ecclesiastes 3:11. Reflect on the "eternity in your heart."
  - **Sunday:** Prepare your heart for worship by thanking Jesus for His authority in your life.
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### Prayer Focus

**Praise:** Thank Jesus that He has complete authority over every area of our lives and that nothing can separate us from His love.

**Confession:** Confess areas where you've evaded or resisted God's authority in your life.

**Intercession:** Pray for those in your life who don't yet recognize Jesus' authority—that their eyes would be opened.

**Petition:** Ask God to help you live in daily submission to Jesus' loving authority.

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### Closing Question

**How has your understanding of Jesus' authority changed after this study? What is one way you will live differently this week because of it?**

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### Memory Verse

*"And Jesus came and said to them, 'All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me.'"*  
— **Matthew 28:18 (ESV)**

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**Leader Tip:** Create space for people to share honestly about their struggles with submission to God's authority. This is often a sensitive topic, so lead with vulnerability and grace.