

MARK 11:27-33

## “SEZ WHO?”

<sup>27</sup> 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. <sup>28</sup> “By what authority are you doing these things?” they asked. “And who gave you authority to do this?” <sup>29</sup> Jesus replied, “I will ask you one question. Answer me, and I will tell you by what authority I am doing these things. <sup>30</sup> John’s baptism—was it from heaven, or from men? Tell me!” <sup>31</sup> They discussed it among themselves and said, “If we say, ‘From heaven,’ he will ask, ‘Then why didn’t you believe him?’ <sup>32</sup> But if we say, ‘From men’ . . . .” (They feared the people, for everyone held that John really was a prophet.) <sup>33</sup> So they answered Jesus, “We don’t know.” Jesus said, “Neither will I tell you by what authority I am doing these things.”

Anyone who has ever witnessed children arguing about something on the playground has heard the question, “Sez who?” It would appear that the question of authority comes naturally to us when a statement or action goes against the position we have taken. Although the question sounds like an honest inquiry, in reality it is usually motivated by hostility. What we are saying is, “You don’t have the right to make me do that.”

With the religious leaders and with us, Jesus does not engage such challenges by being defensive and offering proof of his authority. Rather he responds by questioning our motive. What is important is that the intrinsic authority of Jesus over our lives is acknowledged and received by us through faith. It is not that Jesus is the Son of God because he can prove that he is our Lord. He is Lord of our lives because we believe that he is the Son of God. The answer of “I don’t know” in response to the question of his authority is the same as saying “No.”

**Jesus, through the Bible and the experience of God’s people, you have been revealed as the Son of God. As the Word incarnate you are my Savior and Lord. Help me to acknowledge your lordship with my life by readily living under your authority. Amen.**