

# Presbyterian Church of Henderson

Worship Service 10:00 AM

April 18, 2021

*Gospel of Mark Series*

## Ringing of the Bell

**Welcome and Announcements**      Pastor Eric Hoey

**Prelude**      Austin Glover, vocalist

## \*Call to Worship      Bob Clum

The bread of life opens our eyes.

**The word of life opens our ears.**

The risen one shows us God's own brokenness,

**and by those wounds we are healed.**

Peace be with you.

**And also with you.**

## \*Hymn      PH 466 "O For a Thousand Tongues to Sing"

1 O for a thousand tongues to sing

My dear Redeemer's praise,

The glories of my God and King,

The triumphs of God's grace!

2 Jesus, the name that charms our fears,

That bids our sorrows cease;

'Tis music in the sinner's ears,

'Tis life, and health, and peace.

3 Christ breaks the power of reigning sin,

And sets the prisoner free;

Christ's blood can make the sinful clean,

Christ's blood availed for me.

4 My gracious Master and my God,

Assist me to proclaim,

To spread through all the earth abroad

The honors of Thy name.

## \*Call to Confession

The One who calls us to repent, hears us. In trust that our Creator knows us through and through, let us open our hearts to the healing of God's forgiveness.

## \*Prayer of Confession      (unison)

**Good and gracious God, we are creatures of dust, ignorant of your revelation, misunderstanding your life, death, and resurrection among us, needing forgiveness. We repent of our failure to give as you have given to us. We beg your mercy for our fallen world. We seek your Word, that we may live with the faith of Jesus. Be our solace in this life**

**and always. We ask this as your own children, holy and incomplete.  
Forgive us and lead us. Amen.**

**\*Assurance of Pardon**

In the name of God, the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, your plea for absolution has been heard. God's promises are sure: your sins are forgiven. Peace be with you.

**\*Gloria Patri (PH 579)**

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost; As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen. Amen.

**\*Passing the Peace**

Please turn and bow to someone out of respect and love— "The peace of Christ be with you"

**Prayer for Illumination**

Holy God, by your Spirit reveal your radical, surprising love; come to us through your holy word, and let us hear what you are saying. Amen.

**First Reading** Acts 3:12-19

When Peter saw it, he addressed the people, "You Israelites, why do you wonder at this, or why do you stare at us, as though by our own power or piety we had made him walk? The God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, the God of our ancestors has glorified his servant Jesus, whom you handed over and rejected in the presence of Pilate, though he had decided to release him. But you rejected the Holy and Righteous One and asked to have a murderer given to you, and you killed the Author of life, whom God raised from the dead. To this we are witnesses. And by faith in his name, his name itself has made this man strong, whom you see and know; and the faith that is through Jesus has given him this perfect health in the presence of all of you. And now, friends, I know that you acted in ignorance, as did also your rulers. In this way God fulfilled what he had foretold through all the prophets, that his Messiah would suffer. Repent therefore, and turn to God so that your sins may be wiped out

**Special Music** "If With All Your Hearts" from *Elijah* by Mendelssohn

**Second Reading** Mark 11:27-12:12

Again they came to Jerusalem. As he was walking in the temple, the chief priests, the scribes, and the elders came to him and said, "By what authority are you doing these things? Who gave you this authority to do them?" Jesus said to them, "I will ask you one question; answer me, and I will tell you by what authority I do these things. Did the baptism of John come from heaven, or was it of human origin? Answer me." They argued with one another, "If we say, 'From heaven,' he will say, 'Why then did you not believe him?' But shall we say, 'Of human origin?'"—they were afraid of the crowd, for all regarded John as truly a prophet. So they answered Jesus, "We do not know." And Jesus said to them, "Neither will I tell you by what authority I am doing these things."

Then he began to speak to them in parables. "A man planted a vineyard, put a fence around it, dug a pit for the wine press, and built a watchtower; then he leased it to tenants and went to another country. When the season came, he sent a slave to the tenants to collect from them his share of the produce of the vineyard. But they seized him, and beat him, and sent him away empty-handed. And again he sent another slave to them; this one they beat over the head and insulted. Then he sent another, and that one they killed. And so it was with many others; some they beat, and others they killed. He had still one other, a beloved son. Finally he sent him to them, saying, 'They will respect my son.' But those tenants said to one another, 'This is the heir; come, let us kill him, and the inheritance will be ours.' So they seized him, killed him, and threw him out of the vineyard. What then will the owner of the vineyard do? He will come and destroy the tenants and give the vineyard to others. Have you not read this scripture: 'The stone that the builders rejected has become the cornerstone; this was the Lord's doing, and it is amazing in our eyes?'"

When they realized that he had told this parable against them, they wanted to arrest him, but they feared the crowd. So they left him and went away.

Then they sent to him some Pharisees and some Herodians to trap him in what he said. And they came and said to him, "Teacher, we know that you are sincere, and show deference to no one; for you do not regard people with partiality, but teach the way of God in accordance with truth. Is it lawful to pay taxes to the emperor, or not? Should we pay them, or should we not?" But knowing their hypocrisy, he said to them, "Why are you putting me to the test? Bring me a denarius and let me see it." And they brought one. Then he said to them, "Whose head is this, and whose title?" They answered, "The emperor's." Jesus said to them, "Give to the emperor the things that are the emperor's, and to God the things that are God's." And they were utterly amazed at him.

## **Children's Sermon**      Pastor Eric

### **SERMON**      "The Authority of Jesus - Part 1"

Mark 11:27-17

- How many of you love sports?
- I remember when I went to visit a friend from high school, he and his wife were such great sports fans that they had their television in dual mode so that they could watch two sporting events at the same time.
- I felt like I was in a sports bar.
- Having never been a sports fan growing up in Southern CA, I was never aware of this annual tournament called March Madness.
- Come on Eric, were you born in a closet? Perhaps, I was!
- Out here, almost everyone knows about March Madness, creates their own bracket, and cheers their favorite teams to victory.
- As we look at today's text, and subsequent weeks, it is like a sporting event.
- The competition is ramping up between the religious leaders and Jesus.
- As Jesus prepares his disciples that he is going to the cross, on multiple occasions, the religious leaders are trying to do everything in their ability to get rid of the competition by discrediting him and ultimately get him killed.

- As the pressure ramps up, a quality of Jesus that dominates the competition is the "Authority of Jesus."
- If the religious leaders knew they were competing with the Son of God, the Messiah, the King of Kings and Lord of Lords, I wonder if they would even try.
- You see, that was the problem, they failed to recognize that they were trying to eliminate God himself.
- When you go up against God, you do not stand a chance.
- Let's look at three ways Jesus demonstrates his authority.

### **1. Jesus' Authority Over the Sanhedrin**

*11:27 Again they came to Jerusalem. As he was walking in the temple, the chief priests, the scribes, and the elders came to him*

- Remember when Mark first began to introduce Jesus' destiny in chapter 8?
- *Mark 8:31* Then he began to teach them that the Son of Man must undergo great suffering, and be rejected by the elders, the chief priests, and the scribes, and be killed, and after three days rise again.
- What is interesting this is exactly the same list of religious leaders on v. 27: chief priests, the scribes, and the elders.
- When the three of them are together, they form the seventy-one strong membership of the Sanhedrin or Council, the highest legal body in Judaism.
- They controlled the temple, oversaw the resolution of legal disputes, and administered the political and financial affairs of the Jewish people.
- This is group that is responsible for Jesus' death, and this is the first time they appear together.

*28 and said, "By what authority are you doing these things? Who gave you this authority to do them?"*

- They ask Jesus "by what authority" is he doing **these things**, probably referring to his actions when he over turned the tables in the temple the day before.
- The question itself was a power play because the Sanhedrin was THE authority for all the Jews.

*29 Jesus said to them, "I will ask you one question; answer me, and I will tell you by what authority I do these things. 30 Did the baptism of John come from heaven, or was it of human origin? Answer me."*

- Jesus responded in typical fashion to their question by asserting another question: Whether or not John's mission was from God or from humans.
- This was a typical debate tactic that changed the power equation.
- Jesus will answer their question only on his terms, after they answer his question
- That is why he said, "Answer me!"
- So at the apex of the competition, Jesus is going head to head with those who think they have all the authority
- If you think about it, the question was perfect for the situation.
- John the Baptist had clearly testified to the divine source of Jesus' mission.
- If they recognized the divine authority of John's mission, they would be forced to recognize Jesus' mission and to acknowledge that Jesus' authority came from God.
- Jesus' question placed these religious leaders in a dilemma.

- If they answered, "From heaven," they would incriminate themselves for not believing John and supporting his ministry.
- If they said from men, this would place them in an unfavorable position with the people who accepted John as a true prophet.

*31 They argued with one another, "If we say, 'From heaven,' he will say, 'Why then did you not believe him?' 32 But shall we say, 'Of human origin?'"—they were afraid of the crowd, for all regarded John as truly a prophet.*

- So they pleaded ignorance, which was the same as a refusal to answer Jesus' question.

*33 So they answered Jesus, "We do not know." And Jesus said to them, "Neither will I tell you by what authority I am doing these things."*

- Jesus demonstrates his authority by not allowing their manipulative questions control the narrative, but he turned the conversation around and demonstrated His authority by refusing to answer.

## **2. Jesus' Authority Fulfilled in God's Plan**

*1 Then he began to speak to them in parables. "A man planted a vineyard, put a fence around it, dug a pit for the wine press, and built a watchtower; then he leased it to tenants and went to another country.*

- As Jesus tells this parable, he is alluding to Isaiah 5:2 where it pictures God's lavishing care on the vineyard and his people but are only met with ingratitude and unfruitfulness.
- Listen to the following words from Isaiah.
- *Isaiah 5:1-4* *Let me sing for my beloved my love-song concerning his vineyard: My beloved had a vineyard on a very fertile hill. He dug it and cleared it of stones, and planted it with choice vines; he built a watchtower in the midst of it, and hewed out a wine vat in it; he expected it to yield grapes, but it yielded wild grapes. And now, inhabitants of Jerusalem and people of Judah, judge between me and my vineyard. What more was there to do for my vineyard that I have not done in it? When I expected it to yield grapes, why did it yield wild grapes?*

- Jesus' parable is an allegory of God's troubled relationship with Israel

*2 When the season came, he sent a slave to the tenants to collect from them his share of the produce of the vineyard. 3 But they seized him, and beat him, and sent him away empty-handed. 4 And again he sent another slave to them; this one they beat over the head and insulted. 5 Then he sent another, and that one they killed. And so it was with many others; some they beat, and others they killed. 6 He had still one other, a beloved son. Finally he sent him to them, saying, 'They will respect my son.' 7 But those tenants said to one another, 'This is the heir; come, let us kill him, and the inheritance will be ours.' 8 So they seized him, killed him, and threw him out of the vineyard.*

- This parable reflects the real world of absentee landlords.
- Resentment against them was typical, but few would ever dare to behave as the parable's tenants did.
- However the tenants in Jesus' parable behave recklessly by killing every representative whom the landlord sent to collect from them his share of the produce, the rent.
- Finally the landlord send his son, and the tenants killed him as well thinking they would own the vineyard.

- The parable resembles the prophets that God sent to Israel that were either beaten or killed, and ultimately a destiny of Jesus himself.
- Jesus' parable of the Tenants in the Vineyard is a description of the leaders of Israel as unwilling to receive God's word sent to them by the prophets.
- What happens?

*9 What then will the owner of the vineyard do? He will come and destroy the tenants and give the vineyard to others.*

- Here we see God's judgement upon the religious leaders of Israel ultimately destroying the wicked to make room for something new.
- Listen to the words of *Isaiah 5:5* *And now I will tell you what I will do to my vineyard. I will remove its hedge, and it shall be devoured; I will break down its wall, and it shall be trampled down.*
- Jesus then says:

*10 Have you not read this scripture: 'The stone that the builders rejected has become the cornerstone;*

- Jesus is quoting from Psalm 118:22-23 almost exactly.
- This is a Messianic psalm.
- He is changing the imagery from the "son-tenants killed" to the "stone-builders rejected."
- The builders, which is emblematic of the religious leaders as well as the tenants, reject the stone that ultimately becomes the cornerstone the crucial block to where everything in a new building becomes aligned.
- I think Jesus changes the imagery of the son in the parable of the vineyard to the stone rejected and becoming the cornerstone so that there is a new allegorical image for everyone to consider.
- The vineyard and the tenants allegory had its limits to the future of the son.
- With the switch to the stone, the imagery can be repurposed.
- Through the death and resurrection of Jesus, it the only way God can carve His way forward into something new where Jesus becomes the new foundation for an entirely different kingdom of God.
- Psalm 118:23 continues:

*11 this was the Lord's doing, and it is amazing in our eyes?'"*

- It is almost as Jesus is rubbing in their faces that God is in control, and the religious leaders going to lose
- God is the author of this action as a part of His redemptive plan, and it is wonderful.

*12 When they realized that he had told this parable against them, they wanted to arrest him, but they feared the crowd. So they left him and went away.*

- In this last section of Scripture, we clearly see Jesus' authority fulfilled in God's redemptive plan.

### **3. Jesus' Authority Over Misdirection**

*13 Then they sent to him some Pharisees and some Herodians to trap him in what he said.*

- In order to understand this scenario for Jesus, we must look at the political situation the two groups represented.
- The Jews were living under strong Roman rule over their lives, and they resented it very much.

- King Herod was appointed by the Roman government to rule over the Jews so that they could maintain their religious system and still be under Roman law.
- The Pharisees, known as the separated ones, stood for strict obedience to the Jewish law in written and oral forms; they strongly opposed the Roman rule, but they were never revolutionists.
- The Herodians were connected to the King Herod's family whose position depended upon Rome and supported Roman authority.
- So these two groups come together with so much hatred toward Jesus that the sole purpose was to plot and to trap Jesus.
- By the way, the word for trap is only used here in the New Testament, and it is a term used when you go hunting to trap animals.
- Mark uses a hunting term.

*14 And they came and said to him, "Teacher, we know that you are sincere, and show deference to no one; for you do not regard people with partiality, but teach the way of God in accordance with truth. Is it lawful to pay taxes to the emperor, or not? 15 Should we pay them, or should we not?"*

- Their opening words are flattering and complementary, but they were obviously insincere.
- Notice that everything they said to Jesus was absolutely true, but their commitment to him was far from their hearts.
- Taxes referred to the annual head tax demanded by the Roman emperor from all Jews since A.D. 6. (This was when Judea became a Roman province.)
- The money went directly into the emperor's treasury.
- This tax was unpopular because it symbolized the Jews' subjugation to Rome.
- So the question proposed to Jesus was politically motivated.
- In one sense, from the perspective of the religious leaders, it was a no-win situation.
- If Jesus said paying taxes to Caesar was important, the Pharisees can accuse him of being a religious compromiser who supports the blasphemous Roman system.
- If Jesus said to not pay taxes to Caesar, the Herodians can accuse him of rebelling against the Roman state which was an offense punishable by death.

*But knowing their hypocrisy, he said to them, "Why are you putting me to the test? Bring me a denarius and let me see it."*

- Jesus sensed their hypocrisy, and asserts his authority by demanding a coin and questioning the inscription.
- The fact that the coin possibly came from the religious leaders is in itself ironic because on the coin was an image of Caesar Augustus, and on the flip side is a woman priestess or the wife of Augustus proclaiming Pax Romana that places all people in subjection.
- If they were the owners, Pharisees and Herodians possessed a coin oozing idolatry and blasphemy.

*16 And they brought one. Then he said to them, "Whose head is this, and whose title?" They answered, "The emperor's." 17 Jesus said to them, "Give to the emperor the things that are the emperor's, and to God the things that are God's." And they were utterly amazed at him.*

- Jesus' answer to give what is Caesars and to God what is God's places a limit on Caesar's authority.
- Those things stamped with his image, such as coins, belong to him.

- Those things stamped with God image, belong to God....what this are belonging to God?
  - Human beings are the coinage of God because we were made in the image of God.
  - So when Jesus says, give to God the things that belong to God
  - What do humans owe to God?
  - Our very lives.
  - God wants our very lives to be given to Him because we were created with the image of God to give glory, honor, and allegiance to God.
  - Here is the rub, our allegiance to God was exactly what the religious leaders failed to understand.
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- With the full authority of God, Jesus calls us to himself.
  - Do we challenge this call like the sporting event of the religious leaders in our text, or do we yield our hearts and lives to Jesus who want our full allegiance to him?
1. Jesus' Authority Over the Sanhedrin (religious system)
  2. Jesus' Authority Fulfilled in God's Plan (died for you)
  3. Jesus' Authority Over Misdirection (will see through the misdirecting games)

## **Offering**

As Jesus gave himself fully for us and then appeared to the disciples bringing peace, so let us now bring wholeness and healing to others through our tithes and gifts.

### **\*Doxology**

Praise God from whom all blessing flow.

Praise Him all creatures here below.

Praise him above the heavenly host.

Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost

### **\*Prayer of Dedication**

Lord God, we offer to you only a portion of what you have given us. All that we have is from your creative hand. All that we can give away we do through Jesus' love.

## **\*Affirmation of Faith** (Apostle's Creed)

*Minister:*

Brothers and Sisters in Christ, what do you believe?

*All:*

I BELIEVE in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth, and in Jesus Christ his only Son our Lord; who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried; he descended into hell; the third day he rose again from the dead; he ascended into heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of God the Father Almighty; from thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead. I believe in the Holy Ghost; the holy catholic Church; the communion of saints; the forgiveness of sins; the resurrection of the body; and the life everlasting. Amen.

## **Prayers of the People**

God has made the One who was rejected the cornerstone of a new community. In the name of Christ Jesus, let us pray for the needs of the world, saying, Hear us, O God, **your mercy is great.**

Holy One, as the risen Christ opened the minds of the disciples to understand the Scriptures and gave them power through the Holy Spirit to walk boldly in this world, open your people today to the healing, wisdom, and faith given in your Word; hear us, O God, **your mercy is great.**

Prince of Peace, as Christ Jesus showed his wounded hands and feet to the terrified apostles, reveal to your church, and to people of prayer in every faith, the wounds of our neighbors, the fears of individuals and families, and the avenues toward healing; hear us, O God, **your mercy is great.**

Author of life, we beg for peace among nations, peace throughout communities, peace within families. Guide leaders and voters, legislatures and parliaments, judges and juries. Teach diplomacy and let our ways be formed so that all creatures, plants, and people may have plenty; hear us, O God, **your mercy is great.**

Light in our darkness, let your brightness burn in places shrouded in violence. Reveal the pains that are hidden in secret. Unveil the needs of our own hearts so that we may know the power of vulnerability. Your Son was raised to life even from the grave. Show us again that life comes from death; hear us, O God, **your mercy is great.**

Healer of our every ill, we pray for all who are in need, for refugees of war and all who are displaced by storms, for rescue workers and medical teams, for those whose bones are weary, for those who show us the power of community to give hope to the frightened, and for all who have asked for our prayers; hear us, O God, **your mercy is great.**

You command us to bring to you our deepest desires, O God, and we pray now for those persons and concerns that lie on our hearts, spoken aloud or in silence.... [A time of silence is kept.] Hear us, O God, **your mercy is great.**

Trusting in your abundant mercy, O God, we commend into your care all for whom we pray, and our own lives; through Jesus Christ, our Savior, and now, with confidence as children of God, let us pray:

### **Lord's Prayer**

Our Father, who art in Heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy Kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread and forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For Thine is the Kingdom, and the Power, and the Glory forever. Amen.

**\*Hymn** PH 122 "Thine is the Glory"

1 Thine is the glory,  
Risen, conquering Son;

Endless is the victory  
Thou o'er death hast won.  
Angels in bright raiment  
Rolled the stone away,  
Kept the folded grave clothes  
Where Thy body lay.

Refrain:

Thine is the glory,  
Risen, conquering Son;  
Endless is the victory  
Thou o'er death hast won.

2 Lo! Jesus meets us,  
Risen from the tomb;  
Lovingly He greets us,  
Scatters fear and gloom.  
Let the church with gladness  
Hymns of triumph sing,  
For the Lord now liveth;  
Death hath lost its sting. [Refrain]

3 No more we doubt Thee,  
Glorious Prince of life!  
Life is naught without Thee;  
Aid us in our strife.  
Make us more than conquerors  
Through Thy deathless love;  
Bring us safe through Jordan  
To Thy home above. [Refrain]

**\*Benediction**

The LORD bless you and keep you; the LORD make his face to shine upon you,  
and be gracious to you; the LORD lift up his countenance upon you, and give  
you peace both now and evermore.

**\*Organ Postlude** (please be seated for the postlude)