

# Mark 11:29

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And Jesus answered and said unto them, I will also ask of you one question, and answer me, and I will tell you by what authority I do these things.

## Analysis

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**I will also ask of you one question, and answer me, and I will tell you by what authority I do these things**—Jesus does not refuse to answer but conditions His answer on their response. This rabbinical teaching method—answering questions with questions—was common in first-century Judaism. By proposing a question trade, Jesus exposes whether they are genuinely seeking truth or attempting entrapment. His question about John the Baptist's authority will reveal their hearts. If they are honest truth-seekers willing to acknowledge John's divine commissioning, they will have their answer about Jesus—because John testified explicitly that Jesus was the Messiah (John 1:29-34). If they are dishonest, they disqualify themselves from receiving Jesus's answer. Jesus will not cast pearls before swine (Matthew 7:6).

## Historical Context

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Rabbinic dialogue frequently employed counter-questions, probing assumptions, and dialectical reasoning. This was not evasion but sophisticated engagement designed to clarify thinking and lead interlocutors to truth. John the Baptist's ministry (circa AD 28-29) had profoundly impacted Judea. Crowds flocked to hear him; his martyrdom by Herod was recent (Mark 6:14-29). John's status remained controversial—the people considered him a prophet; Herod feared his influence; religious leaders were ambivalent. Jesus's question forced them to publicly state their position on John.

## Related Passages

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**Romans 10:9** — Confession and belief for salvation

**Ephesians 2:8** — Salvation by grace through faith

**Genesis 1:1** — Creation of heavens and earth

**Colossians 1:16** — All things created through Christ

## Study Questions

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1. How does Jesus's wisdom in answering questions with questions model engagement with bad-faith critics?
2. What does this exchange teach about the prerequisite for receiving truth—honest acknowledgment versus intellectual dishonesty?
3. Where might you be asking God questions while refusing to act on truth He has already revealed?

## Interlinear Text

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ο	δὲ	Ἰησοῦς	ἀποκρίθητε	εἴπειν	αὐτοῖς	Ἐπερωτήσω
G3588	And	Jesus	answer	and said	unto them	I will
G1161	G2424		G611	G2036	G846	G1905
ὑμᾶς	καὶ	ἔνα	λόγον	καὶ	ἀποκρίθητε	μοι
of you	also	one	question	and	answer	me
G5209	G2504	G1520	G3056	G2532	G611	G3427
καὶ	ἐρῶ					
and	I will tell					
G2532	G2046					
ὑμῖν	ἐν	ποίᾳ	ἐξουσίᾳ	ταῦτα	ποιῶ·	
you	by	what	authority	these things	I do	
G5213	G1722	G4169	G1849	G5023	G4160	