

THE AUTHORITY OF JESUS



David Wilkerson August 18, 2015

After Jesus delivered the Sermon on the Mount, His listeners sat in awe. Scripture says, "The people were astonished at his doctrine: for he taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes" (Matthew 7:28-29). The Greek word for *authority* in this verse means "with mastery, power, liberty; as one in control." Jesus' listeners were saying, in essence, "This man speaks as if He knows what He is talking about."

Note that this verse does not say Christ spoke "with authority," but rather "as one having authority." It is one thing to speak with what we think of as authority—in a loud, boisterous voice, seeming to have total control. But in God's kingdom, authority is something altogether different. It's something you have, not something you simply speak.

The authority Jesus wielded shook up the entire religious system. Jewish leaders kept coming to Him demanding to know where He had obtained His authority: "By what authority doest thou these things? And who gave thee this authority?" (Matthew 21:23). Jesus answered them point blank, "I'm not telling you" (see verses 24 and 27). Our Lord knew He didn't have to answer to the devil about where He got His spiritual authority.

Christ had this authority not only in the pulpit, but also over all satanic powers. When He entered a synagogue in Capernaum, He was accosted by a man possessed by a demonic spirit. The spirit cried out, "Let us alone; what have we to do with thee, thou Jesus of Nazareth? Art thou come to destroy us?" (Mark 1:24).

Now, Jesus knew this synagogue didn't need another sermon or interpretation of the Law. It didn't need a how-to seminar or some exciting new program. It needed a person with authority—someone who could chase the devil out of their midst, and cleanse both the possessed man and the powerless church.

Christ used His authority to do just that. Scripture says, "Jesus rebuked him, saying, Hold thy peace, and come out of him" (1:25). In modern terms, Jesus said, "Shut up, devil, and get out of here." And Satan fled. "The unclean spirit . . . came out of him" (1:26). Once again, the people marveled, saying, "What thing is this? . . . For with authority commandeth he even the unclean spirits, and they do obey him" (1:27).

If ever the Church of Jesus Christ needed His power and authority, the time is now!

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