

# The Authority of Christ's Teaching

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[ 0 : 01 ] Let's turn for a little to the chapter we read in Mark's Gospel, Mark chapter 1. I'm reading at verses 21 and 22. And they went into Capernaum, and immediately on the Sabbath he entered the synagogue and was teaching.

And they were astonished at his teaching, for he taught them as one who had authority and not as scribes. We read there how Jesus had just called his first disciples to him, Peter and Andrew and James and John, and they left their boats, they left their nets, they left their work, and they began to follow Jesus.

And then they made their way to Capernaum, and it tells us there that immediately on the Sabbath they entered the synagogue and he was teaching. Now the synagogue, we mentioned that recently, was very similar in many ways to our own church.

And I think the synagogue probably came into being in the time of the captivity, when it was impossible to attend the temple. The temple had been destroyed, and of course the people were in captivity.

And the synagogue became a very focal point in the Jewish community, and families attended. It was something that people did on the Sabbath day.

[ 1 : 28 ] Normally a rabbi or a scribe would read a section of the law and give a lecture or a sermon on it. But very often these sermons or lectures or whatever were dry as dust, because what they tended to do was to focus upon the law.

And in fact there was the Gezerah, which was a law that was added to God's law. You see, they were so determined that they would keep God's law, that they decided to make loads of other laws so that you would be absolutely guaranteed, so they thought, to keep you from breaking God's law.

For instance, they made laws in such a way that, supposing like on the Sabbath, you weren't to, God says that, there's no, remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy and such like, and apart from works of necessity and mercy, work was laid aside.

But in the laws that they made, they would forbid you touching a hammer or a spade or a pencil, or money or anything, just in case you were tempted to use it or do anything with it.

So they created an incredible intolerant burden upon the people. Because it came out of a zeal for protecting God's law and enabling them to make sure that they didn't break God's law.

[ 3 : 09 ] So they made stacks of laws upon every law. And that's Jesus often talked about, the burden that was placed upon the people. Because they were trying, very simply, to keep God's law.

And nobody, of course, were duty-bound to, but we cannot. But we break God's law every day in thought, word, and in deed. But the thing was, they had built this huge network of laws.

So that's kind of what the sermons or the lectures were about. Were about all these laws. About the kind of thing is, how many steps could you walk on the Sabbath day?

Can you imagine? You'd have to count, you couldn't go beyond a certain, you'd have to count the number of steps. So it became unbelievably legalistic. So if you were sitting there listening to, you might think, I'm boring.

But I'm telling you, these sermons would have been just something else. That's all it was about. But then the wonderful thing is that one day, Jesus came into the synagogue.

[ 4 : 11 ] And the audience were just, they were blown away, so to speak. They couldn't believe what they were hearing. Because his teaching was so radically different to anything that they'd ever heard before.

And you know, one of the wonderful things that I think it's worth highlighting is the importance of attending God's house. Because, as we say, their sermons, their lectures were dry as dust.

And yet people went. That's what people did. But one day Jesus broke in. Jesus came in. And we don't know when Jesus might come in power into our lives.

He has done that in here, in the experience of many people, down throughout the years. And Jesus actually promises to be where two or three of his people gather together.

He says, I'll be there in the midst to bless. And so it's actually a really important thing to come to God's house. Because when we do that, we're coming to the place where Jesus has promised to be.

[ 5 : 20 ] And we know that there are many people who deliberately and defiantly would never think of going to God's house. Because they don't want to have any association with God's house.

Because they're opposed to God. And they won't come to God's house. But there are many people, I believe, who would like to come to God's house. Maybe people who used to come and have stopped, but want to start coming back again.

And I believe in this town there are many people who would like to come. But between one thing or another, or maybe there's a sense of being ashamed to come back.

Or finding it difficult to come back. Or thinking, what will people say if I come back? There are all these kind of things. But the important thing is to come. It's so important to come.

And you know, it's a powerful statement to our community when you see people making their way to God's house. Because when we go to God's house, we are acknowledging that we want to meet with the living and through God.

[ 6 : 23 ] And that's, I hope, what every person here tonight has said in their own heart. That, yes, there is an element of duty in coming to God's house. But primarily, it should be about coming to meet with the Lord.

Coming to express our thanks to Him. Coming, seeking to worship Him. But also hearing what He's got to say to us. I'll hear what God the Lord will speak.

That's what the psalmist said to His folk. He'll speak peace. So every time we come to God's house, we're seeking that we will get something for our soul. You see, it is possible to come to church regularly for a long time.

And just to come and to keep coming and to keep coming. And that is good. Don't get me wrong. Whatever you do, don't stop. But to remain unchanged.

God's Word, you hear it. You accept it. You believe it. But it's never really gone beyond that. You come in and you go out.

[ 7 : 27 ] And you're really unchanged by it. God's Word should actually change you. It should change me. And when we come to God's house, let us pray, Lord, change me.

And what we mean by that is, change my heart. Bring me to see you, to know you, to understand you, to believe in you, to trust in you, to want you, to be my King, to be my Lord, to be my everything.

And that has to be your prayer. And I hope that is your prayer as you come to God's house. Well, anyway, on this particular day, Jesus taught.

And it tells us that he taught with authority, not like the scribes, as we said, who just rambled on and on and on. And they rambled on because they actually had no great love for the people.

Jesus highlights that, that both the scribes and the Pharisees, that they were very self-centered. Probably not all of them, but a lot of them were in it for themselves, what they could get out of it.

[ 8 : 34 ] Jesus was the very opposite. Jesus had a heart for the people. And it doesn't take long for an audience to work out whether a person actually has a heart for them or not.

And straight away, that is one of the things people realized about Jesus, was that he actually cared about them. That's why the crowds followed him. Here was a religious leader who wasn't in it for himself.

That's what they were used to. Here was somebody who genuinely cared, had a heart for them. And that's why it says that they heard him gladly. We read about that elsewhere.

That they listened to him and they heard him gladly. But as Jesus preached and as he taught, he spoke about realities. Not about all these multitude of laws.

But he spoke about the real things. About people's life. How they interacted one with another. How they lived their life before God.

[ 9 : 34 ] He spoke about heaven and hell. He spoke about life and death. He spoke about things that they weren't used to hearing about. And so his teaching, as we said, it was radical.

But it was real and it was relevant. And so we're not told here exactly what it was that he taught.

But we certainly would have an idea of what he taught. Because we're told in Luke's gospel that Jesus, when he went into the synagogue, he preached from Isaiah chapter 61.

Well, it wouldn't be in the chapters that we have nowadays, but it was the same word in the scroll. That this is what he read. And he spoke from that.

And I would imagine that as he went round the synagogues and the different communities. As he went from Nazareth to Picanon to Capernaum to all the different places. That he would open the scroll.

[ 10 : 35 ] Read what was about himself. And very recently we looked at Isaiah chapter 61. And the very first, where it said that he proclaimed the good news to the poor.

But it also said this in that chapter. And I believe that this is partly what he would have spoken about. In that, it tells us that about that prophecy about Jesus.

That it proclaiming liberty to the captives. Now the captives are people that are taken. And if we were to put it in today's language, it's people who are at gunpoint.

Ready for execution. People who have been captured and are going to be executed. And they're at gunpoint. And in a sense, that's how we are.

Because the world, the flesh, and the devil has a gun to our head. And they're leading us, without us realizing it, they're leading us to our doom.

[ 11 : 33 ] They're leading us into lostness. We are being led at gunpoint further and further and further away from God all the time. That is the way the natural person goes.

And that's what Jesus has come to deal with. He has come to deliver us. To set us free. And that's what Jesus did. He took on these enemies of the world, the flesh, and the devil.

And through his death, he has broken these powers. And he's saying to us, hey, you can go free. The gun is taken away. You're no longer lined up for execution.

You're delivered. You're free. And that's part of the glory. That's why the gospel is good news. It also says there that he preached about the receiving of sight to the blind.

Now, again, we know that when Jesus was in this world, he opened the eyes to many who were literally blind. People who were physically blind. But it is also speaking to us spiritually of what he is doing.

[ 12 : 40 ] And that's what Jesus does. Because spiritually, by nature, we are blind. We are blind to the truth. We are blind to the spiritual realities of what the word of God tells us.

We're blind to sin. We're blind to the seriousness of the situation we're in. We're blind to the destiny that we're facing.

Unless Jesus delivers us. You know, it's an incredible thought. But this is what the Lord does. He opens our eyes spiritually to see.

And he enables us to see that we are sinners. But not only that we are sinners. He enables us to see him as the Savior. Because, you see, unless we have a sense of our need, we're not going to go to the Savior.

See, a person is not going to say, Oh, what do you mean I need Jesus as a Savior? Why? I don't see. I don't feel any need for that. And a person doesn't feel a need unless they're made aware of their sin.

[ 13 : 50 ] Unless they see that they're offending God. Unless they see that their sin brings them under condemnation. Why do you need a Savior? So that's part of what Jesus has come to do.

To open our eyes. To see our need. And to see him as the answer to that need. And, of course, this was one of the wonderful, wonderful things that Jesus did.

And the wonderful thing that Jesus continues to do. And if you've never seen your sin, ask the Lord to show you. Because, you know, the solemn thought is that one day, one day, if we don't see our sin and our accountability before God, one day we will.

And the worst thing is to discover that when it's too late. Because the moment we die, we have no further opportunity of dealing with this.

It's in time. It is now. And that's what Jesus is pleading with us. That's why Jesus spoke so often about hell. Because he was warning people.

[ 15 : 06 ] He was warning people, no, please don't end up there. You don't have to. I've come to bring life. And that's why it's so important that you ask the Lord to open your eyes, open to see your need of a Savior.

Because, as I say, if we don't see it now, one day we will. But not only that, he set at liberty those who are oppressed. The oppressed are those who are broken or shattered.

And you and I know that life can sometimes be very difficult. It can be devastating. And there's many a bruised and a battered soul. And Jesus has come to deal with a person's hurt.

Because this is one of the things that just set Jesus apart. He was such a sympathetic Savior. He felt for people.

We've said it often enough before because it says it in the Word. He was moved with compassion. His whole being stirred within him with how he felt for people in their distress and in their anguish and in their need and in their lostness.

- [ 16 : 16 ] The pain that they were in entered into his heart. And Jesus hasn't changed. And that's why we're to go to him as we are and say, Lord, I'm hurting.
- Lord, life isn't fair just now. I don't know what to do. I don't know where to turn. Jesus wants us to come with our hurts, with our pains, with our sorrows.
- Because that's why he came. That's what it says. To set at liberty those who are oppressed. Those who are downtrodden. Those who are experiencing injustice.
- To set at liberty. To open up for them. So you go to Jesus however you are. And again to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor.
- That of course was speaking about the year of Jubilee. And the year of release. The year of opportunity. And we live in that time. We live now in gospel opportunity.
- [ 17 : 16 ] This is the day of salvation. So we see that Jesus preached. And they were astonished. That's what it says. At his teaching. For he taught as one who had authority.
- And of course he had authority. Because he was the anointed one. He was sent from God. But not only was he sent from God. He was and is God.
- So no wonder his teaching had authority. When Jesus spoke. His words carried power. And we've got to remember.
- That this is the Jesus. The son of God. The second person of the Godhead. In our nature. Is the very one. Who at the very beginning. Brought everything into being.
- We're told this in scripture. For by him. Were all things created. Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Were involved. In the creation of this world.
- [ 18 : 17 ] And everything. All the galaxies. The planets. The stars. The sun. The moon. The mountain ranges. The seas. All the plant life. All the animals.
- The fish. The birds. Men. Women. He brought everything into being. How? By the word of his power.
- What a word. God. And that is the same Jesus. In our nature. The son of God. In our nature. Who was teaching that day.
- No wonder. There was power and authority. And Jesus displayed that power. And that authority. Over the creation. On many, many occasions.
- He could say to the raging sea. Be still. Straight away. Flat calm. He could walk on the waves.
- [ 19 : 12 ] Because all power was his. We mustn't forget. That's. That's a Jesus. We're. Is here tonight. And you know.
- Sometimes we. We tend to forget that. And we kind of. I don't know. Whether it's just that. We've got used to it. Or familiarity breeds contempt. Or whatever. Somehow. We don't enthuse about it.
- But. This is the Jesus. That we're talking about tonight. He hasn't changed. He's the same. And he is. He is. The one who is. Speaking to us tonight.
- And he has authority. Over the powers of darkness. If we carried on. Reading into that. Chapter. We would see there. How there was a man. With the unclean spirit. Who cried out. What have we to do.
- What have you to do. With us. Jesus of Nazareth. Have you come to destroy us. I know who you are. You know. It's very funny. That the only people.
- [ 20 : 09 ] In the early days. Or the. I shouldn't say the people. The only ones. That recognized. Or knew. Totally. Who Jesus was. Was. In this world. In the early days.
- Not the disciples. Wasn't the chief priests. Or the scribes. Or the Pharisees. Wasn't the ordinary people. It was. Satan.

And the demons. You will find. Over and over. In the. In the New Testament. When people were questioning. Who is this? Who are you?

They were thinking. It might have been. One of the prophets. That had risen from the dead. Or who was it? Of course. We know that his disciples. Came to a full. Persuasion. And Peter. Made the great confession.

You are the Christ. The son of the living God. But every time. Jesus. Dealt with people. With unclean spirits. There was always. The same. Oh. We know who you are.

[ 21 : 06 ] You are the son of God. And they would cry out. Not to. Destroy them. You see. The devils. The demons.

Satan. And the demons. They believe. In God. We are told that. In the Bible. But they do more. Than they believe. Not a belief. With regard to salvation. But a belief.

In knowing the reality. And the fact. That God is. But they do more than that. They tremble. Tonight. In hell. There is trembling. Amongst all the demons.

At the thought. Of facing God. They know. The reality. Of him. And so. Jesus. Has authority. And power.

Over the kingdom. Of darkness. As well. He even has power. Over death. Both spiritual death. And natural death. Spiritual death.

[ 22 : 01 ] Again. Is the condition. That we are in. By nature. Because we are dead. In trespasses. And sins. And Jesus. Has come. To bring life. And you know.

That deadness. Is incredible. Because. A person. Can sit. Under the most. Moving. Sermon. Where maybe.

It's a sermon. That is preaching. About the awfulness. Of hell. Or of the glory. Of heaven. And be. Absolutely. Unmoved. It doesn't.

Mean. A thing. All they hear. Are words. There is not. The slightest. Sense of. Sense of. Apprehension. Not the. Slightest.

Sense of. Desire. Just words. That come. And go. Well. That's deadness. That's. How we are. Actually. By nature.

[ 22 : 56 ] That's how we are. It just. It doesn't really. Mean. Anything. To us. But Jesus. Has come. To change that. He has come.

To waken us up. He's come. To bring life. To breathe life. Into us. To create. A desire. Within us. And you know. That's one of the things. That he does. And sometimes.

He does it suddenly. Like that. Sometimes. It's an ongoing. Where there is. The work of the spirit. Creating this. This desire. This interest. This wanting to know.

Wanting to know. More. And more. And more. And you're saying to yourself. You know. I didn't used to think that way. I don't know. What's happening. Many people are like that. And they say. I don't know. What's happening to me.

But all of a sudden. I'm beginning to get an interest. In the things of God. Beginning to want to read the Bible. Want to come to church. In fact. I am beginning to enjoy. Coming to church. Why is that?

[ 23 : 48 ] That's because God. Is beginning to bring light. And life. Into your experience. And he is the one. Who will enable you. To come to himself.

Because maybe tonight. You're saying. I don't know. How to get from. Where I am. To there. How do I get into the kingdom? How can I. I. I try to believe.

And I can't. You ask the Lord. To help you. To believe. You remember. When Peter. Was on the boat. In the boat. And Jesus came walking. On the water.

And Peter said. Is that you Lord? And Jesus said. Yes. Remember how he said. Did his eye. Be not afraid. And Jesus said. Well if it's you. Bid me. Come to you.

On the water. What Peter was asking. Was an impossibility. He knew that. He was a fisherman. Spent his life at sea. And he's saying to Jesus. Bid me.

[ 24 : 45 ] Tell me to come to you. He was asking Jesus. To do the impossible. For him. Jesus just said. One word. He said. Come. Peter clambered.

Over the side. Of the boat. And he began. To walk. On the water. Towards Jesus. And he would have. Continued all the way. Walking to Jesus. Except. We know what happened.

He. He saw. All of a sudden. That it was wild night. And there was the waves. And the wind. And it tells us. That he began to look. At the waves. And hear the wind. And he began to sink.

Because he took his eyes. Of Jesus. But the fact is. It was the power. The enabling power. In that word. Come. That enabled. Peter to do.

The impossible. And it's the very same. For you. And for me. It's the enabling. Word of invitation. From Jesus. And tonight.

[ 25 : 40 ] Jesus is saying to you. Will you come? And if you're not hearing him. And you're not able. Then say to him. Lord. Please. Enable me. To come. To you.

Tonight. And you know this. If you really pray that. Sincerely. From your heart. He will hear. And he will answer. He has said it. That's what his word tells.

If you seek me. With all your heart. You will find me. And so. This is. This is the power. That Jesus has. A power. Over death. Spiritually.

And a power. Over death. Naturally. As well. Because we know that. There will come a day. When all the graves will open. The sea will give up.

It's dead. All. Will rise. From the dead. Yes. Those who are cremated. Those who have been eaten. By animals. People who say.

[ 26 : 33 ] That's impossible. Well. From our perspective. It is absolutely impossible. To see one person. Rise up. From the grave.

I would say. Humanly speaking. Is impossible. But with God. Nothing is impossible. And the God. Who created this world. And brought everything.

By the word of his power. Into being. And out of the dust. To the ground. Formed man. And from a bone. Of man. Formed. Or built a woman.

Is it impossible. For him. Once again. To do that. With all. Who have been. No. No. Obviously. It's something.

We. It's way beyond. Our understanding. That's where faith goes. Faith lays hold upon that. That's what faith does. Faith is absolutely. Convinced of it. I don't need to know.

[ 27 : 29 ] How. The how's. And the why's. And the mechanics. And all I know. Is God is able. And God will do. Because he said it. It's amazing. What a day. That's going to be. So yes.

Power. Over death. As well. But you know. This voice of authority. It's not just a voice of. What we might call. Of power. Because sometimes.

When we tend to think of power. We sometimes think of something. That. If we're feeling vulnerable. Or low. We want to move away from. But it's not only. The sense of power.

It is a voice of sympathy. A voice of sweetness. Because maybe tonight. You're saying. You're saying. Oh. But I. You know this. I have got a troubled life. Because I.

I've done so much. That is wrong. You're talking about me. Coming to Jesus. I can't come the way I am. Because. If you've seen my life. And all that I've done.

[ 28 : 23 ] Well. Do you know what Jesus. What it says in the Bible. About him. This man. Receiveth sinners. And he eateth with them. This man. Receives sinners.

And he eats with them. Or the. Scribes and Pharisees. And the religious leaders. Couldn't handle that. The sinner. These were people who were. At the lowest.

Eb. It wasn't just your ordinary people. Those were people who were. Renowned. Excuse me. Renowned sinners. Jesus happily. Ate with them. Drank with them.

He received them. I. Even I am he. That blotteth out. Thine iniquity. For mine own. Namesake. And so.

This is. This is a Jesus. Maybe tonight. You feel all burdened. Through all the different. Troubles in your life. And you say. Well. What will I do? And Jesus says. Come unto me.

[ 29 : 20 ] All you who labor. And are heavy laden. And I will give you rest. Maybe you're. You're. Troubled by. Unbelief. Or fear.

What if the Lord. Will leave you? He says. I will never leave you. I will never forsake you. Maybe sorrows are. Just.

Overflowing. Within your heart. And he says. I will not leave you. Comfortless. I will come to you. He's got a word. For every season. He's got a word.

For every situation. He is. The. Jesus. Of authority. And power. Father. And I hope tonight. That we will look to this Jesus.

Who this day. He walked into the. The. The. The synagogue. In Capernaum. And he changed. The society. Through his teaching. Through his preaching.

[ 30 : 15 ] And through who he was. And he's able tonight. To change you as well. Will you look to him. Will you ask him. And say. Lord. I don't know what it's.

What it's. How the outcome's going to be. I don't really. I haven't a clue. But I need you. Will you come. Into my life. Tonight. Let us pray.

Let us pray.