



Authority In Ministry

“For he taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes” (Matthew 7:24).

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“And it came to pass, when Jesus had ended these sayings, the people were astonished at his doctrine: 29 For he taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes.” (Matthew 7:28-29).

Jesus’ sermon on the mountain started in Matthew 5:1 “And seeing the multitudes, he went up into a mountain...”, and ended in Chapter 7, as confirmed in Matthew 8:1 “When he was come down from the mountain....”

Throughout the teaching, we find the confidence, faith and authority of Christ, as exemplified in statements like:

- 1) “Ye have heard that it was said of them of old time... But I say unto you... (Matthew 5:21-22; 27-28; 31-32; 38-39; 43-44;
- 2) “Verily I say unto thee...” (Matthew 5:26).

In addition, the depth of His understanding, intensity of his conviction and powerful manner of presentation, all conveyed such level of authority that the hearers could not fail to notice.

His teachings were different to those of the religious elites of his day and brought to live the very essence of the original intent of God in the scriptures and illuminated the minds of His hearers. There was no doubt, uncertainty or mincing of words in His teachings. He demonstrated how the scriptures are fulfilled in Him. His statement in John 10:35 “If he called them gods, unto whom the word of God came, and the scripture cannot be broken” reveal His absolute trust in the authenticity and reliability of the word of God.

On completion of his earthly ministry, Jesus commissioned His disciples (and by extension all of us) saying: “Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: 20 Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen” (Matthew 28:19-20).

Similarly, Paul admonished his spiritual children

“... the people were astonished at his doctrine” (Matthew 7:28).

Timothy and Titus saying:

- 1) “Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all long suffering and doctrine” (2 Timothy 4:2).
- 2) “These things speak, and exhort, and rebuke with all authority. Let no man despise thee” (Titus 2:15).

In discharging this commission, we must not forget Jesus admonition that “It is enough for the disciple that he be as his master, and the servant as his lord” (Matthew 10:25). Satisfying this requirement, calls for certain qualities and experiences, including:

- 1) Deep personal knowledge and relationship with God.
- 2) Empowerment by the Holy Spirit. It is interesting to note that at the start of Christ’s ministry, the Holy Spirit descended in bodily form as a dove upon Him. He also instructed the disciples to tarry for the Holy Ghost baptism prior to launching forth in Ministry.
- 3) Sensitivity to the Holy Spirit. This is what made Jesus to identify and declare what was written of Him in Luke 4:16-21.
- 4) Deep knowledge of the scriptures through personal study and application “Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth” (2 Timothy 2:15).
- 5) Courage and boldness to stand unflinchingly firm on the word of God. This is what made the apostles to declare in the face of persecution “Whether it be right in the sight of God to hearken unto you more than unto God, judge ye. 20 For we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard” (Acts 4:19-20).