

Norris Ferry Community Church
Matthew 7:28-29 Jesus' Authority
December 24, 2017

Kid's - Christmas, Explain the Lord's Supper

Songs

Today - what impacts you the most at Christmas?

Today we are going to look at Matthew 7:28-29.

At the conclusion of Jesus' Sermon on the Mount, recorded by Matthew, Matthew tells us what impacted the crowds the most. He says, "**And when Jesus finished these sayings [his sermon on the mount], the crowds were astonished at his teaching, for he was teaching them as one who had authority, and not as their scribes (7:28-29).**"

The Crowd

Notice Matthew says the **crowds were astonished** at Jesus' teaching. Remember Jesus is sitting on the side of a mountain with his disciples sitting at his feet but there is also a crowd of people who have been gathered around listening in on Jesus' teaching. This crowd had not yet become disciples of Jesus. The crowd was full of all sorts of people in all different places in their spiritual journey with Jesus. Perhaps some of them were skeptical, some were curious, some were interested and some were seeking, some were ready to become disciples.

Christmas Crowd in all different walks of life

There is something wonderful about Christmas time isn't there?! There is just something about Christmas that leads people to church and like the crowds that were listening to Jesus teach that day I know there are people in all different places in their spiritual journey with Jesus. Some here are

skeptical, some are curious, some are interested and others are seeking out Jesus.

They were astonished - dumbfounded, struck, touched, moved

Matthew says the crowds were **astonished**. This means they were dumbfounded. They were struck, they were moved, they were touched, they were impacted. And what they were struck by? What was it that so touched them? What attribute really impacted them? It was Jesus' authority. They **were astonished at Jesus' teaching, for [Jesus] was teaching them as one who had authority, and not as their scribes** the unique authority of Jesus.

Transition - This is what we want to consider more carefully this Christmas Eve - the authority of Jesus. There may not be the most popular theme of Christmas but it actually should be. The Peace, Joy and Love of Christmas is only enjoyed and experienced most fully and most completely and satisfyingly when we come to know the authority of Jesus. Let's consider Jesus' authority. Look at v29 again.

Not like the Authority of Scribes

V29 says **for [Jesus] was teaching them as one who had authority, and not as their scribes**. The crowd was struck by Jesus' unique authority. Jesus' authority was unique, unlike anyone else, unlike the scribes who were the most authoritative religious teachers of their day. The scribes were the experts of their day and they stood in a long, long tradition of scholars. Their authority came not from themselves but from their connection to their traditions. Their authority came from their knowledge of prior teachings, of precedents set before them, their claim to be aligned with the teachings of famous rabbis who had gone before them whom they were able to quote. The scribes had no real authority of their own.

My Authority Like Scribes

The Scribes authority was a lot like the authority I have as I teach. I stand in a long tradition of Evangelical teachers. I try to stand on their shoulders. In our tradition we hold the Word of God as our source of authority so our authority is rooted in and grounded in our proper interpretation of the Word of God. That's why I say I stand on the shoulders of evangelical scholars. I do my best to prayerfully interpret the Scriptures to understand what God has said in His Word but I have been taught by evangelical scholars and I am constantly checking my thoughts against scholarly interpretations. So, similar to the scribes, my authority to stand here and say anything to you today is very dependent upon others.

Jesus had inherent authority

When Jesus taught, Jesus spoke with inherent absolute authority. Jesus don't any other rabbis or scholars. Jesus didn't try to demonstrate how his teachings aligned with a certain school of thought. Jesus taught from his own authority on all things. Jesus exalted himself above every scribe of their day and every rabbi they quoted. Jesus exalted himself above Moses and the law God gave Moses.

Transition - Matthew and Christmas Story point to Jesus' ultimate authority

In fact, the entire gospel of Matthew, and the Christmas story in the gospel, is very concerned to point out the ultimate, absolute, and unique authority of Jesus Christ. Let's briefly flip through the pages of Matthew to see the authority of Jesus. Jesus wants all of us to be confronted with his **ultimate, absolute and unique authority** this Christmas eve.

Matthew 1:18-25 Jesus' birth announcement

Matt. 1:18 Now the birth of Jesus Christ took place in this way. When his mother Mary had been betrothed to Joseph, before they came together she was found to be with child from the Holy Spirit. **19** And her husband Joseph, being a just man and unwilling to put her to shame, resolved to divorce her quietly. **20** But as he considered these

things, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, “Joseph, son of David, do not fear to take Mary as your wife, for that which is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. 21 She will bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins.” 22 All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had spoken by the prophet: 23 “Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall call his name Immanuel” (which means, God with us). 24 When Joseph woke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him: he took his wife, 25 but knew her not until she had given birth to a son. And he called his name Jesus.

He was of the Holy Spirit not man

He fulfills the OT Scriptures - They are all about Him.

He will save his people from their sins.

He is Immanuel (God with us)

Matthew 2:1-6 The wise men announce that Jesus is a king, ruler

Matt. 2:1 Now after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king, behold, wise men from the east came to Jerusalem, 2 saying, “Where is he who has been born king of the Jews? For we saw his star when it rose and have come to worship him.” 3 When Herod the king heard this, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him; 4 and assembling all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Christ was to be born. 5 They told him, “In Bethlehem of Judea, for so it is written by the prophet: **Matt. 2:6** ““And you, O Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are by no means least among the rulers of Judah; for from you shall come a ruler who will shepherd my people Israel.””

The Birth narratives of Jesus are all about the authority of Jesus as the Son of God, the God who came to earth in flesh.

Transition - Baby Jesus grows into a man and begins his ministry

Matthew 3:11-17 Jesus' Baptism - Jesus declared "Son of God"

16 And when Jesus was baptized, immediately he went up from the water, and behold, the heavens were opened to him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and coming to rest on him; 17 and behold, a voice from heaven said, "This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased."

Matthew 4:23 teaching and healing

Matt. 4:23 And he went throughout all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues and proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom and healing every disease and every affliction among the people.

Then in Chapter 5 Jesus sits down and begins to teach (READ)

In the Sermon on the Mount Jesus didn't appeal to past rabbis and Jesus didn't say, "Thus says the Lord" like prophets or modern day preachers. Instead, Jesus appealed to his own authority with the formula, "**Truly Truly I say to you.**" And he repeatedly exalted himself over the teachings of the scribes, the religious authorities of their day, saying "**you've heard it said...but I say to you....**" In the sermon Jesus spoke with absolute, inherent authority. He spoke as if what he said was universal truth. He declared the arrival of God's kingdom with himself. He declared who would be great in the kingdom and who would be the least. He set forth the norms and values and priorities of God's kingdom. With no hesitation or wavering in doubt, Jesus declared who would inherit God's kingdom, who would inherit God's earth, who would experience God's mercy, who would experience God's wrath, what is characteristic of the wise person and what makes one a fool, who would see God and who could be called a child of God. Jesus' birth, life and teaching carried **ultimate, absolute and unique authority.**

Application - So what does this mean

So what does this mean for us this Christmas eve? This means we should be dumbfounded, struck, amazed by Jesus' authority. Let's think about it in two applications:

Salvation - authority to forgive sins

Only Jesus has the authority to forgive sin. Jesus says that all of us are measured by what we do with his teaching. We are either declared wise or fools. We are either blessed to enter into God's kingdom or we are not. Jesus corrects all other teachings about how to be reconciled with God and inherit eternal life. Jesus says that he was born as the Son of God who took on flesh in order to live the perfect life we couldn't live and to die the death for sin that we deserved to die. Jesus says that he has the authority to forgive sin and declare righteous with God all who trust in Jesus. **Matt. 1:21 He will bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins."** **Matt. 3:6 and they were baptized by him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins. Matt. 9:2 And behold, some people brought to him a paralytic, lying on a bed. And when Jesus saw their faith, he said to the paralytic, "Take heart, my son; your sins are forgiven."**

Be a disciple and make disciples

And then Jesus says in Matt 28:18-20. **18 And Jesus came and said to them, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. 19 Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, 20 teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age."**

Close

This Christmas, we should be dumbfounded by the authority of Jesus and recognize that Jesus has all authority of heaven to save us and to send us out to make disciples.

Lord's Supper

Now, let's move into a time of the Lord's Supper

Instructions

Open to all believers

Wait - we will all partake of the bread and the cup together

Pray - be in prayer of confession and repentance

Pray – for the Lord will help you submit to his authority in your life.

Prepare the Bread:

In **1Cor. 11:23** Paul says, **“For I received from the Lord what I also delivered to you, that the Lord Jesus on the night when he was betrayed took bread, 24 and when he had given thanks, he broke it, and said, “This is my body, which is for you. Do this in remembrance of me.” 25 In the same way also he took the cup, after supper, saying, “This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me.” 26 For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord’s death until he comes.**

1Cor. 11:27 **Whoever, therefore, eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty concerning the body and blood of the Lord. 28 Let a person examine himself, then, and so eat of the bread and drink of the cup. 29 For anyone who eats and drinks without discerning the body eats and drinks judgment on himself.**

Pray:

“Father, we rest only in the righteousness of Jesus Christ, your perfect Son. As we remember His death may we remember that He died to cleanse us of our sin, to heal us, to declare us righteous in order to satisfy your righteousness and justice. We remember His eternal love and

boundless grace. May we receive the assurance of forgiveness, eternal life and the hope of glory. And Father, as we partake in this ordinance may you examine our hearts to reveal to us areas we need to bring into submission to your authority. May you be our Treasure, our Master.

Distribute Bread

Pass out the bread to stewards... Serve the bread to the stewards. Raise the bread saying, *“The body of our Lord Jesus Christ, which is given for us. Let us eat together.”*

Distribute Cup

Pass out the cup to stewards... Serve the stewards. Raise the cup saying, *“The blood of our Lord Jesus Christ through which we have the forgiveness of sins. Let us drink together.”*

Concluding Prayer

Heavenly Father may we honor your life, death and resurrection by doing what you saved us and sent us to do in your ultimate authority - to make disciples. In the name of Jesus, our precious Lord and Savior, Amen.