

No one ever spoke like Him

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Let us turn to **John 7: 43-49**.

John 7: 43-49

- 43 So a division occurred in the crowd because of Him.
- 44 Some of them wanted to seize Him, but no one laid hands on Him.
- 45 The officers then came to the chief priests and Pharisees, and they said to them, "Why did you not bring Him?"
- 46 The officers answered, "Never has a man spoken the way this man speaks."
- 47 The Pharisees then answered them, "You have not also been led astray, have you?"
- 48 "No one of the rulers or Pharisees has believed in Him, has he?"
- 49 "But this crowd which does not know the Law is accursed."

As we seek to appreciate who the Lord Jesus is, we can consider comments by different people: some of them are very prejudiced; some of them are accurate; some of them may not quite know what they are saying. We can reflect on what they say and ponder over the reasons behind what they say.

Today, I want to concentrate on the remark that the officers gave – the officers who were sent by the Pharisees to arrest the Lord Jesus, to seize Him, to lay hands on Him. The officers said, "Never has a man spoken the way this man speaks."

These words are very strong and they must have meant a great deal to the people who said that. What did they mean by that?

They were so impressed by the way that the Lord Jesus spoke that they just could not bring themselves to seize Him. In a sense, you can say they were paralyzed; they just could not do it.

What then was it that the Lord Jesus spoke that impressed them so much? Why were they so affected? It is obvious that they could recognize that the Lord Jesus was different from all other people that they had met. Somehow they could recognize that the Lord Jesus was very, very special, unusual.

These officers were not the first persons to be impressed by the way that the Lord Jesus spoke.

Matthew 7: 28-29

28 When Jesus had finished these words, the crowds were amazed at His teaching;
29 for He was teaching them as *one* having authority, and not as their scribes.

The crowds were amazed – this was the Sermon on the Mount and when the Lord Jesus had finished these words that He spoke, the crowds were amazed. Why were they amazed? What was it that affected them so much?

We are told: “for He was teaching them as *one* having authority, and not as their scribes”.

Did the scribes and the Pharisees not speak with authority? Very likely they would have sought to speak with authority. They were supposed to teach the things of God, they were supposed to represent God and likely, they would have wanted very much to assert their authority and in many instances, they probably would have spoken quite authoritatively.

But then the crowds could recognize the difference: there was not true authority. It was an authority they wanted to assert; they wanted people to listen to them, but the people could recognize they did not have a true authority.

When they heard the Lord Jesus, they recognized that there was true authority. He was One who had authority. What makes the difference?

What if the Pharisees or the scribes had said words very similar to the Sermon on the Mount? What if they had said, "Blessed are the poor in spirit... Blessed are those who mourn..." and all the rest that the Lord Jesus spoke? Would it have made that kind of impact?

The answer is very clear: Definitely not! They could not have such an impact even if they were to say exactly the same words that the Lord Jesus did.

The reason has to do with what came with the words. It came from a Man whose heart was fully identified with God. He spoke with authority because what He said was truly from God. His heart was truly identified with God and He was fully submitted to God and His will.

The Lord Jesus Himself said, "My teaching is not Mine, but His who sent Me." Yes, they were amazed at His teaching, but the Lord Jesus told them, "My teaching is not Mine - just as an ordinary man - but my teaching is that of Him who sent Me." It comes from God.

The Lord Jesus said again and again He spoke as the Father taught Him; He spoke as the Father led Him. He was conscious never to depart from that.

As the perfect Man, He showed to us how we should live: to live by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God, conscious of what it means, identified with it, identified with all the words that we know that come from God and prepared to live by them.

Many people are prepared to say words similar to that of the Lord Jesus, but the great difference is that they are not prepared to live by those words.

The Lord Jesus, when He commanded the evil spirits, they obeyed Him. When He called upon them to come out, they came out; they obeyed Him, they recognized His authority.

Whether it be in preaching, in healing, in casting out of demons, the Lord Jesus lived His life in perfect dependence on God, by the power of the Holy Spirit.

How about us? Is it possible for us also to speak with authority? Is it possible for us to exercise power in that kind of way that the Lord Jesus demonstrated?

Well, we can say, "No", or we can say, "Yes", depending on what we are referring to.

We cannot speak the same way as the Lord Jesus spoke because He is "God with us": God who came to dwell on this earth as a perfect Man.

On the other hand, we can say "Yes" because if we live by His power, on the basis of His name, on the basis of what He has done on the cross, on the basis of the life He has given to us, we can speak with authority.

And so we find that the apostle Paul, when he was confronted with a slave girl with a spirit of divination, he said, "I command you in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her!" and the evil spirit came out, just as the evil spirits came out when the Lord Jesus commanded them. So the apostle Paul had the power to do so, on the basis of the name of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Do all of us have the same power?

The answer lies in the meaning within our lives: to what extent we have identified with God, to what extent we are depending on Him.

So we see for example there were seven men who were called Jewish exorcists, who went around seeking to cast out demons and they attempted to name over those who had the evil spirits the name of the Lord Jesus, saying, "I adjure you by Jesus whom Paul preaches." Notice they said "by Jesus whom Paul preaches". They did not have a direct relationship with the Lord Jesus, they did not know His power in their lives, but they had seen the apostle Paul preaching, teaching, casting out demons and they thought that they could go by this means: the Jesus whom Paul preaches. "I adjure you by Jesus whom Paul preaches."

The reply of the evil spirit was: "I recognize Jesus, and I know about Paul, but who are you?"

The meaning is: "I do not know you. You are of no significance to me; you have no power over me. I recognize Jesus: He is the Lord. He has the power to command me to depart, but not you. I know about Paul: he also has the power on the basis of the name of the Lord Jesus Christ to command, but you do not have. Who are you?"

And so we are told the evil spirit overpowered them and injured them and they were humiliated.

So this tells us that it is important for us in our faith in the Lord Jesus, to understand that it is not just by the words that we say that our lives will have power.

It has to be the life that we live according to what is appropriate and meaningful in the eyes of God.

The Lord Jesus has given us the perfect Example and if we follow His example and we learn to give our lives fully to Him then we can manifest His character, we can also manifest His power.

We see how the apostle Paul, when he preached to the Corinthians, he told them, "I was with you in weakness... and in much trembling, and my message and my preaching were not in persuasive words of wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power, so that your faith would not rest on the wisdom of men, but on the power of God."

Here, it is clear the apostle Paul had no confidence in himself on his own. He came in fear and... trembling. He knew that he could not truly help them by his own natural ability. He used to think he could. He was a Pharisee. He was confident, zealous, in the flesh. Now he knew that unless God worked in his life, there was nothing that he could really do. "... my message and my preaching were not in persuasive words of wisdom..." – it is not by human intelligence and ability and the ways of the world – but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power.

So again we see the apostle Paul learnt to live by the power of the Holy Spirit so that the message would go forth according to God's enabling and the response would not be based on the wisdom of men but on the power of God.

The Lord Jesus spoke words that would be very difficult for people to understand if they did not appreciate the spiritual meaning within His heart.

For example in **John 6: 53**, we read:

John 6: 53

So Jesus said to them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink His blood, you have no life in yourselves..."

Is this not an example of this statement: "Never has a man spoken the way this man speaks"? Never had they heard anyone speak in this way. He said, "...unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink His blood, you have no life in yourselves..." The Lord Jesus spoke in that way because He is the Source of Life for us. He is the way, and the truth, and the life. We can come to the Father only through Him.

If we want to have spiritual life, we have to come to Him and through Him. "... you have no life in yourselves..."

So the Lord Jesus told them, "You have to eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink His blood. You have to partake of My life – the Life of God. You have to receive that Life to become part of you, otherwise you will have no life."

And then in **John 6: 63**, He says,

John 6:63

"It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh profits nothing; the words that I have spoken to you are spirit and are life..."

So that is a primary distinction between the words of the Lord Jesus and the words of mere men at the natural plane. The Lord Jesus spoke with life: "It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh profits nothing..."

If we depend on ourselves, the things that we do, the things that we say, they will not profit anything. "It is the Spirit who gives life..."

And He says, "...the words that I have spoken to you are spirit and are life..."

No one ever spoke like Him. There was such authority; there was life; there was power; there was light; there was meaning.

That is because there was a reality within His heart and the things that He said came forth from a life of meaning, of moral quality and oneness with God.

So if we want to develop our lives to be like the Lord Jesus, then we must recognize: the flesh profits nothing.

How could the apostle Paul develop to become such a great man – with wisdom, love, compassion – whom God could trust, and entrust to him much to do?

It was because he gave up the life of the flesh. He repented and he repented deeply; he no longer trusted in himself and his own natural ability. He discarded all confidence in the flesh. He came in fear and trembling before God to seek God's enabling, God's power, in whatever he did and said.

The Lord Jesus tells us we must abide in Him and He in us. It is then that we can and will bear much fruit. Otherwise we can do nothing of real value.

So as we come before Him, let us ask Him to help us to ponder over who He is.

When we read the Scriptures and we hear what the Lord Jesus says in various parts of the Scriptures, are we impressed by this: "Never has a man spoken the way this man speaks"?

Or are we so familiar with the words of the Lord Jesus that we just read through them very quickly and they do not mean very much to us?

It is important for us if we want to grow well, to listen carefully to what the Lord Jesus said, the way He said it, why He said it and the meaning within Him when He said those things that He did. It is as we learn to be like Him that there will be meaning and quality in our lives.

It is because of that, that the cross has the power to save us. If the Lord Jesus had not lived that way, the cross would have been of no value.

The cross is powerful because the Lord Jesus was true to His words and when He died on the cross, He did bear the sins of mankind because He was perfect in His being and His true love for us was manifested when He died on our behalf.

So let us ask Him to help us to ponder over His life and to consider how we can develop ourselves and deepen in the quality of our being.

Let us thank Him for what He has done for us and ask Him to help us to be willing and to be decisive to take the steps necessary to truly follow Him, be His disciple.