

TRUTH B-P CHURCH
Adult Sunday School

SERMON ON THE MOUNT (III)

LESSON FIVE: THE RESPONSE

I. PASSAGE

Matthew 7:28-29, “²⁸ 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.”

II. INTRODUCTION

The Lord ends His Sermon on the Mount by calling for a right response to all the “sayings” which He had taught His disciples and the multitude. The right response requires action after hearing. We call this “obedience.” And this is also regarded as wise. But, to be foolish is the failure to act upon hearing. With this, the Lord gave a stern warning that the end of such foolishness is “... great will be the fall of it” (see verse 27).

Whatever we are building that is not for Christ, will surely tumble and fall down. Do not turn away from this severe warning. Do not downplay the seriousness of this warning. It is not worth it. It is not just a simple fall. The fall could be so great that we can never get up again. Why wait for it to happen when we can prevent it now? Do not be a foolish builder. Instead, be a wise builder. A wise builder is one who built his life on the solid Rock who is Christ that shall not be moved easily. A wise builder is one who not only hears the Word but also does the Word.

In this lesson, we want to learn what the response of the people who heard the Lord’s sermon on the mount was. May the Holy Spirit be our Teacher.

III. RESPONSE TO HIS TEACHING (verse 28)

The word “astonish” means to be amazed, shocked, and dumb struck. Literally, they were struck out of their senses. It blew their minds away. That is the power of God in His Words. There is no background music playing behind or something at the background to stir up one’s emotion through soft music. These Words came powerfully from God.

Jesus simply taught the powerful Word and caused what was taught comes alive in the heart of the people. God’s Word was not supposed to be dead. The scribes themselves taught as if the commandments are for dead people. It is the same commandment, the same Bible that Jesus taught that the scribes were ordained as teachers.

Yet the people had never heard such wisdom from the scribes, they had never seen such depth that was found in God’s Word before. They had never heard such deep insight into the law of God or how the sin of man being exposed. They had never heard such fearful warnings about hell, and judgment. They probably had never heard anyone who so boldly and righteously confronted the Pharisees and scribes for their sin of hypocrisy and double life. They were utterly shocked that He spoke with such depth with all these familiar words that they had heard before but have never truly understood so deeply as now.

In short, as Matthew recorded, “The people were astonished at His doctrine.” What about us? We should be more than astonished. We should be more than amazed than the people on the Mount, isn’t it? We should be convicted and follow Christ even more.

Let us grow in the Lord and with one another, to be likeminded in the faith and doctrine and not to be easily divided by the evil one.

IV. RESPONSE TO HIS AUTHORITY (verse 29)

There is authority in the Lord's teaching. "... For he taught them as *one* having authority, and not as the scribes." Authority means the power or right to give order or to enforce obedience and submission. In other words, the people recognized the strength of the authority which came as a result of His teachings. It was especially so when they compared the Lord's teachings to the scribes.

The scribes were the official teachers who were responsible for the people's Bible knowledge and spiritual wellbeing. Surely, they have been "authorized" to teach the Jews to ensure they kept God's law and be faithful children of God. This authority came from the Sanhedrin council which is in charge of all religious matters within the Jewish community. But, what is the problem with the authority of the scribes which the Lord had what they do not have? Clearly it is authority.

The scribes may have been authorized to teach, but they lack the "authority" in their teaching. They may have the right words to teach the people which is God's Words. However, if they failed to exegete and expound God's Word rightly and correctly, they lost the authority and credibility to teach. When the people were taught wrongly, they understood wrongly and definitely they will live wrongly based on wrong teachings. However, if the scribes had taught the Word of God correctly and accurately, then there is authority for the people to submit and obey what they had been taught accordingly.

And this is exactly what the Lord has done. He has taught the people accurately and correctly the Word of God that should transform their life to bring glory to God. And it is all because there is authority in His teaching.

V. CONCLUSION

How do the hearers (both His disciples and the multitude) recognize the authority in His teaching? It has nothing to do with personal preference. It is also not out of good will that they recognize the authority. It is by the power of the Holy Spirit which gives the spiritual sense for the hearers to recognize the source of this authority came from God.

However, by being astonished at both His teaching and authority, it does not mean that there is immediate submission and obedience to what had been taught. Not all of them believe and submit to the authority of the Lord's teaching. It could be the beginning for some as they seek the truth and will be encountering more and more of the Lord's Words and Works during His earthly ministry. Only the Lord knows their response in the end.

We are reminded of the concluding illustration of the wise and foolish builder. Only those who act upon what they had heard is wise. And it also means the wise being wise because they have believed by faith, and therefore allowed His teachings to shape and transform their life for the glory of God and also for their testimony for the Lord Jesus Christ.

Without a doubt, there is authority in the Lord's teaching over our life on earth. Because we are now God's children by His grace, love and mercy, let us be wise by building our life upon the solid Rock who is Jesus Christ our Lord. As long as we are found in Him and continue to do His will faithfully, we will never fall. May God help us. Amen.