

Jesus Authority

Before I begin I just want to say that I don't have it all sussed out, nor am I an expert in theology anything I am up here this morning sharing with you has come from a few weeks of meditating, examining and asking for God's revelation & thoughts on the scriptures which I will speak on....

In Matthew 28: 18 – “Then Jesus came to his 11 disciples in Galilee (just after he has risen) and says, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. **SLIDE**

This morning we will look at this authority in **action** –

Lets turn to Mark 11: 27-33 where things are starting to ramp up a bit for Jesus' - Jesus is walking in the temple and the Scribes & Chiefs come to him and ask “*by what authority are you doing these things and who gave you authority to do this??*”

This question was more of an **attack!!**

Jesus meets the attack with a **counter-question** – or maybe we could think of it as an empowering question because he knew the answer lay within them...

“I will ask you one question. Answer me, and I will tell you by what authority I am doing these things. John's baptism = was it from heaven or from men? Tell me!”

It was a tricky one for the scribes and chiefs to answer –

- To say from heaven meant acknowledging Jesus as the messiah,
- to say from men was to risk the hostility of the people and
- to say nothing was a dent in their pride - as the spiritual chiefs they believed they had the answers to everything so they answered Jesus “*we don't know....*”

Jesus replied: “*Neither will I tell you by what authority I am doing these things*”.

Earlier in Matthew we read Chapt 7:28-29 “The people were **astonished** at his teaching, because he taught them as one **who had authority**, not as the teachers of the law.

*Let's examine this a little more..... - how did the people just know/sense that this man spoke with authority? AND why did they respond to his authority so willingly?? **SLIDE***

In a worldly sense, Jesus did not have any power at all.

- He was not a worldly king with political or military power.
- He was not of the priests, who had the power in Roman Judea.
- He was not even a scribe with the authority of Jewish tradition.

The only authority he had was the supreme confidence – of knowing that what he did and said was both **God's will and God's truth.** –

This authority was lived out on a day to day basis in the **sheer power of his words and in the example of his deeds.** **SLIDE** – characteristics of this authority:

1. His authority lay in his living as God's servant – he served the people – he is our greatest inspiration and model for what a 'servant leader' looks like. Jesus used his authority **not** to obtain power for himself but to **serve humanity** (Mark 10:45). ie For **even the son of man** did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many. When an authority is sincerely concerned about the welfare of those under his care, it is usually easy for us as followers to submit to his/her leadership. – we here at MBC are very blessed to have leaders that display the servant leadership model that Jesus modelled for us
- 1) Jesus' acting in authority brought blessings to people--health and healing (1:23-28). He healed people – both mentally and physically, he brought people back from the dead, he invited people to consider other paths, he was friends with people regardless of their race/religion or colour
 - 2) His authority possessed an irresistible power (charisma you might call it...) that drew people freely and not through manipulation, simply by the person that he was and the truth of his own existence and the gifts that he gave. What a contrast to the status quo – ie everyone being under the letter of the law!!
 - 3) Jesus' authority was also earned by his willingness to step beyond where most would dare not go ie out of his comfort zone. He reached out to the unloveable, the sick, the lepers – they didn't disgust him or make him feel uncomfortable.
 - 4) He had a humble authority – he viewed himself also as being under authority – J consistently displayed and communicated with his disciples a sense of accountability to God for the use of authority that he had been given. He was always checking in with God ie he drew away to a quiet place – again at MBC many people here recognise and display that they are under God's authority too .

PART 2

Lets look at one example of J authority –“The cursed fig tree” (PROP)

[Mark 11:12-14, 19-21](#)

*The next day as they were leaving Bethany, Jesus was hungry. Seeing in the distance a fig tree in leaf, he went to find out if it had any fruit. When he reached it, he found nothing but leaves, because it was not the season for figs. Then he said to the tree, "**May no one ever eat fruit from you again!!**." And his disciples heard him say it.*

*When evening came, they went out of the city. In the morning, as they went along, they saw the fig tree withered from the roots. Peter remembered and said to Jesus, "**Rabbi, look! The fig tree you cursed has withered!**"*

As Kerry said to me yesterday – what the hell did the poor old fig tree do?

Why did J curse this fig tree ??– seems like an odd thing doesn't it??

Well **Outside** it was all leaves –**Inside** “it was barren – hopeless & fruitless” He cursed the tree because it should have been growing fruit since it had the outward signs of fruit Spiritually speaking it was not unlike the Hebrew nation – in that it feigned the appearance of productivity but was actually **barren**....

As Jesus said of the Israelites who claimed to be worshipers of the true God : Matt 15:7-9

“You hypocrites!!, Isaiah was right when he prophesied about you:

“These people draw near Me with their mouth, and honour Me with their lips; but their hearts are far from Me. “They worship me in vain; their teachings are but rules taught by men!!”
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Our God is not concerned with our outward signs of productivity but in what is taking place **inwardly -- in our hearts**....If our hearts and hearts are aligned with his we will bear good fruit!!!

In order to bear fruit we must be plugged into him “I am the vine; you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing. John: 15: 5.

PART 3

By association with Jesus we carry some of this same **authority** – you and I (followers of Christ)–we too are called to act upon this authority with our words and our deeds....so we also will bring **blessings** to people!! **SLIDE**

We can learn more from ***The Parable of the tenants Mark 12: 1-12***

The vineyard J described here is God's Kingdom and we are all a part of this– God is the landowner and he has put in each and every one of us everything we need to carry out his will here on earth... as he taught us to pray “your kingdom come, you will be done”...(story of Sancia) what if I miss God's will....

In the story, many servants were sent to collect some of the fruit from the vineyard, to gather what was rightfully the owners BUT they all came away empty handed....

Sometimes in life as we are going up the rungs of the ladder gaining more authority/recognition/money – we can mistakenly begin to use it for something I call “self-aggrandizement”. (Miranda moment)

I myself have had to do some soul searching on this issue over the past couple of years – the struggle for recognition ie the world's recognition, led me on a path where I really felt God saying “well you can go do that, I'm happy just to sit by and watch for awhile....

We want the fruits of our labour for ourselves!! Either in the form of money, power or prestige– so that everyone will look at us and think how amazing we are!! – not too dissimilar to the Pharisees!!

We forget that the gifts God has placed in each of us are to be used for his glory!!

Finally, in the Parable the owner had only one left to send... v6 "And then eventually he sent his one and only Son" - The tenants, rejecting the son, killed him as well.

The parable ends when J reminds them: Haven't you read this scripture?? Ps 118: 22,23 - "*the stone the builders rejected has become the **capstone**; The Lord has done this, and it is marvellous in our eyes*" vs 10 & 11

Ironically what God demands of us goes far beyond what the scribes required (cf. Matthew 5:20). He wants us to come in faith alone with broken and contrite hearts. It was easier for the Pharisees to reject him and silence him than have to consider their errors and face **correction**. – does this sound familiar to you? – it does to me...

Both the story and the parable provide a warning.... the kingdom of God will be taken away from you and I and given to a people who will produce its fruit.

"In summing up WE WALK IN HIS AUTHORITY WHICH DEMANDS BOTH AN ACCOUNTABILITY AND A RESPONSE..."

And I will end with IN BEAUTIFUL WORDS OF RAVI Zaccharis) WE ARE TO BE **REFLECTIVE OF HIS SPLENDOR!!! SLIDE**