

## Jesus' Sermon on the Mount Sermon Series

### Sermon 31

#### Speaking with Authority

Matthew 7:28-29 And so it was, when Jesus had ended these sayings, that the people were astonished at His teaching, <sup>29</sup> for He taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes.

Jesus spoke with authority. It is interesting to note that the scribes, who were the teachers of the scriptures did not speak with authority. How did they speak then?

In a broad sense, the scribes and Pharisees taught their own traditions. They even put these traditions in importance over the law of God.

Mark 7:1-13 Then the Pharisees and some of the scribes came together to Him, having come from Jerusalem. <sup>2</sup> Now when they saw some of His disciples eat bread with defiled, that is, with unwashed hands, they found fault. <sup>3</sup> For the Pharisees and all the Jews do not eat unless they wash *their* hands in a special way, holding the tradition of the elders. <sup>4</sup> *When they come* from the marketplace, they do not eat unless they wash. And there are many other things which they have received and hold, *like* the washing of cups, pitchers, copper vessels, and couches. <sup>5</sup> Then the Pharisees and scribes asked Him, "Why do Your disciples not walk according to the tradition of the elders, but eat bread with unwashed hands?" <sup>6</sup> He answered and said to them, "Well did Isaiah prophesy of you hypocrites, as it is written: 'This people honors Me with *their* lips, But their heart is far from Me. <sup>7</sup> And in vain they worship Me, Teaching *as* doctrines the commandments of men.' <sup>8</sup> "For laying aside the commandment of God, you hold the tradition of men -- the washing of pitchers and cups, and many other such things you do." <sup>9</sup> He said to them, "*All too* well you reject the commandment of God, that you may keep your tradition. <sup>10</sup> "For Moses said, 'Honor your father and your mother'; and, 'He who curses father or mother, let him be put to death.' <sup>11</sup> "But you say, 'If a man says to his father or mother, "Whatever profit you might have received from me *is* Corban" -- ' (that is, a gift *to God*), <sup>12</sup> "then you no longer let him do anything for his father or his mother, <sup>13</sup> "making the word of God of no effect through your tradition which you have handed down. And many such things you do."

Jesus preached the truth of the Old Testament Scriptures with freshness and power. He elevated the word of God above the traditions of men. He did not speak with hesitation and uncertainty as did the teachers of the law. He spoke with calm assurance and with independence. The religion that prevailed at the time of Christ in a large degree consisted in senseless repetitions.

The washing of the hands and cups by the Jews was not a command of God. In general cleanliness is a command of God but this was not what the scribes and Pharisees were doing. They taught that to come into physical contact with a non-Jew or something that a non-Jew touched or an unclean animal would bring ritual defilement to them before God. So they washed their hands and cups to save themselves from this so-called defilement. All the rules of cleansing were laborious. Jesus condemned these man-made rules. While the people were occupied with observances which God had not required, their attention was turned away from the great principles of His law, love and mercy.

The Jews didn't want to support their parents as was taught by God in the law. So the scribes and Pharisees found a way around the law. They would pronounce Corban over their goods and tell their parents that these items were devoted to God and could not be sold to support their parents. But the items devoted to God would be used by themselves until they died. Then they would be given to the temple. In this way they kept their possessions and did not support their parents under a cloak of religion.

Jesus taught with authority. Today, there are many teachers who do not teach with authority. They talk and talk but they are only expounding their own ideas. And multitudes drink in their words as if the teachers were prophet speaking for God.

These teachers do not teach the word of God. They teach the teachings of men. But the people do not know it because the people do not read the word of God for themselves. They simply believe what the educated and smooth speaking preacher tells them. But the people are easily deceived this way.

Many people go from teacher to teacher until they find one that teaches according their own ideas. They say, "This is a good teacher. He teaches the truth." But how do they know it is the truth unless they examine the word of God? These people just find a teacher that thinks like they do and they call it truth.

I have here a vacuum cleaner. We created a lot of dust in our building here while we were doing renovations. Of course we use the vacuum cleaner to get the dirt out of the building. The vacuum cleaner takes in clean air and dirt through the nozzle here. Then the dirt and air pass through this bag where most of the dirt is collected and filtered out. But the air passes through yet one more filter before it exits as clean air out the back here.

In a similar manner we receive right information and wrong information each day. We hear lies and we hear truth hopefully. How do we separate the lies from the truth? What is our filter system that allows us to get the dirt out and keep the clean air?

For most people the bag and filter they use is simply their own ideas and inclinations. If they like the information then they think it must be truth and they accept it. Other people have as their filter the teaching of their parents and society. Whatever they grew up hearing must be truth they

think. Anything that does not agree with what they grew up hearing must be false, they think. Others seem to have no filter at all. Whatever they hear they believe. Their ideas are all mixed up with a confusion of things they heard on T.V., with what popular teachers say and their own ideas.

What do you believe? Have you simply believed whatever your parents told you? Have you simply believed whatever you were taught by religious teachers? Do you simply believe your own ideas? How can you really know what is truth?

Jesus spoke with authority because He was teaching the scriptures. As a prophet of God, Jesus had spent the whole night in prayer before preaching the sermon on the mount. He was receiving a message from God. Jesus tells us exactly where we can find truth.

John 17:17 "Sanctify them by Your truth. Your word is truth."

God's reveals the truth through the prophets. This is the Old and New Testaments. This is the filter that we use to separate truth and error. God set these revelations as the standard.

Isaiah 8:20 To the law and to the testimony! If they do not speak according to this word, *it is* because *there is* no light in them.

All teaching must be compared to the former revelation. If the new teaching does not conform to the old, then there is error in the new teaching and must be discarded. Jesus pointed to the Old Testament as the standard of truth. Jesus taught with authority because He taught the scriptures.

John 14:6 Jesus said to him, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.

Jesus was more than a prophet. He said that He was the truth. His life and His person was a revelation of the love and character of God.

John 14:7-11 "If you had known Me, you would have known My Father also; and from now on you know Him and have seen Him." <sup>8</sup>Philip said to Him, "Lord, show us the Father, and it is sufficient for us." <sup>9</sup>Jesus said to him, "Have I been with you so long, and yet you have not known Me, Philip? He who has seen Me has seen the Father; so how can you say, 'Show us the Father'? <sup>10</sup>"Do you not believe that I am in the Father, and the Father in Me? The words that I speak to you I do not speak on My own *authority*; but the Father who dwells in Me does the works. <sup>11</sup>"Believe Me that I *am* in the Father and the Father in Me, or else believe Me for the sake of the works themselves.

Jesus spoke these words and the words were confirmed by the miracles that He did and by a sinless life.

Are you searching for the truth or are you searching only for what agrees with what you already believe? How will you know the difference? You should not trust teachers, including myself.

How do you know that I am telling the truth? You must read the word of God for yourself. You must compare the teaching of men with the unerring standard: the Bible. But if you do not read God's word then you then you have no accurate filter to discern truth. Your filter is only your parent's teaching or the teaching of your society or your own imagination. Throughout history, in religious matters the majority has only been wrong. If you think you are finding safety in believing what everyone else believes then that is a wrong filter.

Are you too busy to study God's word? On judgment day will you say to God, "I didn't have time to search for truth, I needed to watch funny videos on Facebook"? Do not trust your eternal destiny to some teacher or to the majority or even to your parents. Trust the word of God. It is truth. But to trust it, you must know it. You must read it for yourself.