

Jesus, the Master Teacher

Luke 4: 32.

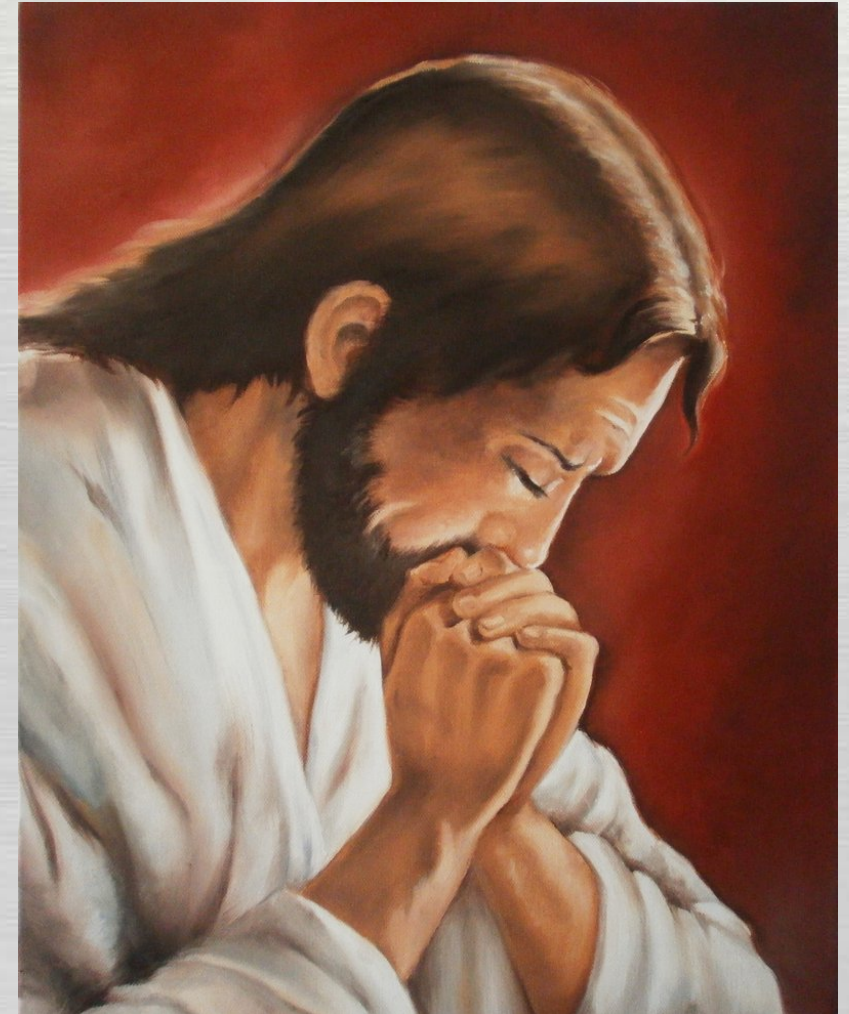


"And they were astonished at His teaching,
for His word was with authority."
Luke 4: 32



I. Introduction

Jesus is certainly the best teacher in the history of our planet. He came to proclaim the ultimate truth for a fulfilled life and to reveal the true character of His Father. Through His teaching 'we have all received of His fullness, and grace for grace'." (John 1: 16.)



“The source of Christian teaching is the Gospels, and in them I found the explanation of the spirit which guides the life of all who really live... I did not know the light and had thought there was no light of truth to be found in life, but having convinced myself that men live by that light alone, I began to look for its source and found it in the Gospels, despite the false Church interpretations. And on reaching that source of light I was dazzled by it, and found full replies to my questions as to the meaning of my own life... What was important to me was this light which has enlightened mankind for eighteen hundred years and which enlightened and still enlightens me...”

Leo Tolstoy, *The Gospel in brief*, p. 23.

A new perspective for the
communication with God

“To a Jewish mind, it would have been irreverent and therefore unthinkable to call God by this familiar word [abba, ‘daddy’]. It was something new, something unique and unheard of that Jesus dared to take this step and to speak with God as a child speaks with his father, simply, intimately, securely.”

Joachim Jeremias, The Central Message of the New Testament (London, SCM, 1965), p. 21;



"Jesus made everything so simple and we have made it so complicated. He spoke to the people in short sentences and everyday words, illustrating His messages with never-to-be forgotten stories."
Billy Graham



“What does that mean to be a disciple? It means to be a devoted student of Jesus the teacher... Until we have a real vision of being the best we can be, fulfilling our true potential as a human being, and recognize that it can only come from being a daily devoted student of Christ - we will not be disciples of Jesus. Why would we want to be a disciple of Jesus if we were not convinced that he was the best person to be learning from.”
Ross Kendall



"The figure of Jesus presents us with an exemplar of teaching through nonliteral forms; he uses these not merely for embellishment, or as a way to entertain his audience, or to hold and sustain their interest - although they might have these benefits as well. He teaches morality this way, I believe, because he cannot conceive of any other way to teach it... His moral teaching is aimed at achieving a transformation of moral character. Without changing certain traits and attitudes that impede moral responsiveness, moral teaching remains merely exhortative."

Nicholas C. Burbules



"Jesus was not mainly a talented orator, knowing how to use the technics of effective communication. He was a transformational speaker, a powerful teacher, contributing to the quintessential change of those who followed Him. His greatness cannot be found in the uniqueness of His sayings. If the content of His teaching were unique, it would mean that God didn't reveal Himself previously to human beings. This is why Jesus confirmed the divine revelation of the Old Testament and extended its significance. He was able to affirm: 'Do not think that I came to destroy Law or the Prophets. I did not come to destroy but to fulfill.'" (DS)



RABBI

"Hebrew and Aramaic words meaning "my master" in general, or "my teacher" in particular. They were not used as titles in OT times, but were common titles of respect by the time of Jesus, especially but not only for teachers.

A Greek transliteration of the Hebrew "Rabbi" occurs only in the Gospels, while a transliteration of the Aramaic "Rabbouni" occurs only in Mark 10:51 and John 20:16. Both titles are explicitly translated in John as meaning "teacher" (1:38; 20:16), and both are almost always applied to Jesus.

The NT frequently also uses the equivalent Greek word "didaskalos" meaning "teacher", usually when Jesus is addressed by various people (disciples and opponents), but sometimes in Jesus' own sayings about "teachers" (see esp. Matt 10:24-25; 23:6-12)."

Felix Just, Christological Titles in the New Testament.

II. Context



The structure of the Gospel of Luke

In	1: 1 – 4	Search for Authentic Narrative about Jesus
1	1: 5 – 2: 50	Incarnation (Prophecies, John the Baptist and Jesus)
2	2: 50 – 4: 30	Nazareth (Baptism, Temptation, and Ministry in Nazareth)
3	4: 31 – 7 : 50	Capernaum (Headquarters of Jesus for his Ministry in Galilee)
4	8: 1 – 9: 50	Every City and Village
5	9: 51 – 19: 27	Trip to Jerusalem (Jesus' Ministry on the road, Samaria and Judea)
6	19: 28 – 21: 38	Jerusalem (Fulfillment of Jesus' Mission)
7	22: 1 – 23: 56	Jesus' Passion, Death, and Burial
8	24: 1 – 24: 53	Jesus' Resurrection, Post-resurrection Teaching, and Ascension

At the beginning of the third section of the Gospel of Luke (4: 31 – 7: 50) Jesus is doing His ministry with authority. All activities are performed around the city of Capernaum, His new headquarters.



The people of Capernaum have the privilege of witnessing so many miracles. At the same time they are honored to listen to the inspired messages of their divine teacher. At the end of the first section (4: 31 – 37), the report of his action spreads out the entire region.



The structure of Luke 4: 31 - 37

A	4: 31	Jesus' arrival to Caparnaum (went down)
B	4: 32	Reaction of the Multitude about Jesus' Authority
C	4: 33	In the Synagogue, a man with an unclean spirit
D	4: 33. 34	'Leave us alone', demon crying out to Jesus
X	4: 34	Message of the demon to Jesus a. Jesus of Nazareth b. Did you come to destroy us? a'. Holy One of God
D'	4: 35	'Be quiet and leave', the healing words of Jesus
C'	4: 35	In the middle of the Synagogue, the Miracle of Jesus
B'	4: 36	Reaction of the Multitude about Jesus' Authority
D	4: 37	Jesus known in the surrounding region (went out)

“Two verses in our text are in parallel:

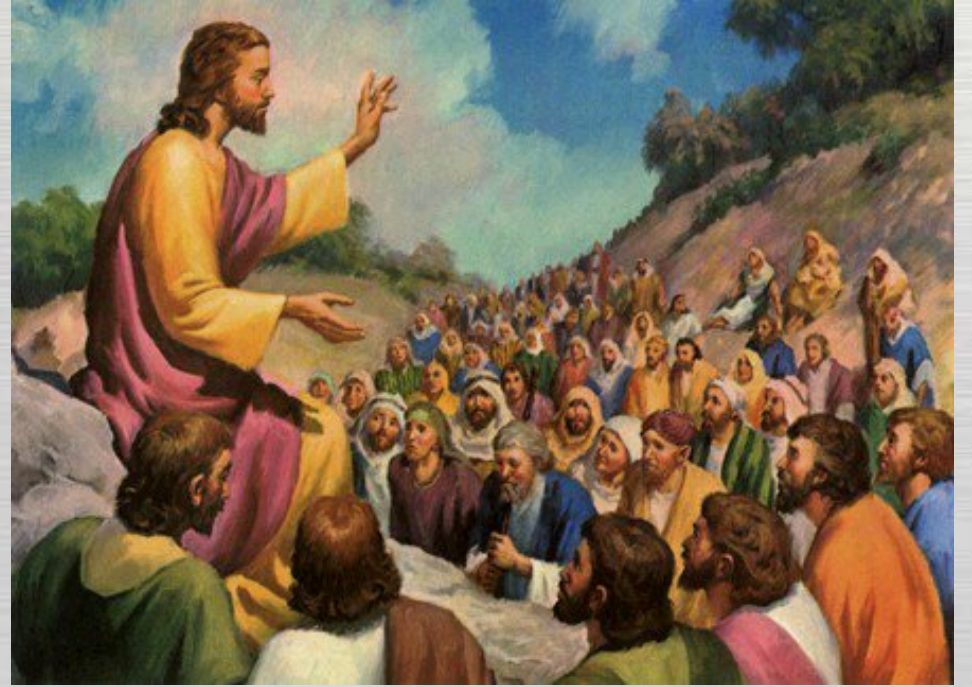
“And they were astonished at His teaching, for His word was with authority” (32) with “For with authority and power He commands the unclean spirits, and they come out.” (36). This confirms the essential aspect of Jesus’ ministry: the message delivered with power of conviction.



The same text reminds us that the demon is aware of the mission of Jesus. The concept of the Great Controversy is omnipresent in the Gospel of Luke. Even the demons know well the strategic plan of Jesus.



III. An outstanding, Divine Teacher



1. Jesus teaching
made big imprint on
the mind of the
audience

“They were astonished”



"The people were astonished at his doctrine; it being something new, and unheard of, what they had not been used to; and coming in the demonstration of the Spirit, and of power, it carried its own evidence along with it, wrought conviction in their minds, and obliged them to acknowledge the truth of it."
John Gills



"I believe that
curiosity, wonder
and passion are
defining qualities of
imaginative minds
and great teachers"
Kay Redfield
Jamison



“Struck with wonder, having never heard such doctrine before, nor any doctrine on religious subjects, delivered with such solemnity and sweetness, or with such force and energy. Christ’s words, it appears, made a wonderful impression on their minds. For he taught them as one having authority — With a dignity and majesty peculiar to himself, as the great lawgiver, and with the demonstration and power of the Spirit; and not as the scribes — Their established teachers, “whose lectures, for the most part, were absolutely trifling; being drawn from tradition, or from the comments of other doctors, which these ignorant and corrupt teachers substituted in the place of Scripture, reason, and truth.” — Scot Macknight.



“Christ's preaching much affected the people; and a working power went with it to the consciences of men. These miracles showed Christ to be a controller and conqueror of Satan, a healer of diseases. Where Christ gives a new life, in recovery from sickness, it should be a new life, spent more than ever in his service, to his glory. Our business should be to spread abroad Christ's fame in every place, to beseech him in behalf of those diseased in body or mind, and to use our influence in bringing sinners to him, that his hands may be laid upon them for their healing. He cast the devils out of many who were possessed. We were not sent into this world to live to ourselves only, but to glorify God, and to do good in our generation. The people sought him, and came unto him. A desert is no desert, if we are with Christ there. He will continue with us, by his word and Spirit, and extend the same blessings to other nations, till, throughout the earth, the servants and worshippers of Satan are brought to acknowledge him as the Christ, the Son of God, and to find redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins.” Matthew Henri

2. The Power of Jesus' word

"His Word was with Authority"

"The scribes only told what the Rabbis or doctors taught. They were the writers of the law, and their business was to transcribe the text of Holy Scripture, to preserve and expound it. They admitted the authority of teachers higher than themselves, and paid deference to them; Christ recognized no superior."

Tait, A. *The charter of Christianity*, (1886).
London, Hodder and Stoughton.



“One element of Jesus’ teaching style that rises to the surface as we study his life is that He was serious about what discipleship would mean. He did not ask for interest or empathy only, but for genuine commitment and lifelong discipleship.”
Thomas A. Wayment, To teach as Jesus taught, p. 26.



Jesus didn't make use of his divine condition; He cast it off and made Himself equal to us in everything, except sin. He proposed His message humbly, without imposing it. He always respected the freedom of those who listened to Him and those who followed Him. However, His words and acts acquired credibility and authority because of the quality of His message and His life of serving. The values in His proposition acquired force and authority... only through His generous, genuine and complete service offered to mankind and to God." Eli Chavez



“Not everyone who heard Jesus became believers because we all have personal agendas that can hold us in disbelief. But everyone who did hear had to grapple with the power of what he said, and they had to decide what to do with the authoritative voice with which he spoke—an authority that did not come from a booming microphone or spotlights or banners, but from the ring of truth in the words themselves, backed up by every action he performed.”

Mel Lawrenz



V. Conclusion



"The Bible unfolds truth with a simplicity and a perfect adaptation to the needs and longings of the human heart, that has astonished and charmed the most highly cultivated minds, while it enables the humblest and uncultured to discern the way of salvation. And yet these simply stated truths lay hold upon subjects so elevated, so far-reaching, so infinitely beyond the power of human comprehension, that we can accept them only because God has declared them. Thus the plan of redemption is laid open to us, so that every soul may see the steps he is to take in repentance toward God and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ, in order to be saved in God's appointed way; yet beneath these truths, so easily understood, lie mysteries that are the hiding of His glory—mysteries that overpower the mind in its research, yet inspire the sincere seeker for truth with reverence and faith. The more he searches the Bible, the deeper is his conviction that it is the word of the living God, and human reason bows before the majesty of divine revelation."

Ellen G. White, Steps to Christ, p. 107.

“Jesus preached the truth of the Old Testament Scriptures with freshness and power, and elevated the word of God above the traditions and maxims of men. All that he said fell upon the ears of his hearers as a new revelation. He did not repeat the common-place traditional maxims after the manner of the rabbis, nor did he speak with hesitation and uncertainty as they did. He spoke with calm assurance and with marked independence. The religion that prevailed at the time of Christ’s public ministry was lifeless. Tho it was taught by men of education and talent, yet their instruction in a large degree consisted in senseless repetitions; but the words of Christ, spoken so earnestly and in such power, stirred the hearts of the people, and created an intense interest. They listened in vain for the senseless repetitions of the unchangeable exactions, and they were astonished at his doctrine, for he taught as one having authority and not as the scribes.”

Ellen G. White, Signs of the Times, March 26, 1896, par. 2.

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