



THE GOSPEL OF MATTHEW

Expressing Christ Among Religious Captives: Setting Them Free (Part 6)

Session Number: 32 | Week: 5 | Day: 4

Bible Passage

Matthew 21:23-46

Introduction

In Matthew 21:23-46, we explore the stumbling blocks that hinder making Christ known, particularly to those imprisoned by religion. As Jesus enters the final week of His earthly ministry, He fully reveals His identity as the Suffering Servant, the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world, yet is rejected by men. In this session, the religious leaders question Jesus' authority to cleanse the temple. He exposes their unwillingness to obey God's authority and clarifies that His authority is not delegated but ultimate, coming directly from God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. Jesus demonstrates that He is the source of all authority, not merely a resource.

Session Objectives

By the end of this session, you will have:

- Understood the doctrine of authority on earth to free those in prison by examining the source of our authority, the rejection of this authority by religious leaders, and the punishment God gives to those who reject His authority.
- Been warned that God can reject us from representing Him on earth by reflecting on the example of the Israelites.

Session Outline

- **The identity of the person of Christ is fully revealed** as the Suffering Servant.
- **The Suffering Servant is the Lamb of God** who takes away the sins of the nations.
- **The rulers questioned Jesus' authority.**
- **Types of authority are listed and explained.**

Connecting

- Study together in a group of two or more people.
 - Begin with a prayer, asking God to bless your understanding.
 - Read the passage at least twice using different Bible versions, then retell the story among your group members.
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- Share the challenges and blessings from the previous day.

Comprehending

What do the verses mean?

(In small groups, attempt the following questions. Focus on God's attitudes and the people's character/attributes.)

- What did you discover about God's attributes/character, His people's character, and the enemy in this passage? What lessons have you learned from the passage?
- Who is the author? What is authority? What types of authority do you know? List at least three figures who can grant delegated authority on earth.
- What had Jesus done or what was done to Him to show that He was a man of authority? (Refer to Matthew 21:1-22 and lessons from the previous session.)
- Read Matthew 21:23-27. List five principles or truths that Jesus revealed about authority. What are the sources of authority and types of authority? How do people respond to authority?
- Jesus used three parables to answer the question of what authority He used and who gave Him authority. In the first parable, read Matthew 21:28-32. What did Jesus reveal about the source of authority and how to benefit from that authority?
- In the second parable, Matthew 21:33-46, what did Jesus reveal about God the Father being the source of His authority? List the wrong ways people responded to authority, and what punishment did they receive from the farm's owner?

Committing

- Engage with the Bible—read, study, memorize, meditate, pray, listen, and live it out.
- List three lessons you learnt as an agent of change that you would practice and teach others about
- Take time and worship Jesus with the attributes revealed about Christ now.
- Engage SPACEPETS model, to do something after the session. Look for:
 - **Sin** to confess
 - **Promise** to claim
 - **Attitude** to change
 - **Command** to keep
 - **Error** to change
 - **Prayer** to make
 - **Example** to copy
 - **Truth** to obey and
 - **Something** praiseworthy

Communicating

- Identify one person and share the lessons you learnt in this session?
- Visit or call a new believer and Pray with them over the issues they are struggling with. Issue of attending the church.
- Form another group and repeat this study.