

JESUS CHRIST - THE MANNER AND COMPLETENESS OF HIS TEACHING

Characteristics that set Jesus apart from
other teachers.

SCRIPTURE QUOTATIONS FROM
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Introduction

Significant points in this lesson,

- The lesson includes some of the characteristics and peculiarities of Jesus that set Him apart from other men. These characteristics offer proof that He is the Christ, the Son of God.
- Also, it points out His peculiarities as a teacher, peculiarities that show His difference from men. Jesus taught profound lessons by using simple stories and analogies. He taught by His own authority.
- Further: the chief priests and elders challenged the authority of Jesus but could not withstand the wisdom of His replies. This shows that He did not merely accept the prevailing doctrines of the time.

The gospel of Matthew tells of an incident concerning the conflict between Jesus and the leaders in Jerusalem over His authority to teach,

Matthew 21:23 When He entered the temple, the chief priests and the elders of the people came to Him while He was teaching, and said, “By what authority are You doing these things, and who gave You this authority?” 24 Jesus said to them, “I will also ask you one thing, which if you tell Me, I will also tell you by what authority I do these things. 25 “The baptism of John was from what *source*, from heaven or from men?” And they *began* reasoning among themselves, saying, “If we say, ‘From heaven,’ He will say to us, ‘Then why did you not believe him?’ 26 “But if we say, ‘From men,’ we fear the people; for they all regard John as a prophet.” 27 And answering Jesus, they said, “We do not know.” He also said to them, “Neither will I tell you by what authority I do these things.”¹

Alfred Edersheim wrote concerning this incident,

For, there was no principle more firmly established by universal consent than that authoritative teaching required previous authorization. Indeed, this logically followed from the principle of Rabbinism. All teaching must be authoritative, since it was traditional—approved by authority, and handed down from teacher to disciple.

At whatever periods some of these practices may have been introduced, it is at least certain that, at the time of our Lord, no one

¹ *New American Standard Bible: 1995 update.* (1995). (Mt 21:23–27). La Habra, CA: The Lockman Foundation.

would have ventured authoritatively to teach without proper Rabbinic authorization. The question, therefore, with which the Jewish authorities met Christ, while teaching, was one which had a very real meaning, and appealed to the habits and feelings of the people who listened to Jesus. Otherwise, also, it was cunningly framed. For, it did not merely challenge Him for teaching, but also asked for His authority in what He did; referring not only to His Work generally, but, perhaps, especially to what had happened on the previous day. They were not there to oppose Him; but, when a man did as He had done in the Temple, it was their duty to verify his credentials. Finally, the alternative question reported by St. Mark: ‘or’—if Thou hast not proper Rabbinic commission ‘who gave Thee this authority to do these things?’ seems clearly to point to their contention, that the power which Jesus wielded was delegated to Him by none other than Beelzebub (i.e., the Devil). ²

The Jewish authorities attributed Jesus teaching to Beelzebub, but John wrote concerning the teaching of Jesus,

John 7:15 The Jews then were astonished, saying, “How has this man become learned, having never been educated?” 16 So Jesus answered them and said, “My teaching is not Mine, but His who sent Me.

Section Review 1

1. Did Jesus permit the leaders in Jerusalem to control what He taught?
2. What did the priests and elders demand of Jesus as He taught in the temple?
3. Did Jesus agree to submit to the authority of the priests and rabbis?

The Foundation

The Foundation of Christianity is a Person—Jesus Christ, Himself.

- Jesus said, “I AM the way, and the truth, and the life.” He did not cite a verbal description of the way, or a philosophical

² Edersheim, A. (1896). Vol. 2: *The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah* (381–383). Bellingham, WA: Logos Bible Software.

argument about what truth is, or what was the origin or explanation of life. He said, I am it.

- The same is true of law. Jesus (as God) is not subject to law. He **is** law. See the “royal law,” i.e., the law of the kingdom. His law of love pervades everything because He is love.

Christianity does not rest upon a philosophy or body of doctrines, but upon a divine person, the Christ Himself.

Paul wrote,

1 Corinthians 3:11 “For no man can lay a foundation other than the one which is laid, which is Jesus Christ.”

Jesus assigned the most importance to the moral evidences of his divine mission; to His miracles He assigned second place.

John 8:18 “I am He who testifies about Myself, and the Father who sent Me testifies about Me.”

John 14:10 “Do you not believe that I am in the Father, and the Father is in Me? The words that I say to you I do not speak on My own initiative, but the Father abiding in Me does His works. 11 “Believe Me that I am in the Father and the Father is in Me; otherwise believe because of the works themselves.

- Jesus bore witness about Himself.
- The Father also bore witness of Him.
- Significantly, and in contrast with Jesus, the Jewish teachers always cited as their authority a previous rabbi who had gained reputation.

Matt. 12:38 Then some of the scribes and Pharisees said to Him, “Teacher, we want to see a sign from You.” 39 But He answered and said to them, “An evil and adulterous generation craves for a sign; and yet no sign will be given to it but the sign of Jonah the prophet; 40 for just as JONAH WAS THREE DAYS AND THREE NIGHTS IN THE BELLY OF THE SEA MONSTER, so will the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.

- The scribes and Pharisees demanded a sign from Jesus in proof of who He was.
- Jesus rejected their demand and said that it was an “evil and adulterous generation that craved a sign.”

- Nevertheless, Jesus cited one sign that would be offered in proof of who He was. The sign was His resurrection.

Jesus rested His claim not merely on the message He brought, but on his character.

He said, “If you have seen Me you have seen the Father,”

John 14:9 Jesus *said to him, “Have I been so long with you, and yet you have not come to know Me, Philip? He who has seen Me has seen the Father; how can you say, ‘Show us the Father’?”

He said that His words were the Father working in Him.

This lesson presents some of the characteristics and peculiarities of Jesus which set him apart from other men. These characteristics serve as proof to us that He is the Christ, the Son of God in an extraordinary sense.

In this lesson we also consider his peculiarities as a teacher which shows that He is different from men.

Review 2

1. The priests and elders asked Jesus, “By what _____ are You doing these things, and who gave You this _____.”
2. Jesus replied, “The baptism of John was from what _____, from _____ or from _____?”
3. The priests and elders reasoned among themselves, “If we say, ‘From _____,’ He will say to us, ‘Then why did you not _____ him?’
4. The foundation of Christianity is _____.
5. The Apostle Paul wrote, “For no man can lay a _____ other than the one which is laid, which is Jesus Christ.”
6. Jesus bore witness about _____.
7. The sign that Jesus promised to the doubting Jews was the sign of _____.

Jesus' Manner of thought

Jesus does not seek the same end as men.

The philosopher seeks explanations.

The philosopher seeks to explain the universe and its workings, to formulate a complete, all-embracing, all-explaining law of things. He studies the mind, seeking to explain it. He speculates about evolution as an answer to the origin of things.

The scientist investigates nature.

He seeks underlying causes for phenomena. The physicist talks of atoms; the medical technologist of microorganisms and viruses; the geologist of rocks and formations, millions of years and various theoretical ages.

For example,

A statement from the preface to the book *Red Giants and White Dwarfs* by Robert Jastrow reveals both his scientific attitude and philosophical aim. Jastrow was at that time the director of the Goddard Institute for space studies.

Jastrow wrote,

The scientific story of creation touches on the central problems of man's existence: what am I? How did I get here? What is my relation to the rest of the universe? The ideas are simple and beautiful; they can be expressed in clear language, without the use of jargon or mathematics. The story of man's origins goes far beyond the concepts of Darwin; it begins earlier than the time of our tree-dwelling ancestors, and much earlier than the period, several billion years ago, when the lowest forms of life first appeared on the face of the earth; it crosses the threshold between the living and the non-living worlds and goes back in time to the parent cloud of hydrogen out of which all existing things are descended.³

Jastrow believed that the philosophy of material evolution provided the explanation for all existence. And so He frames his belief completely in terms of physical matter. Jastrow saw no Spirit, no Deity behind the existence of nature. That was his philosophy, what He believed underlay science.

The Bible says of Jesus,

John 1:3 All things came into being through Him, and apart from Him nothing came into being that has come into being.

³ Robert Jastrow, *Red Giants and White Dwarfs*. Preface.

And,

Hebrews 1:10 ... “You, Lord, in the beginning laid the foundation of the earth, and the heavens are the works of your hands;

And,

John 1:10 He was in the world, and the world was made through Him, and the world did not know Him.

Jesus said,

Matthew 19:4 And He answered and said, “Have you not read that He who created them from the beginning MADE THEM MALE AND FEMALE,

The teaching of Jesus is forthright and simple, yet is profound.

The theologian investigates moral imperatives, moral principles and existence. The theologian seeks a philosophy of religion, strives to show the origin of evil, advances theories of the atonement, et. al., and is constantly seeking mysteries to explain.

Theologians are expected to offer proofs for their assertions.

Scientists and philosophers are also expected to offer proofs for their statements. In many cases THEY ARE SUBJECTED TO PEER REVIEWS.

Jesus speaks authoritatively and without proofs. He rejected dependence on tradition.

Jesus does not seek the same end that the great thinkers have sought:

Jesus did not seek to prove things to his hearers, but announced his principles as truth, as God would announce truth. He did not reason to prove, or seek to discover; he simply taught truth as truth.

For example, Jesus’ teaching on morality is simple but profound. See the Sermon on the Mount. Matthew 5 and 6.

Review 3

1. Jesus does not seek the same _____ (_____) as men.
2. All things came into _____ through Him.
3. The Bible says of God, the _____ are the work of Your hands.
4. The world was made through Him and the world did _____ Him.
5. Jesus speaks _____.
6. Jesus did not seek to _____ things to His hearers.
7. Jesus' teaching on morality is _____ but _____.

Jesus did not seek to prove things

Providence and the folly of worry.

Typically, man will conduct statistical studies, or extensive laboratory investigations to establish the truth of a statement or procedure. Even then the so-called experts make recommendations based on probability. Jesus merely cited examples in nature.

Jesus compared God's care for nature to His care for man.

He merely said, "Do not be anxious."

He pointed out the higher priority of seeking first the kingdom of God.

The way that numerous people deal with worry may be seen in a story that was told by Henry Ward Beecher, who lived in the 19th Century when money was worth a lot more. Beecher told about a young man who was applying for a job in a New England factory. Asking for the owner, the young man found himself in the presence of a nervous, fidgety owner who looked hopelessly dyspeptic. "The only vacancy here," the owner told the young man, "is a vice-presidency. The man who takes the job must shoulder all my cares."

"That's a tough job," said the applicant. "What's the salary?"

"I'll pay you one hundred thousand a year if you will really take over all my worries."

"Where is the hundred thousand coming from?" asked the applicant, suspiciously.

“That, my friend,” replied the owner, “is your first worry.”⁴

Jesus did not use philosophical argument to prove His point.

Jesus, in teaching His disciples of God's providence and the folly of worry made no argument to prove his point, but He used illustrations to impress it upon His hearers' hearts and minds.

For example, as a cure for worry and anxiety He said,

Matthew 6:25 “For this reason I say to you, do not be worried about your life, as to what you will eat or what you will drink; nor for your body, as to what you will put on. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothing? 26 “Look at the birds of the air, that they do not sow, nor reap nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not worth much more than they? 27 “And who of you by being worried can add a single hour to his life? 28 “And why are you worried about clothing? Observe how the lilies of the field grow; they do not toil nor do they spin, 29 yet I say to you that not even Solomon in all his glory clothed himself like one of these. 30 “But if God so clothes the grass of the field, which is alive today and tomorrow is thrown into the furnace, will He not much more clothe you? You of little faith! 31 “Do not worry then, saying, ‘What will we eat?’ or ‘What will we drink?’ or ‘What will we wear for clothing?’ 32 “For the Gentiles eagerly seek all these things; for your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things. 33 “But seek first His kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things will be added to you. 34 “So do not worry about tomorrow; for tomorrow will care for itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own.

Prayer.

Among the men who founded the United States were some who were devout. They prayed regularly; in fact, they developed practices in their lives that involved devotion to prayer. One of these men was George Washington.

Robert Lewis of Fredericksburg, Virginia, was George Washington's private secretary. During the first part of the presidency, he said that he accidentally witnessed Washington's private devotions, both morning and evening. He saw him in a kneeling posture, with an open Bible before him;

⁴ Tan, P. L. (1996). *Encyclopedia of 7700 Illustrations: Signs of the Times* (1642). Garland, TX: Bible Communications, Inc.

and he said that he believed such was his daily practice. His custom was to go to his library at four o'clock in the morning for devotions.⁵

Jesus taught His disciples how to pray, and He taught them in simple straightforward language. Luke and Matthew tell about Jesus' instructions. Their accounts differ somewhat in their descriptions of the incident, but taken together they tell how Jesus approached the subject.

Luke 11:1 It happened that while Jesus was praying in a certain place, after He had finished, one of His disciples said to Him, "Lord, teach us to pray just as John also taught his disciples."

And in Matthew we read,

Matthew 6:9 "Pray, then, in this way:

'Our Father who is in heaven,

Hallowed be Your name.

10 'Your kingdom come.⁶

Your will be done,

On earth as it is in heaven.

11 'Give us this day our daily bread.

12 'And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. 13 'And do not lead us into temptation, but deliver us from evil. [For Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.]'

- Jesus made no argument about the nature of prayer.
- Jesus made no effort to prove prayer reasonable.
- Jesus simply taught the disciples to pray.

Of prayer, Jesus made no argument about the nature of prayer, nor effort to prove its reasonableness or harmony with law; he simply taught the disciples to pray, In the Gospel of Mathew we read,

⁵ Tan, P. L. (1996). Encyclopedia of 7700 Illustrations: Signs of the Times (1036). Garland, TX: Bible Communications, Inc.

⁶ Please note that in Israel of those days the phrase "your kingdom come" referred in most cases to the "rule of God." We can pray "Your kingdom come" in this sense.

Matthew 7:7 “Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. 8 “For everyone who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it will be opened. 9 “Or what man is there among you who, when his son asks for a loaf, will give him a stone? 10 “Or if he asks for a fish, he will not give him a snake, will he? 11 “If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father who is in heaven give what is good to those who ask Him!

And again, He said,

Luke 18:1: Now he was telling them a parable to show that at all times they ought to pray and not to lose heart, ..."

The Sabbath.

The Bible shows that traditional observances had changed the aim and benefits of the Sabbath. Traditions had changed the regard people had for the day. As Jesus said to them, “The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath. (Mark 2:27).

Jesus simply asked the Jews a question about it.

Regarding the Sabbath. When Pharisees complained that he healed on that day, he asked them about their kindness to animals and the comparative values of a man and a sheep!

Matt. 12:9 Departing from there, He went into their synagogue. 10 And a man was there whose hand was withered. And they questioned Jesus, asking, “Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath?”—so that they might accuse Him. 11 And He said to them, “What man is there among you who has a sheep, and if it falls into a pit on the Sabbath, will he not take hold of it and lift it out? 12 “How much more valuable then is a man than a sheep! So then, it is lawful to do good on the Sabbath.”

- The Jews were following empty formality.
- Jesus did not teach slavery to formality.

An admonition of the Apostle Paul clarifies the teaching of Christianity on the subject of religious formality.

Colossians 2:20 If you have died with Christ to the elementary principles of the world, why, as if you were living in the world, do you submit yourself to decrees, such

as, 21 “Do not handle, do not taste, do not touch!” 22 (which all refer to things destined to perish with use)—in accordance with the commandments and teachings of men? 23 These are matters which have, to be sure, the appearance of wisdom in self-made religion and self-abasement and severe treatment of the body, but are of no value against fleshly indulgence.

Jesus rejected the mere outward appearance of religion. He condemned it as hypocrisy.

Jesus spoke simply

Jesus never burdened his hearers with large words, philosophical reasonings, or the like, but spoke simply, Once when Jesus spoke in the temple He said,

Mark 12:35 And Jesus began to say, as He taught in the temple, “How is it that the scribes say that the Christ is the son of David? 36 “David himself said in the Holy Spirit,

‘THE LORD SAID TO MY LORD,

“SIT AT MY RIGHT HAND,

UNTIL I PUT YOUR ENEMIES BENEATH YOUR FEET.” ’

37 “David himself calls Him ‘Lord’; so in what sense is He his son?” And the large crowd enjoyed listening to Him.

And the great crowd enjoyed listening to him.

Again, Jesus merely asked his opponents a question.

- He used simple language, not philosophical arguments.

Review 4

1. Jesus compared God's care for _____ to His care for _____.
2. He merely said, "Do not be _____."
3. He pointed out the higher priority of seeking first the _____ of _____.
4. Jesus made no argument about the nature of _____.
5. Jesus made no effort to _____ that prayer is reasonable.
6. Jesus simply taught the disciples to _____.
7. In regard of the Sabbath the Jews were following empty _____.
8. Jesus did not teach slavery to _____.
9. Jesus used _____ language and not _____ arguments.

Jesus possessed divine calmness

Mark 4:35 On that day, when evening came, He *said to them, "Let us go over to the other side." 36 Leaving the crowd, they *took Him along with them in the boat, just as He was; and other boats were with Him. 37 And there *arose a fierce gale of wind, and the waves were breaking over the boat so much that the boat was already filling up. 38 Jesus Himself was in the stern, asleep on the cushion; and they *woke Him and *said to Him, "Teacher, do You not care that we are perishing?" 39 And He got up and rebuked the wind and said to the sea, "Hush, be still." And the wind died down and it became perfectly calm. 40 And He said to them, "Why are you afraid? How is it that you have no faith?" 41 They became very much afraid and said to one another, "Who then is this, that even the wind and the sea obey Him?"

- He slept when the boat encountered the storm.
- He spoke to the gale on the sea and said, "Hush, be still."
- Jesus quieted the fierce gale with three words.

In His dealing with his listeners,

Jesus possessed a divine calmness unseen in mere human teachers. He was always tender-hearted, compassionate, and calm; He never became heated or excited in his discourses. He sought calmly to lead men out of darkness into light.

The enemies of Jesus brought him to trial before Pontius Pilate and the scripture tells of the encounter,

John 18:33 Therefore Pilate entered again into the Praetorium, and summoned Jesus and said to Him, “Are You the King of the Jews?” 34 Jesus answered, “Are you saying this on your own initiative, or did others tell you about Me?” 35 Pilate answered, “I am not a Jew, am I? Your own nation and the chief priests delivered You to me; what have You done?” 36 Jesus answered, “My kingdom is not of this world. If My kingdom were of this world, then My servants would be fighting so that I would not be handed over to the Jews; but as it is, My kingdom is not of this realm.” 37 Therefore Pilate said to Him, “So You are a king?” Jesus answered, “You say correctly that I am a king. For this I have been born, and for this I have come into the world, to testify to the truth. Everyone who is of the truth hears My voice.”

- Jesus spoke calmly and forthrightly to the man who had the power to crucify Him.

Review 5

1. Jesus possessed Divine _____.
2. He _____ when the boat encountered the storm.
3. He _____ to the gale on the sea and said, “Hush, be still.”
4. Jesus _____ the fierce gale.
5. Jesus was always tender-hearted, _____, and _____.
6. Jesus never becomes _____ or _____ in His discourses.
7. Jesus always sought to lead men out of _____ into _____.
8. Jesus spoke _____ and _____ to the man who had the power to crucify Him.

The Completeness of His teaching makes Him different from men

Jesus taught as one having authority, Matt. 7:28-29: He appealed not to the "rabbis," but to Moses, to the prophets and to the psalms; with these he was thoroughly familiar. He could speak with authority because:

- He knew his subject. He knew what he was talking about. He was an expert on the subject he handled. He never allowed himself to be drawn away from it.
- He knew men. He knew the hearts of men; he knew the needs of men. There was no guesswork on his part.
- He knew God. He walked with God; he lived with God; he prayed to God. There was nothing superficial in this knowledge. It was practical.

Jesus taught as one having authority.

Jesus knew his subject.

Jesus knew men.

Jesus knew God.

The teaching of Jesus was "full" teaching.

Other teachers give principles of ethics and morals, but do they, any one of them, give a complete and full teaching as did Jesus? What moral principle has been added to the sermon on the mount? What have the centuries of human argument and learning added to the work of Christ? Nothing.

The teaching of Jesus has power upon the conscience.

Consider the story of the woman taken in adultery. (John 8:4). The incident and the way Jesus handled the circumstances evokes the deepest sense of sensitivity and justice. He said of the woman, whom the Law of Moses had condemned to death by stoning for adultery,

John 8:7 "He who is without sin among you, let him be the first to throw a stone at her."

Convicted by their own consciences her accusers left.

In the story of the Good Samaritan the issue is "who is my neighbor?" A man wishing to justify himself put the question to Jesus. Jesus provides the answer that at once cuts to the heart of the issue and provides a realistic and satisfying answer. – The Samaritan showed compassion to the man who had fallen among robbers and was injured. Jesus pointed out that it was he who was neighbor to the victim, and so He said, "Go and do likewise." Luke 10:37.

The teaching of Jesus has more power upon the conscience than that exerted by any other teacher of any age. The teachings of those antagonistic to Jesus have no power over the conscience except to paralyze it.

- Jesus lived what He taught.
- His life mirrored the Sermon on the Mount.
- He showed no faults; He had no consciousness of fault or sin.
- He claimed kinship with God.

Jesus-the Manner and Completeness of His teaching

Conclusion.

The teachings of Jesus combine to teach moral truth. His Manner is poignant and penetrating to the innermost part of man's heart and conscience.

Jesus' teaching is complete. Nothing is to be added to it.

The teachings of men are deficient.

As all the colors of the constituents of light combine make the pure white light, so the teachings of Jesus combine to make the sum total of all moral truth.

Review 6

1. Jesus taught as one having _____.
2. Jesus _____ His subject.
3. Jesus knew _____. Jesus knew _____.
4. The teaching of Jesus was _____ teaching.
5. The teaching of Jesus has power upon the _____.
6. Jesus' teaching is _____. Nothing is to be _____ to it.

Answers

Review 1

1. No.
2. “By what authority are You doing these things, and who gave You this authority?”
3. No. He turned them away with a question about John the Baptist.

Review 2

1. authority, authority
2. source, heaven, men
3. heaven, believe
4. Jesus Christ
5. foundation
6. himself
7. Jonah

Review 3

1. end, or purpose
2. being
3. heavens
4. know
5. authoritatively
6. prove
7. simple, profound

Review 4

1. nature, man
2. anxious
3. kingdom of God
4. prayer
5. pray
6. formality
7. formality
8. simple, philosophical

Review 5

1. calmness
2. slept
3. spoke
4. quieted
5. compassionate, calm
6. heated, excited
7. darkness, light
8. calmly, forthrightly

Review 6

1. authority
2. knew
3. men, God
4. full
5. conscience
6. complete, added