

“Leadership is the art and science of inspiring others to reach their full potential in the pursuit of a common vision”

Dr. James Bultman



Today Scripture Reference

### Mark 1:22

The people were amazed at his teaching, because he taught them as one who had authority, not as the teachers of the law.



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## The TCL E-Leadership Resource Using Your Authority – Part 2

Scripture Reference Mark 1:22

Part 1 of our series on authority was an exploration of how Christian leaders acquire authority. In short, we saw the value of defining the scope of one's authority and the importance of receiving it in a proper manner.

Part 1 was also about positional authority. It was not about leadership per se. It was about a foundational requirement for the soil from which good and bad leadership emerges. Unfortunately, this soil is a requirement for good leadership, but it can also be the breeding ground for poor leadership. When you find yourself standing in this soil as a positional leader with a certain kind of authority, it is then that you will decide (consciously or unconsciously) who your leadership will look like .... Jesus or the world.

Here is where some of you will struggle. Theologically, all of you should agree that Jesus had every spiritual gift, and within that fact will acknowledge that Christ is our leadership model. However, many of you will look at His life and draw the conclusion that Jesus' life was more of a display of his teaching and healing gifts and not his leadership gift. You will tend to defer to a contemporary leader who has demonstrated some enormous accomplishment and lean toward imitating whatever that person did. While I admit that might have some value (Paul even exhorted men to "imitate" him), we must filter one's behavior and practices through the life of Christ first.

One might say that Jesus' life does not speak loudly enough with examples of leadership. Friends, that is because we have a propensity to look for the wrong examples. Might I suggest that the absence of certain behaviors in Jesus' life should speak to us as loudly as those He displayed? Look at our scripture verse. While it appears that Jesus was demonstrating His teaching gift at this time, ponder with me what He is teaching us about positional authority. Would you agree that we might conclude the following?

1. While being granted authority over all the earth, He did not display the fact that He outranked everyone.
2. The ultimate reason His authority was recognized was in the use of one of His other powers ... namely His teaching. While He was helping people understand, this help was recognized as authoritative.
3. That power/authority was distinctively different from anything they had ever seen or heard from their own leaders.

What application to the use of authority can we learn from these? Consider this:

1. Don't walk around telling everyone you are the boss. Don't lead by intimidation.
2. Try helping those under your authority to understand better the goals you have set, then you can assess how effective that understanding becomes for goal accomplishment.
3. Don't assume that contemporary leaders are the ones to imitate. If you must, might I suggest you study the life of contemporary leaders who have already died. An effective leader who has died has finished his race and cannot disappoint you.

I have communicated this before, but it cannot be repeated too often:

**Jesus' life on this earth was more a demonstration of restraint than any one of His other attributes or behaviors.**

Think about that for a moment. Even if you believe that statement halfheartedly, you are on your way to imitating the leadership of Christ.