

Matthew 7:28-29 Commentary

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MATTHEW CONTAINS 15 PARABLES 20 MIRACLES

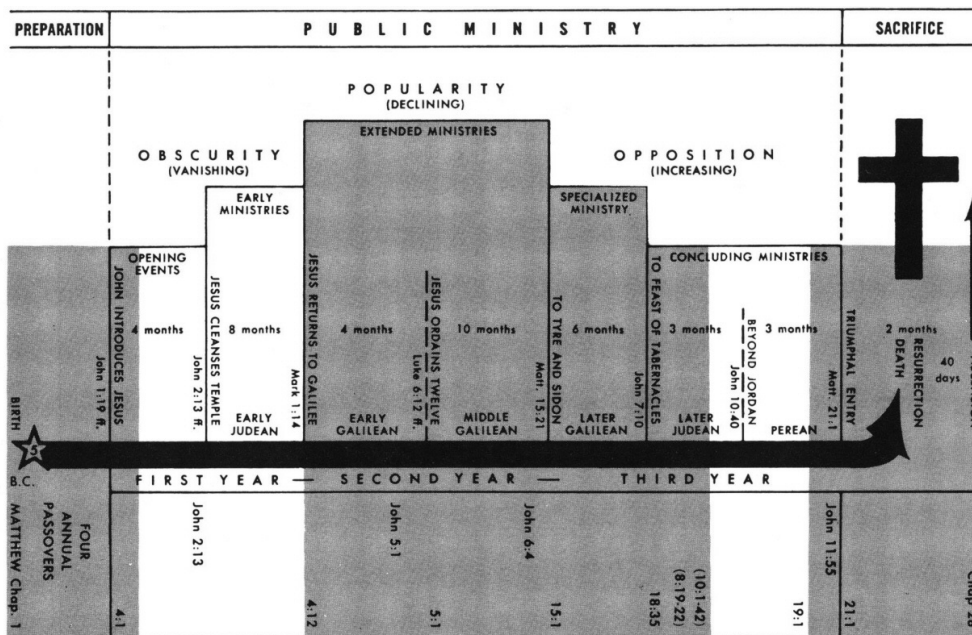
KEY VERSES: 1:1 "The book of the generation of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham."

2:2 "Where is he that is born King of the Jews? for we have seen his star in the east, and are come to worship him."



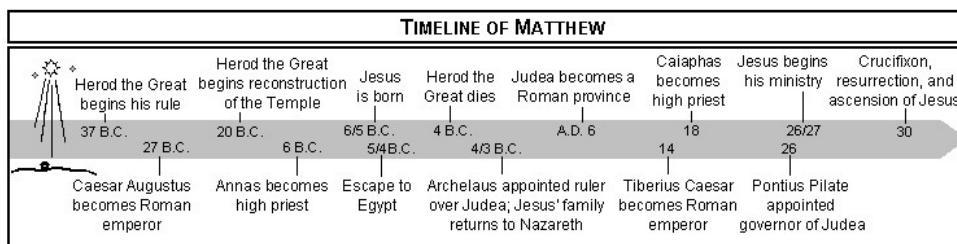
Click chart to enlarge
Charts from Jensen's Survey of the NT - used by permission
Another Chart from Swindoll

THE LIFE OF JESUS AS COVERED BY MATTHEW (shaded area)



Click chart to enlarge

Jesus Birth and Early Years
Leading up to the Sermon on the Mount
Matthew 1-7



Source: Ryrie Study Bible

Greek: [Kai egeneto \(3SAMI\)](#) [hote etelezen \(3SAAI\)](#) [o lesous tous logous toutous](#) [exeplessonto \(3PIPI\)](#) [oi ochloi](#) [epi te didache autou](#):

Amplified: When Jesus had finished these sayings [the Sermon on the Mount], the crowds were astonished and overwhelmed with bewildered wonder at His teaching, ([Amplified Bible - Lockman](#))

KJV: And it came to pass, when Jesus had ended these sayings, the people were astonished at his doctrine:

NLT: After Jesus finished speaking, the crowds were amazed at his teaching ([NLT - Tyndale House](#))

Phillips: When Jesus had finished these words the crowd were astonished at the power behind his teaching. ([New Testament in Modern English](#))

Wuest: And it came to pass that when Jesus brought these words to a close, the crowds were struck with astonishment to the point of the loss of self-control by His teaching. (Eerdmans)

Young's: And it came to pass, when Jesus ended these words, the multitudes were astonished at his teaching

When Jesus had finished these words, the crowds were amazed at His teaching Kai egeneto (3SAMI) hote etelezen (3SAAI) o lesous tous logous toutous exeplessonto (3PIPI) oi ochloi epi te didache autou

- Mt 13:54; Ps 45:2; Mk 1:22; 6:2; Lk 4:22,32; 19:48; Jn 7:15,46)

When Jesus had finished - More literally this reads "And it came to pass, when Jesus ended...."

Finished ([5055](#)) (**teleo** from **telos** = end, goal) means to complete something and bring to an end. The idea of **teleo** is not merely to end it, but to bring it to perfection or its destined goal. The Sermon on the Mount had been achieved His goal, not only terminating His discourse but carrying it out to the full.

Teleo means to accomplish an obligation or demand in the sense of to bring about a result by effort. The idea is to achieve a goal or to conclude it successfully. This meaning is especially poignant in the context of Jesus' life purpose which was to die on the Cross, the purpose He pointed to and which He accomplished ("It is finished" John 19:30). This same meaning of fulfilling or bringing about the completion or achievement of a goal or objective is also a prominent meaning in the Revelation (e.g. Re 11:7-[note](#); Re 17:17-[note](#))

The crowds were amazed - John records a parallel incident with the temple soldiers who had been sent to arrest Jesus but returned empty handed...

John 7:43 So there arose a division in the multitude because of Him (Jesus). 44 And some of them wanted to seize Him, but no one laid hands on Him. 45 The officers therefore came to the chief priests and Pharisees, and they said to them, "Why did you not bring Him?" 46 The officers answered, "**Never did a man speak the way this man speaks**."

I Stand Amazed in the Presence

by Charles H Gabriel

I stand amazed in the presence
Of Jesus the Nazarene,
And wonder how He could love me,
A sinner, condemned, unclean.

Refrain

***O how marvelous! O how wonderful!
And my song shall ever be:
O how marvelous! O how wonderful!
Is my Savior's love for me!***

Spurgeon writes...

He touched their conscience; his teaching came home to them; they could not help feeling that it was true. Besides, he did not keep on quoting Rabbi This and Rabbi That, but he spoke from his own knowledge: "He taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes."

Not quoting Rabbi So-and-so, to show how well he was acquainted with his writings, but speaking as one who knew what he had to say, and who spoke, out of the fullness of his heart, truth that was evidently inspired; and his hearers felt the force of the solemn message which he thus delivered.

The Gospels and Acts also use another Greek word that is translated **amazed** which presents a great word picture of what it means to be amazed or astounded. The Greek word is **existemi** ([1839](#)) (**ek** = out of + **histemi** = to stand) which literally means to stand out of. In the NT **existemi** is used figuratively to describe "standing out of one's mind", being "beside" oneself, put out of one's wits, amazed or astounded. If you have time study the 17 uses of **existemi** in context ([Matthew](#), [Mark 4x](#), [Luke 3x](#), [Acts 8x](#), [2 Corinthians](#))

Amazed ([1605](#)) (**ekplesso** from **ek** = out + **plesso** = strike) (imperfect tense) means strike out, expel by a blow, drive out or away, force out or cast off by a blow.

Some versions render it **astonished** which is a good translation of **ekplesso**. It is interesting to note that our English word "**astonish**" which is derived from the Latin word *extondere* meaning **to strike with thunder**! What a picture of Jesus' radical message which must have struck His hearers like thunder!

Figuratively **ekplesso** means to drive out of one's senses by a sudden shock or strong feeling, or "to be exceedingly struck in mind". It means to cause to be filled with amazement to the point of being overwhelmed (struck out of one's senses). It encompasses the ideas of wonder, astonishment or amazement. **Ekplesso** expresses a stunned amazement that leaves the subject unable to grasp what is happening.

Thayer writes that **ekplesso** is "common in Greek from Homer down; properly, to strike out, expel by a blow, drive out or away; to cast off by a blow, to drive out; commonly, to strike one out of self-possession, to strike with panic, shock, astonish; passive to be struck with astonishment, astonished, amazed."

Vincent has this note on Jesus' parent's astonishment in Luke 2:48-note writing that **amazed** is "a very strong word; the verb meaning, literally, to strike out or drive away from; and so to drive out of one's senses. Hence in the general sense of great amazement. Amaze is to throw into a maze or labyrinth; and so is closely akin to the Greek word here, and is a faithful rendering."

The audience was astounded, overwhelmed, besides themselves, totally dumbfounded by Jesus' words. So was **John Newton** ([Brief bio](#))...

[Amazing Grace](#)

Amazing grace! How sweet the sound
That saved a wretch like me!
I once was lost, but now am found;
Was blind, but now I see.

'Twas grace that taught my heart to fear,
And grace my fears relieved;
How precious did that grace appear
The hour I first believed!

Through many dangers, toils and snares,
I have already come;
'Tis grace hath brought me safe thus far,
And grace will lead me home.

The Lord has promised good to me,
His Word my hope secures;
He will my Shield and Portion be,
As long as life endures.

Yea, when this flesh and heart shall fail,
And mortal life shall cease,

I shall possess, within the veil,
A life of joy and peace.

The earth shall soon dissolve like snow,
The sun forbear to shine;
But God, who called me here below,
Will be forever mine.

When we've been there ten thousand years,
Bright shining as the sun,
We've no less days to sing God's praise
Than when we'd first begun.

When we the readers today really comprehend what Jesus is saying in the Sermon on the Mount, we should be amazed and astonished also by His gracious (grace filled) word! If we aren't astonished at the revolutionary character of Jesus' sermon, then frankly we have probably not truly heard or truly grasped Jesus' intended meaning! As Jesus said repeatedly in the letters to the seven churches of the Revelation...

He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches (see note [Revelation 2:7](#))

It is notable that most of the 13 NT uses (see below) of **ekplesso** are a reaction (most often of an uncommitted listener) to Jesus' teaching even the passage in Acts 13:12 in which Luke records...

Then the proconsul believed when he saw what had happened (Acts 13:8 Elymas the magician blinded by Paul), being **amazed** (ekplesso) at the **teaching of the Lord** (Note that it was Paul who was teaching and yet the phrase "teaching of the Lord" as if the Lord were teaching through him. Would it be that every pastor had a similar dynamic when they spoke from the pulpit)

Ekplesso is used 13 times in the NT (see below) and is translated: amazed, 5; astonished, 8. There are 4 uses in the Apocrypha and one in the Septuagint (LXX) (Eccl 7:16)

Here are all the NT uses for your review (read the **context** or surrounding passages to understand why there was amazement or astonishment)...

Matthew 7:28 The result was that when Jesus had finished these words, the multitudes were **amazed** at His teaching;

Matthew 13:54 And coming to His home town He began teaching them in their synagogue, so that they became **astonished**, and said, "Where did this man get this wisdom, and these miraculous powers? **Read on for more reactions...**

Matthew 13:55 "Is not this the carpenter's son? Is not His mother called Mary, and His brothers, James and Joseph and Simon and Judas? **56** "And His sisters, are they not all with us? Where then did this man get all these things?" **57** And they **took offense** (verb skandalizo - see noun **skandalon** = stumbling block) at Him. But Jesus said to them, "A prophet is not without honor except in his home town, and in his own household." **58** And He did not do many miracles there because of their unbelief.

Matthew 19:25 And when the disciples heard this (Jesus' teaching that "it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God"), they were very **astonished** and said, "Then who can be saved?"

Matthew 22:33 And when the multitudes heard this (Jesus' teaching that God said "I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob "? He is not the God of the dead but of the living."), they were **astonished** at His teaching.

Mark 1:22 And they were **amazed** at His teaching; for He was teaching them as one having authority, and not as the scribes.

Mark 6:2 And when the Sabbath had come, He began to teach in the synagogue; and the many listeners were **astonished**, saying, "Where did this man get these things, and what is this wisdom given to Him, and such miracles as these performed by His hands?"

Mark 7:37 And they were utterly (hyperperissos = beyond all measure, exceedingly) **astonished**, saying, "He has done all things well; He makes even the deaf to hear, and the dumb to speak."

Mark 10:26 And they (His own disciples) were even more **astonished** and said to Him, "Then who can be saved?"

Mark 11:18 And the chief priests and the scribes heard this, and began seeking how to destroy Him; for they were afraid of Him, for all the multitude was **astonished** at His teaching.

Notice why the chief priests reacted this way: **Mark 11:17** And He began to teach and say to them, "Is it not written, 'MY HOUSE SHALL BE CALLED A HOUSE OF PRAYER FOR ALL THE NATIONS'? But you have made it a ROBBERS' DEN."

Luke 2:48 And when they saw Him, they were **astonished** (they were "dumbfounded"!); and His mother said to Him, "Son, why have You treated us this way? Behold, Your father and I have been anxiously looking for You."

Luke 4:32 and they were **amazed** at His teaching, for His message was with authority.

Luke 9:43 And they were all **amazed** at the greatness of God. But while everyone was marveling at all that He was doing, He said to His disciples,

Acts 13:12 Then the proconsul believed when he saw what had happened (Acts 13:8 Elymas the magician blinded by Paul), being **amazed** at the teaching of the Lord.

Note that it was Paul who was teaching and yet the phrase **teaching of the Lord** indicates it was as if the Lord Jesus were teaching through Paul! **God let it be so, that every pastor reading these words humbly depends on a similar spiritual dynamic when they speak Thy truth to their flock. Amen.**

NIDNTT notes that...

The primary meaning of **ekplesso** is to strike out or expel. The verb is found with this sense in classical Greek (e.g. "enjoyment banishes grief", Thucydides), but it occurs far more frequently with its derived meaning of astound or amaze (i.e. drive out of one's senses by a sudden shock). Among the sources of amazement expressed by **ekplesso** in non-biblical literature are fear, desire, love, joy and pleasure. Josephus uses **ekplesso** several times to express amazement or overwhelming fear. ([Brown, Colin, Editor. New International Dictionary of NT Theology. 1986. Zondervan](#))

A T Robertson commenting on **ekplesso** writes that Jesus' audience...

listened spell-bound to the end and were left amazed. Note the **imperfect tense** -- a buzz of astonishment. The verb means literally "were struck out of themselves." ([Matthew 7](#))

Wuest has similar comments noting that...

ekplesso is a very strong word meaning, "to strike out, expel by a blow, drive out or away, to strike one out of self-possession, to strike with panic, shock" in a passive sense "to be struck with astonishment, amazed." The verb is in the pictorial imperfect, describing the prolonged amazement of the audience. It is in the passive voice, showing that this amazement was caused by an outside influence, the tremendous impact that the Messiah made upon them by the new type of teacher and teaching that met their eyes and ears.

The teaching of our Lord was in such contrast to that of the Jewish leaders, that the people saw the difference at once, and were almost beside themselves because of it. What a commentary upon the type of teaching they had been receiving, dry, formal, stereotyped, without power, above their heads, and the powerful, simple, interesting thought-arresting teaching of our Lord.

(**Commenting on the use of ekplesso in Mark 6:2**) "to strike out, expel by a blow, to strike one out of self-possession," in a passive sense, "to be struck with astonishment." The discourse and the miracles of our Lord struck them so forcibly that they were astonished to the point of losing control of themselves. The verb is imperfect, showing that this condition of being beside themselves with amazement continued for some time. It is, "they were continuing to be beside themselves with amazement." The prefixed preposition **ek** meaning "out," shows an exhausted state of affairs. It reminds one of an automobile tire that has been deflated. Their astonishment was so great that their self-possession was exhausted. In the language of Webster, they were completely flabbergasted. ([Wuest's Word Studies from the Greek New Testament](#))

Vincent has a similar analysis of **ekplesso**, writing that it...

Often meant to drive one out of his senses by a sudden shock, and therefore here of amazement. They were astounded. We have a similar expression, though not so strong: "I was struck with this or that remarkable thing." (Vincent, M. R.. Word Studies in the New Testament)

Crowds ([3793](#))(**ochlos**) is a gathering of a relatively large number of people, a multitude of men who have flocked together in some place, a throng of people milling around or closely pressed together.

Teaching ([1322](#)) (**didache** from **didasko** = to give instruction in a formal or informal setting with the highest possible development of the pupil as the goal; English = didactic = intended to teach, particularly in having moral instruction as an ulterior motive) is a noun which describes the activity of teaching (instruction).

See studies on related words - Teach (teaching, taught) ([1321](#)) **didasko** and **Teaching** (instruction) ([1319](#)) **didaskalia**

In the passive sense **didache** speaks of the content of what is taught or the doctrine. **Ralph Earle** (Word Meanings in the NT) writes that "today doctrine has a formal, theological sense that didache does not have."

Didache or "the teaching" was that instruction which elucidated the meaning of the facts which were proclaimed. The idea of didache then is to impart knowledge to or instruct someone, for example in how to do something, etc. **Teaching** or **doctrine** is that which communicates to another the knowledge of that which heretofore that person was ignorant or ill informed.

In the context of the Sermon on the Mount, **didache** refers both to Jesus' content (which is primarily ethical instruction - contrast kerugma - proclamation, as of the gospel) and the manner of His instruction -- no doubt the crowds were astonished at both. Unfortunately their astonishment says nothing about their personal heart commitment to His Word of Truth and/or their belief in Jesus as Savior and Redeemer.

As an aside the early Church compiled its first service order book which was entitled **The Didache**, or The Teaching of the Twelve Apostles. The Didache dates back to shortly after 100AD.

Didache is used 30 times in the NT -

Matthew 7:28 The result was that when Jesus had finished these words, the multitudes were amazed at His **teaching**;

Matthew 16:12 Then they understood that He did not say to beware of the leaven of bread, but of the **teaching** of the Pharisees and Sadducees.

Matthew 22:33 And when the multitudes heard this, they were astonished at His **teaching**.

Mark 1:22 And they were amazed at His teaching; for He was **teaching** them as one having authority, and not as the scribes.

Mark 1:27 And they were all amazed, so that they debated among themselves, saying, "What is this? A new **teaching** with authority! He commands even the unclean spirits, and they obey Him."

Mark 4:2 And He was teaching them many things in parables, and was saying to them in His **teaching**,

Mark 11:18 And the chief priests and the scribes heard this, and began seeking how to destroy Him; for they were afraid of Him, for all the multitude was astonished at His **teaching**.

Mark 12:38 And in His **teaching** He was saying: "Beware of the scribes who like to walk around in long robes, and like respectful greetings in the market places,

Luke 4:32 and they were amazed at His **teaching**, for His message was with authority.

John 7:16 Jesus therefore answered them, and said, "My **teaching** is not Mine, but His who sent Me.

John 7:17 "If any man is willing to do His will, he shall know of the **teaching**, whether it is of God, or whether I speak from Myself.

John 18:19 The high priest therefore questioned Jesus about His disciples, and about His **teaching**.

Acts 2:42 And they were continually devoting themselves to the apostles' **teaching** and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer.

Acts 5:28 saying, "We gave you strict orders not to continue **teaching** in this name, and behold, you have filled Jerusalem with your teaching, and intend to bring this man's blood upon us."

Acts 13:12 Then the proconsul believed when he saw what had happened, being amazed at the **teaching** of the Lord.

Acts 17:19 And they took him and brought him to the Areopagus, saying, "May we know what this new **teaching** is which you are proclaiming?

Romans 6:17 But thanks be to God that though you were slaves of sin, you became obedient from the heart to that form of teaching to which you were committed,

Romans 16:17 Now I urge you, brethren, keep your eye on those who cause dissensions and hindrances contrary to the **teaching** which you learned, and turn away from them.

1 Corinthians 14:6 But now, brethren, if I come to you speaking in tongues, what shall I profit you, unless I speak to you either by way of revelation or of knowledge or of prophecy or of teaching?

1 Corinthians 14:26 What is the outcome then, brethren? When you assemble, each one has a psalm, has **ateaching**, has a revelation, has a tongue, has an interpretation. Let all things be done for edification.

2 Timothy 4:2 preach the word; be ready in season and out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort, with great patience and **instruction**.

Titus 1:9 holding fast the faithful word which is in accordance with the **teaching**, that he may be able both to exhort in sound doctrine and to refute those who contradict.

Hebrews 6:2 of **instruction** about washings, and laying on of hands, and the resurrection of the dead, and eternal judgment.

Hebrews 13:9 Do not be carried away by varied and strange **teachings**; for it is good for the heart to be strengthened by grace, not by foods, through which those who were thus occupied were not benefited.

2John 1:9 Anyone who goes too far and does not abide in the **teaching** of Christ, does not have God; the one who abides in the teaching, he has both the Father and the Son.

2John 1:10 If anyone comes to you and does not bring this **teaching**, do not receive him into your house, and do not give him a greeting;

Revelation 2:14 'But I have a few things against you, because you have there some who hold the **teaching** of Balaam, who kept teaching Balak to put a stumbling block before the sons of Israel, to eat things sacrificed to idols, and to commit acts of immorality.

Revelation 2:15 'Thus you also have some who in the same way hold the **teaching** of the Nicolaitans.

Revelation 2:24 'But I say to you, the rest who are in Thyatira, who do not hold this **teaching**, who have not known the deep things of Satan, as they call them-- I place no other burden on you.

There is only one use of **didache** in the Septuagint...

Psalm 60:1 For the choir director; according to Shushan Eduth. A Mikhtam of David, to **teach**; when he struggled with Aram-naharaim and with Aram-zobah, and Joab returned, and smote twelve thousand of Edom in the Valley of Salt. O God, Thou hast rejected us. Thou hast broken us; Thou hast been angry; O, restore us.

As **MacArthur** observes the **crowds**...

had never heard such comprehensive, insightful words of wisdom, depth, insight, and profundity. They had never heard such straightforward and fearless denunciation of the scribes and Pharisees or such a black and white presentation of the way of salvation. They had never heard such a fearful warning about the consequences of turning away from God. They had never heard such a powerful and demanding description of true righteousness or such a relentless description and condemnation of self-righteousness. (MacArthur, J: [Matthew 1-7 Macarthur New Testament Commentary Chicago: Moody Press](#))

Charles Simeon Matthew 7:28, 29 Effect of our Lord's Preaching

IT has been thought by many, that this which is called the Sermon on the Mount, was not delivered at one time, but is only a collection of sayings which at different times were used by our Lord. But, as our Lord went through all the cities, towns, and villages of Judæa, instructing the people, it is reasonable to suppose, that he should frequently deliver the same truths in nearly the same expressions, because the same instructions were necessary for all. The repetition of them therefore, at different times, and at distant places, is no reason at all why they should not now have been delivered all at once, when so great a multitude was attending his ministry, and he had gone up upon a mountain for the purpose of addressing them to more advantage. Moreover, the words before us clearly shew, that this was one continued sermon; or rather, that these were the chief topics contained in it, together with the principal illustrations of them.

Having successively considered all the different parts of this sermon, we now come to notice,

I. The peculiar character of our Lord's preaching—

We shall not enter upon the subject of his ministry at large, but confine our attention to the discourse before us; which, both in the matter and in the manner, appears to have been well calculated to make a deep impression on his audience.

The things with which they appear to have been particularly affected, were,

1. His wisdom—

[There was an astonishing depth in all that he spoke. His knowledge of the divine law was such, as infinitely surpassed all that even their most eminent prophets had ever manifested. David had acknowledged his inability to explore its depth: "I have seen an end of all perfection; but thy commandment is exceeding broad." But the height, and depth, and length, and breadth of it were open to the view of Jesus, who saw it in all its spirituality, and in its utmost perfection. He was able to expose and refute all the false glosses with which their most learned teachers had obscured the law; and to set it forth as reaching, no less to the thoughts and intents of the heart than to the most open actions of the life.

There was also a luminousness in his statements, which, like the light of the sun, carried its own evidence along with it. And his illustrations were so apt, so easy, so familiar, so convincing, that every one who was open to conviction was constrained to assent to every word he spoke. Nor did he ever, like the Scribes, dwell upon matters that were altogether useless and unedifying; but he was always on subjects of prime importance, the knowledge of which was necessary for the salvation of the soul. In a word, as at an early period of his life the doctors in the temple "were astonished at his understanding and answers," so now, on this and many subsequent occasions, his hearers wondered; "How knoweth this man letters (the Scriptures), having never learned," or had a learned education?]

2. His faithfulness—

[He flattered not the people by countenancing for a moment their expectation of a temporal Messiah, but shewed the spiritual nature of that kingdom which he was come to establish. Moreover, in his reproofs he spared not any: the greatest and the wisest among the people were rather the more exposed to his censures, on account of the influence which they exerted over the minds of others. The fallacy of their reasonings, the defectiveness of their morals, and the hypocrisy of their religious acts, (their alms, their prayers, their fastings,) were held up to universal reprobation; and all the multitude were warned plainly, that "unless their righteousness should exceed the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees, they should in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven." They were warned too that they must yield a cordial and unreserved obedience to his instructions; that the retaining of any bosom lust would infallibly destroy their souls for ever: that every sinful affection, though dear as a right eye, or apparently necessary as a right hand, must be cut off; or else they would assuredly take their portion "in hell-fire."

These were plain truths; not such as the people had been accustomed to hear from their teachers, who only "prophesied smooth things, or amused them with deceits:" they were such truths as commended themselves to the consciences of all, and made them feel that they were sinners before God. Every person that heard him bore him witness, that "truly he was full of power by the Spirit of the Lord, and of judgment, and of might, to declare unto Jacob his transgressions, and to Israel his sin."]

3. His authority—

[The Scribes were in the habit of founding their instructions on their own fallacious reasonings, or on the dogmas of some of the more learned Rabbins. But our Lord appealed to no authority above his own. He reasoned indeed for the conviction of his hearers; but the ground on which he required every word of his to be received, was his own authority; "I say unto you; I say unto you." In this he differed from all the prophets that had gone before him: they delivered their messages, as from Jehovah; "Thus saith the Lord:"—but Jesus, being himself "God manifest in the flesh, assumed a right to dictate as from himself;" "Ye have heard from others" such or such a thing; but "I say unto you" the very reverse; and require you to receive the word on my authority. To this his hearers were ready to submit: for the miracles which he had already wrought without number had evinced his almighty power and Godhead, and were a standing testimony, that his every word was to be received with implicit faith and unreserved obedience.

Doubtless there were many other things conspicuous in his ministrations: his gracefulness and ease, his tenderness and compassion, his zeal and diligence, could not fail of attracting notice; but the points above specified, are those which seem more particularly adverted to in the words of our text.]

Such was the preaching of our Lord. Let us now consider,

II. The effect produced by it on his hearers—

They appear to have been exceedingly struck with his address; yet not so affected as we might have hoped. We shall endeavour to point out,

1. How far the effect was good—

[The word which we translate “astonished.” does certainly imply a very deep impression made upon their minds. This impression consisted partly in admiration, with which they were filled; and partly in conviction, with which they were penetrated; a conviction of the truth, the importance, and the beneficial tendency of all he had spoken. The novelty, united with the circumstances before mentioned, made his ministry appear as superior to that of others, as the effulgence of the sun is to the light of a twinkling star. One sentiment evidently pervaded the whole multitude, “Never man spake like this man.” At the same time they felt in their consciences, that, if this was religion, they had hitherto been ignorant of it in their minds, and destitute of it in their hearts.

Now these two feelings were doubtless good, inasmuch as they argued an openness of mind, a freedom from offence, and a desire of further instruction: and accordingly we find, that, “when he came down from the mountain, great multitudes followed him.” But, from all that is recorded, we have no reason to conclude that the impression made upon them was altogether such as might have been wished.]

2. Wherein it was defective—

[They should have been “pricked to their hearts” with a deep sense of their wickedness, and should have been led to cry out, like those on the day of Pentecost, “What shall we do to be saved?” Without such humiliation as this they could never be truly penitent: they never could abhor themselves, as every penitent must do, in dust and ashes.

They should have also given up themselves entirely to the Lord Jesus Christ. He required all to take up their cross and follow him: but this was effected only to a very small extent, even to the hour of his death: the whole number of his followers amounted at the last to no more than one hundred and twenty. Hence it is evident, that, whatever effects were produced on this audience, they were only transient; and, consequently, that the word preached did not profit the people, “not being mixed with faith in them that heard it.”

They should have been brought to a new and heavenly life. Every thing that falls short of this is in vain. We must “obey from the heart that form of doctrine into which we are delivered;” just as metal, that assumes the shape of the mould whereinto it is poured. But we see not in this audience any such tenderness of spirit, such melting of heart, such surrender of their souls, such transformation of their lives. They appear only to have been like Ezekiel’s hearers, who were delighted with his oratory, but were uninfluenced by his reproofs.]

Learn then from hence,

1. How ineffectual is the word without the Spirit—

[If any words could of themselves convert the souls of men, surely the words of our Lord Jesus Christ would have produced this effect. But even his discourses were often as water spilled upon the ground. So it was also when his disciples preached: “Paul might plant, and Apollos water, but God alone can give the increase.” The truth is, that nothing ever has been done, or ever can, for the saving of immortal souls, but by the operation of the Spirit of God. It is the Spirit that quickeneth us from the dead: it is the Spirit that opens the understanding and the heart: it is “the Spirit that enables us to mortify the deeds of the body,” and that renews us altogether after the Divine image. When, therefore, we come up to the house of God, let us look, through the means, to Him who alone can render the means effectual for our good. Let us remember, that the ministry of Christ himself will produce no saving effects without the Spirit; and that the word, by whomsoever delivered, if accompanied with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven, shall be sharper than a two-edged sword, and be more powerful than “the hammer that breaketh the rock in pieces.”]

2. In what a lamentable state are the generality of hearers—

[Multitudes, where the Gospel is preached with fidelity, will approve the word, and perhaps admire the preacher; but they are apt to put those feelings in the place of true conversion. Surely this is a point that deserves to be well considered. We should judge ourselves, not by our feelings towards the word, or towards him that ministers it to us, but by the radical and abiding effects produced upon our hearts and lives. Let it be a matter then of serious inquiry, Wherein does my reception of the word differ from that manifested by the auditors of our Lord? Perhaps I have been often struck, yea, “exceedingly struck,” with admiration and conviction: but have I been brought to the exercise of deep contrition, of lively faith, of universal holiness? Know ye, beloved, that unless the word have this effect upon you, instead of being to you “a savour of life unto life, it will be a savour of death unto death;” yea, your state will be less tolerable than even that of Sodom and Gomorrah.]

3. What reason we have for thankfulness that we possess the written word—

[Many of Christ’s hearers probably regretted that they could not retain his discourse in their memory, and that they had it not in their hands for subsequent perusal. And the generality amongst us have reason to lament our inability to remember what we hear, even when the discourse embraces perhaps only a single point of that which was so diffusively treated by our Lord. But, whether this forgetfulness is our misfortune or our fault, we have this consolation at least, that the sermon of our blessed Lord is in our

hands; that we may hear him preach it over to us, as it were, again and again; yea, that we may even ask him to explain to us every point in it. What an advantage is this! What a value should we set upon it, if now, for the first time, his sermon were put into our hands! But, alas! because it is accessible at all times, we are apt to make light of it: and not a few are blind enough to disregard it, because it refers rather to the precepts than the doctrines of the Gospel. Let us not however so slight our privileges: let us study this portion of Holy Writ with peculiar attention: and let us endeavour to get every precept wrought into our hearts, and exhibited in our lives. Then shall we be indeed improved by it, and shew forth the excellence of Christianity in all its perfection.]

Matthew 7:29 for He was teaching them as one having authority, and not as their scribes (NASB: Lockman)

Greek: en (3SIAI) gar didaskon (PAPMSN) autous os ecousian echon (PAPMSN) kai ouch os oi grammateis auton

Amplified: For He was teaching as One Who had [and was] authority, and not as [did] the scribes. ([Amplified Bible - Lockman](#))

KJV: For he taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes

NLT: for he taught as one who had real authority—quite unlike the teachers of religious law. ([NLT - Tyndale House](#))

Phillips: For his words had the ring of authority, quite unlike those of the scribes. ([New Testament in Modern English](#))

Wuest: for He was teaching them in the manner of one who possesses authority, and not in the manner of their men learned in the sacred writings. (Eerdmans)

Young's: for he was teaching them as having authority, and not as the scribes.

for He was teaching them as one having authority, and not as their scribes: en (3SIAI) gar didaskon (PAPMSN) autous os ecousian echon (PAPMSN) kai ouch os oi grammateis auton:

- **Authority** Mt 5:20,28,32,44; 21:23-27; 28:18; Dt 18:18,19; Eccl 8:4; Is 50:4; Je 23:28,29; Mic 3:8; Lk 21:15; Ac 3:22,23; 6:10; He 4:12,13
- **Scribes** Mt 15:1-9; 23:2, 3, 4, 5, 6,15-24; Mk 7:5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12 13; Lk 20:8,46,47)

For (gar) introduces an explanation. When you encounter a "for", always take a moment to stop and query "What for?" Here Matthew is explaining why the crowds were so taken aback by His words and His delivery.

Teaching (1321) (**didasko**) (**present tense**) means providing instruction in a formal or informal setting. Of some 95 instances, almost two thirds are in the Gospels and Acts (and only ten in Paul). The unambiguous meaning is "to teach."

Robertson comments that the audience

They had heard many sermons before from the regular rabbis in the synagogues. We have specimens of these discourses preserved in the Mishna and Gemara, the Jewish Talmud when both were completed, the driest, dullest collection of disjointed comments upon every conceivable problem in the history of mankind. **The scribes quoted the rabbis before them and were afraid to express an idea without bolstering it up by some predecessor.** Jesus spoke with the authority of truth, the reality and freshness of the morning light, and the power of God's Spirit. This sermon which made such a profound impression ended with the tragedy of the fall of the house on the sand like the crash of a giant oak in the forest. There was no smoothing over the outcome. ([Matthew 7](#))

As one having authority - Jesus' **teaching** differed from the "scribes" for many of them limited their teaching to the authorities they cited, and a great part of their training centered on memorizing the received traditions. They spoke by the authority of others, whereas Jesus spoke with His own authority. As explained below, **authority** (exousia), speaks of the fact that Jesus possessed both the power and the privilege, and in the NT His authority served to prove His sovereignty. Whereas the scribes quoted other human sources to lend a sense of authority to their proclamations, Jesus quoted God's Word, the final authority. **Is not Jesus' "template" of teaching still one every pastor and teacher should seek to espouse and emulate?**

Having (2192) (**echo**) means possessing or holding and present tense indicates it was continual.

A. T. Pierson observed that Christ taught the Scriptures to the people as if He were its Author (cp He 1:1, 2notes) rather than its commentator. How incredible, **Pierson** added, that He...

comes forth from the carpenter's shop, where like all other well-trained Hebrew youth, He had learned His father's trade, and His first public utterance is the most original and revolutionary address on practical morals which the world has ever heard.

Authority (1849) (**exousia** from **éxesti** = it is permissible, allowed; it is lawful) is "the right to control or command". **Exousia** literally means to "be out of". Vine says **exousia** evolved "from the meaning of "leave or permission," or liberty of doing as one pleases, it passed to that of "the ability or strength with which one is endued," then to that of the "power of authority," the right to exercise power...or "the power of rule or government," the power of one whose will and commands must be obeyed by others. In short **exousia** is "the right and the might". **Exousia** describes the authority a person has delegated to him from someone else. In legal practice for example, **exousia** speaks of delegated authority.

Exousia is used for the power that proves and reflects the sovereignty of Jesus. Jesus declaration with power was in marked contrast to the scribes who quoted others to lend authority to their teachings. Jesus quoted only God's Word and spoke as the final authority on truth. He spoke eternal truth simply, directly, with love (in contrast to the bitter hatred of the Pharisees), and without hesitation or consultation. That astounded the crowd.

Exousia is used 102 times in the NT - note density of uses in the Gospels with some 44 uses - Mt 7:29; 8:9; 9:6, 8; 10:1; 21:23, 24, 27; 28:18; Mk 1:22, 27; 2:10; 3:15; 6:7; 11:28, 29, 33; 13:34; Lk 4:6, 32, 36; 5:24; 7:8; 9:1; 10:19; 12:5, 11; 19:17; 20:2, 8, 20; 22:53; 23:7; Jn 1:12; 5:27; 10:18; 17:2; 19:10, 11; Acts 1:7; 5:4; 8:19; 9:14; 26:10, 12, 18; Rom. 9:21; 13:1, 2, 3; 1 Co. 7:37; 8:9; 9:45, 6, 12, 18; 11:10; 15:24; 2 Co. 10:8; 13:10; Eph. 1:21; 2:2; 3:10; 6:12; Col. 1:13, 16; 2:10, 15; 2Th 3:9; Titus 3:1; He 13:10; 1Pe 3:22; Jude 1:25; Re 2:26; 6:8; 9:3, 10, 19; 11:6; 12:10; 13:2, 4, 5, 7, 12; 14:18; 16:9; 17:12, 13; 18:1; 20:6; 22:14

Jamieson, Fausset and Brown comment that...

The consciousness of divine authority, as Lawgiver, Expounder and Judge, so beamed through His teaching, that the scribes' teaching could not but appear drivelling in such a light.

Power and authority (right and might, power and privilege) are a recurrent theme in Matthew (see Mt 8:9; 9:6, 8; 10:1; 21:23, 24, 27; 28:18).

Jesus' authority was unique, and the crowds recognized it even if they did not always understand it.

SCRIBES

Scribes (1122) (**grammateus** from **grápho** = write) literally is a **writer** (town clerk - Acts 19:35) and was the word used to describe a clerk, a scribe, especially a public scribe, a secretary, a recorder, whose office and influence differed in different states.

See multiple dictionary articles on **Scribes** - [Click Here](#)

Grammateus is used 67 times in the NT (Matt 2:4; 5:20; 7:29; 8:19; 9:3; 12:38; 13:52; 15:1; 16:21; 17:10; 20:18; 21:15; 23:2, 13-14, 23, 25, 27, 29, 34; 26:3, 57; 27:41; Mark 1:22; 2:6, 16; 3:22; 7:1, 5; 8:31; 9:11, 14, 16; 10:33; 11:18, 27; 12:28, 32, 35, 38; 14:1, 43, 53; 15:1, 31; Luke 5:21, 30; 6:7; 9:22; 11:44, 53; 15:2; 19:47; 20:1, 19, 39, 46; 22:2, 66; 23:10; John 8:3; Acts 4:5; 6:12; 19:35; 23:9; 1Cor 1:20)

Grammateus is found 69 times in the Septuagint - Exod. 5:6, 10, 14f, 19; Num. 11:16; Deut. 20:5, 8f; Jos. 1:10; 3:2; 8:30; 23:2; 24:1; Jdg. 5:14; 2 Sam. 8:17; 20:25; 1 Ki. 4:3, 20; 2 Ki. 12:10; 18:18, 37; 19:2; 22:3, 8, 10, 12; 25:19; 1 Chr. 2:55; 5:12; 18:16; 23:4; 24:6; 27:1, 32; 2 Chr. 19:11; 24:11; 26:11; 34:13, 15, 18, 20; Ezr. 4:8f, 17, 23; 7:6, 11f, 21, 25; Neh. 8:1, 4, 9, 13; 12:26, 36; 13:13; Est. 3:12; 8:9; 9:3; Job 37:20; Ps. 45:1; Isa. 36:3, 22; 37:2; Jer. 8:8; 36:10, 12, 23; 37:15, 20; 52:25

Nave's Topical entry on **Scribes**...

- A writer and transcriber of the law, 2Sa 8:17; 20:25; 1Kin. 4:3; 2Kin. 12:10; 18:37; 19:2; 1Chr. 24:6; 27:32; Neh. 13:13; Jer. 36:12.
- King's secretary, 2Kin. 12:10, 11, 12; 22:1-14; Esther 3:12; 8:9.
- Officer in charge of conscription of the army, 2Ki 25:19; 2Chr. 26:11.
- Instructors in the law, Mt. 7:29; 13:52; 17:10; 23:2, 3.
- Test Jesus with questions, bringing to Jesus a woman taken in adultery, John 8:3.
- Members of the council, Matt. 2:4.
- Conspire against Jesus, Matt. 26:3, 57; 27:41; Mark 14:1; Luke 22:66.

- Hypocrisy of, reproved by Jesus, Matt. 5:20; 9:3; 12:38; 15:1; 16:21; 20:18; 21:15.

The **grammateus** was a recognized expert in Jewish law including both Scripture and traditional laws and regulations. They were members of a learned class in ancient Israel through New Testament times who studied the Scriptures and served as copyists, editors, and teachers. Thus they were considered to be experts in matters relating to divine revelation, especially in regard to the law of Moses. ([click Bible dictionary discussion](#))

Thayer notes that **grammateus** in the Bible was...

a man learned in the Mosaic law and in the sacred writings, an interpreter, teacher. Scribes examined the more difficult and subtle questions of the law; added to the Mosaic law decisions of various kinds thought to elucidate its meaning and scope, and did this to the detriment of religion. Since the advice of men skilled in the law was needed in the examination in the causes and the solution of the difficult questions, they were enrolled in the Sanhedrin; and are mentioned in connection with the priests and elders of the people.

Vine says that **grammateus** is

from **gramma**, a writing, denotes a scribe, a man of letters, a teacher of the law; the scribes are mentioned frequently in the Synoptists, especially in connection with the Pharisees, with whom they virtually formed one party (see Luke 5:21), sometimes with the chief priests, e.g., Matt. 2:4; Mark 8:31; 10:33; 11:18, 27; Luke 9:22. They are mentioned only once in John's Gospel, 8:3, three times in the Acts, 4:5; 6:12; 23:9; elsewhere only in 1 Cor. 1:20, in the singular. They were considered naturally qualified to teach in the Synagogues, Mark 1:22. They were ambitious of honour, e.g., Matt. 23:5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, which they demanded especially from their pupils, and which was readily granted them, as well as by the people generally. Like Ezra (Ezra 7:12), the scribes were found originally among the priests and Levites. The priests being the official interpreters of the Law, the scribes ere long became an independent company; though they though they never held political power, they became leaders of the people. Their functions regarding the Law were to teach it, develop it, and use it in connection with the Sanhedrin and various local courts. They also occupied themselves with the sacred writings both historical and didactic. They attached the utmost importance to ascetic elements, by which the nation was especially separated from the Gentiles. In their régime piety was reduced to external formalism. Only that was of value which was governed by external precept. Life under them became a burden; they themselves sought to evade certain of their own precepts, Mt 23:16f; Lk 11:46; by their traditions the Law, instead of being a help in moral and spiritual life, became an instrument for preventing true access to God, Luke 11:52. Hence the Lord's stern denunciations of them and the Pharisees. ([Vine, W E: Vine's Complete Expository Dictionary of Old and New Testament Words. 1996. Nelson](#))

C. S. Lewis gives an illustration from his own life of the attitude of many who hear the gospel and fail to act upon it writing...

When I was a child I often had toothache, and I knew that if I went to my mother she would give me something which would deaden the pain for that night and let me get to sleep. But I did not go to my mother-at least, not till the pain became very bad. And the reason I did not go was this. I did not doubt she would give me the aspirin: but I knew she would also do something else. I knew she would take me to the dentist next morning. I could not get what I wanted out of her without getting something more, which I did not want. I wanted immediate relief from pain: but I could not get it without having my teeth set permanently right. And I knew those dentists; I knew they started fiddling about with all sorts of other teeth which had not yet begun to ache. They would not let sleeping dogs lie. ([Mere Christianity 2001 Harper](#))