

“They had been with Jesus”

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Introduction: What does it mean to be a Christian?

A. It must mean to be Christ-like! (**Gal 2:20**)

1. The Sanhedrin faced some men that stood up to them in a powerful way!
(**Acts 4:13**)
2. These men had not followed a path of development that the world respected.
3. There was a power in these men that could only have been found in Jesus Himself.

B. Jesus had radically changed these men from what there were.

1. They often failed and gave their opponents opportunity. (**Lk 9:37-41**)
2. They were slow to learn and overcome their prejudices. (**Lk 9:43-45**)
3. They battled with pride. (**Lk 9:46-48**)
4. They were easy to become angry and act unmercifully. (**Lk 9:54-56**)

I. They had learned the meaning of authority

A. In the baptism of John. (**Mk 11:30**)

1. Anyone who accepted the Baptism of John had also to accept that he was a prophet!
2. An understanding of authority causes you to approach the scriptures in a certain way. (**Deut 4:2; 12:32; Rev 22:18-19**)
3. Controversies over baptism today can be resolved through an understanding of authority!

B. In the teachings of Jesus. (**Mt 28:18-20**)

1. His entire ministry was focused on this point.
2. His future ministry would depend upon men that accept His authority as expressed through the written word. (**Jn 16:13**)
3. Authority will produce a careful appeal to Book, Chapter and Verse. (**Col 3:17**)

C. In the stands of Jesus. (**Jn 2:13-17**)

1. Authority will show the purpose of God.
2. Jesus stood upon that authority and would not yield.
3. Those who objected had yet to understand the right source of authority.
(**Jn 2:18-21**)

II. They had learned the meaning of character

A. Their calling to follow Jesus tested their character. (**Lk 9:58-62**)

1. Jesus taught his disciples to stand on their own.
2. Relationships will be a great test for you!
3. Some problems men face are not easily solved because of the fear of disappointing others. (**Jn 12:42-43; 9:20-23**)

B. They faced the Sanhedrin without fear of compromise.

1. They were not afraid to answer by a simple lesson on authority. (**Acts 4:17-21**)
2. Their understanding of authority and the God behind that authority gave them confidence and purpose!
3. Sadly most “churches of Christ” have long since left any teaching on authority.

- a. When authority is neglected then character is neglected.
- b. Ex. “How can we get the Elders to attend on Wednesday night?”
- c. Ex. Moral issues are ignored such as dress, drinking and divorce.
- d. The lost battles over “small” issues have compromised the foundation!

III. They had learned to deal with their hearts

A. They had to overcome pride. (Mk 10:39-45)

- 1. Pride comes from abundance, achievements and blessings, that is why it is so dangerous.
- 2. Knowledge is good, but watch for pride. (2 Cor 8:1-2)
 - a. One may have some understanding of authority but use the scriptures to glorify themselves.
 - b. Do you look down on your brethren because of their “ignorance?”
- 3. Be careful at who you put into positions of responsibility. (1 Tim 3:6)
 - a. The same attitude that is manifested within the home will be manifested within the church.
 - b. Pride will enslave and destroy other people.
- 4. The apostle Paul needed help to avoid pride. (2 Cor 12:7)

B. They learned patience and longsuffering. (2 Tim 2:24-26)

- 1. They showed this even when dealing with their enemies. (Acts 3:17-19)
- 2. Many try to intimidate and run over another rather than to patiently teach.
 - a. Names and labels are used against those who do not line-up. (Jn 9:34)
 - b. Social pressure is used instead of an appeal to Christ’s authority. (Jn 9:22, 34)
 - c. Some will approach a subject by saying “there are several people who are going to leave if you do not...”
- 3. How long did Jesus work with these men until they developed? (Eph 4:31-32)

IV. They knew what it meant to be tested

A. In their calling their heart was revealed. (Lk 5:27-28; 18:28-30)

- 1. Who are you really loyal to?
- 2. We can over time shift in our loyalty.

B. Look at how Jesus put them into difficult situations. (Lk 18:31-34)

- 1. Imagine hearing Jesus say this to you! (Jn 6:66-70)
- 2. Jesus knew that these situations will produce spiritual growth.

C. Look at how they responded under pressure! (Acts 5:40-42)

- 1. They did not pray for the destruction of their enemies.
- 2. They kept teaching patiently. Are you doing this?

Conclusion: Who have you been with?

A. Some are loyal to a paper and men that write in them.

- 1. When the editor and his friends change their views their followers do to.
- 2. Others may follow a family or a local church.

B. Those who have been with Jesus will show it by their fruits. (Jas 3:13-17)