

Authority & Power / Grace & Glory

Scripture Reading: John 3:25-36

Previously, we looked at divine authority and power in the earthly life and ministry of Jesus Christ in Luke 4:1-22. Then Jesus warned us to look for the mark of divine authority in the lives and ministries of others, as well as in our own life and ministry in Matthew 7:13-29. In this lesson we will examine the flow of grace **from** God **through** us **to** others (Ephesians 3:1-8; I Peter 4:10; Romans 15:18). We also will discuss the glory, which is revealed to us and through us, that must not be tampered with (II Corinthians 4:6-7; 2:17; 12:7-10; I Corinthians 2:1-5).

Receiving and Distributing

Read John 3:25-30 – Note verses 25-26, 30

- Ritual and form become less significant when we focus on who Jesus is.
- Our ministries need to provide black velvet for displaying the glories of Christ

Foundational truth for life and ministry – Note John 3:27

- Senders must first be receivers.
- Teachers must first be students.
- Those who feed must first be fed.
- Those who lead must first be followers.
- We do not create. We distribute.
- Our head must be anointed, and our cup must run over (Psalm 23:1-6 – Shepherds are sheep, too).

Touch not the glory

Read John 7:14-18

- God-centered preaching transcends academic knowledge (I Corinthians 2:1-5, 9-16 cp. Ephesians 3:14-21).
- “Touch not the glory” – John 7:18 cp. John 3:27, 30; I Corinthians 4:7; Romans 12:3
 - God’s thoughts, not mine.
 - God’s purposes, not mine.
 - God’s results, not mine.
 - God gets the attention, not me.

- Godly teaching is best discerned by those who desire God and desire to please Him (Proverbs 1:7; 9:10; 14:6; Psalm 111:10 cp. Hebrews 11:6).
 - Don't encourage a carnal glorification of preachers and teachers (I Corinthians 3:1-7).
 - Don't encourage a carnal pursuit of knowledge (I Corinthians 8:1-3).

Glancing through Galatians

The following references give us a survey of Paul's emphasis on the purity of the gospel. The gospel is of divine origin and must be handled humbly, reverently, and spiritually. Legalism, carnal attitudes / ambitions, and religious pride all interrupt the flow of God's grace and interfere with the glory that belongs to God alone. *Soli Gratia* ("By Grace Alone"). *Soli Deo Gloria* ("To the Glory of God Alone").

- Galatians 1:6-12
- Galatians 2:20
- Galatians 3:1-5
- Galatians 4:8-11, 17-20
- Galatians 5:1-9
- Galatians 6:12-17