

JESUS TAUGHT

Mt 5:2, 7:29; Prov 8:22-36

I. JESUS, BY NATURE (incarnated Truth), A TEACHER (trinitarian implications)

- A. Routinely called “Rabbi” (Teacher)—60 of 90 times in NT
- B. Incarnate WORD (Jn 1:1-5), eternally speaking, intrinsically Reason/Wisdom.
 - 1. Throughout creation account (Gn 1) God speaks (i.e. utters words forming things)
 - 2. Wisdom celebrated (Prov 8:22-36) as intrinsic to God & important for man (e.g. “wisdom literature”)
- C. Jewish rabbis in Jesus’ day
 - 1. Many “Torah Teachers” holding forth in synagogues and itinerant wonderings
 - a. Synagogue importance inasmuch as Temple access difficult during diaspora—range from simple room to elaborate place of worship; Jesus often entered and taught in synagogues
 - b. Itinerant rabbis moved about country, stopping to teach whenever able—thus Jesus often finds suitable spots in rural areas
 - c. Memorization key—must know Torah completely
 - d. Exposition expected—reminding, explaining, exhorting; staying strictly with Text
 - 2. Rare “Shmeka Rabbis” appear (perhaps no more than 100 in Jewish history before Jesus)
 - a. Not only mastered & expounded Torah but asserted new insights unmentioned in Texts.
 - b. Thus Jesus “taught them as having authority, and not as the scribes” (Mt 7:29)
 - 1. Deeper meanings to Torah—“you have heard it said, but I say”
 - 2. New declarations, uniquely Christ’s
- D. Other than Jesus, are some purely human teachers “born to teach”?

II. JESUS’ METHODS (pedagogical strategies)

- A. Lectures—most manifestly in Sermon on the Mount, Farewell Address (Jn 14-16)
 - 1. Prepared, knowledgeable, product of study & thought (pre-planned, thought through, intentionally delivered)
 - 2. Organized: classical rhetoric prescribed: introduction, body, conclusion important for both oral and written presentations
 - 3. Illustrated—examples, stories, personal perspective add color & texture to propositional points
 - 4. Current on-line pod-casts, lectures attract multitudes (e.g. Jordan Peterson popularity with young men)
- B. Dialogues—rather spontaneous interactions, asking & answering questions, evoking subsequent thought
 - 1. Unlike “group discussions” dialogues assume common knowledge or trained mind, enabling serious inquiry
 - 2. Unlike “student-centered” approach of John Dewey & “progressive” educators, dialogues purposeful, steered by teacher, aimed at attaining Truth
 - 3. Familiar method in ancient world, e.g. Plato’s dialogues featuring Socrates
 - 4. Jesus’ encounters with Nicodemus, Samaritan woman, questions regarding healings—conversational in tone but instructive in nature
 - 5. Appropriate? Mandatory? Irrelevant?
- C. Example: loving God & man; caring for needy; giving life for others

III. CHURCH (BODY of CHRIST) ALWAYS (TRUE TO HER FOUNDER) TEACHES

- A. New Testament clearly instructional—doctrine, ethics, etc.
- B. Apostolic Fathers show concern for education (cf. Justin Martyr)
- C. Clement of Alexandria’s *Christ the Educator* (ca. 200 A.D.)
- D. Augustine’s *On the Teacher* (ca. 400 A.D.)
- E. Benedictines’ educational endeavors (manuscripts, schools)
- F. Cathedral schools
- G. Medieval Universities
- H. Protestant Reformers (exp. Calvin)
 - I. John Wesley’s emphases
 - J. Great Awakenings & Christian colleges in America
- K. Missionary endeavors (19th & 20th century) amazingly effective, inevitably establishing schools
- L. Current home-schooling endeavors

IV. NOW (FOR US in 2023), HOW OUGHT WE (the Church) TEACH?