

Luke 4:32

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And they were astonished at his doctrine: for his word was with power.

Analysis

In Capernaum synagogue, people 'were astonished at his doctrine: for his word was with power.' The Greek 'exousia' (ἐξουσία, authority/power) describes Jesus' teaching quality—not merely persuasive or learned, but authoritative and powerful. Unlike scribes who cited previous rabbis, Jesus spoke with inherent authority ('You have heard...but I say,' Matthew 5). His words carried weight, demanding response. This authoritative teaching distinguished Him from other teachers and validated His claims. Words spoken with divine authority accomplish what they declare.

Historical Context

Rabbinic teaching followed established patterns—citing previous rabbis, building arguments through reference to tradition and interpretation. Scribes gained authority through formal training and association with recognized teachers. Jesus' teaching was revolutionary—He spoke with direct authority, interpreting Scripture definitively without citing human authorities. His teaching authority derived from His divine identity—God's Word incarnate speaks God's word with inherent authority. This pattern continued throughout His ministry, amazing crowds and infuriating religious leaders whose authority He implicitly challenged.

Related Passages

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Study Questions

1. How does Jesus' teaching 'with authority' differ from merely citing tradition or making persuasive arguments?
2. What does the crowd's astonishment at Jesus' authoritative teaching reveal about the power of God's word spoken with divine authority?

Interlinear Text

καὶ	ἐξεπλήσσουντο	ἐπὶ	τῇ	διδασκῇ	αὐτοῦ	ὅτι	ἐν
And	they were astonished	at	G3588	doctrine	his	for	with
G2532	G1605	G1909		G1322	G846	G3754	G1722
ἐξουσία	ἦν	ὁ	λόγος	αὐτοῦ			
power	was	G3588	word	his			
G1849	G2258		G3056	G846			

Additional Cross-References

Luke 4:36 (Word): And they were all amazed, and spake among themselves, saying, What a word is this! for with authority and power he commandeth the unclean spirits, and they come out.

John 6:63 (Word): It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life.

Titus 2:15 (Parallel theme): These things speak, and exhort, and rebuke with all authority. Let no man despise thee.

1 Thessalonians 1:5 (Word): For our gospel came not unto you in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance; as ye know what manner of men we were among you for your sake.