

Sunday, September 14, 2025 am

THEY HEARD HIM GLADLY!

Mark 12:37

In our account we find Jesus during His final week of teaching. His enemies are doing all they can to entrap and discredit Him. The context leading up to our verse (Mark 12:13-37) notes the Pharisees and Herodians asking about paying taxes, the Sadducees asking about the resurrection by presenting a supposed contradictory scenario about which they were wrong, and then a lawyer asking about the greatest commandment. Jesus answered all so that after that none dared to question Him anymore. BUT Jesus then asks a question of them establishing the resurrection. He notes how David by the Holy Spirit spoke about how the Christ was a son of David, yet David called Him Lord implying He existed BEFORE David. We then read, *"And the common people heard Him gladly."*

As a general rule, it was the common people (large crowd – NASB, LSB, etc.) that were willing to consider the teachings of Jesus, while most of the leaders and elites dismissed Him (cf. Luke 15:1, etc.). When you examine His work, Jesus was loved and followed by the common people. Why? We are not given all the reasons, but the "everyday folks" are more likely to listen to someone because: 1) They have less to lose; 2) They are just living their lives and getting by; and 3) They typically they are smarter when it comes to life than they are given credit for.

And while that likely describes the demeanor of this audience, there were also things about the way that Jesus taught that are worthy of our consideration. In this lesson I want to notice some qualities of the teaching of Jesus that made Him appealing to many.

I. Jesus treated them with respect

- a. When you look at the default demeanor of Jesus, it showed He cared. He was compassionate and concerned. He was approachable. Jesus often associated with the marginalized (those placed in a position or viewed as of little or no importance) – cf. Matthew 9:10-13 – "tax collectors and sinners."
- b. Contrast this with examples like Rehoboam, the son of Solomon, who upon taking the throne was encouraged to lighten the burden that Solomon had placed on the people and they would follow him. His older and experienced advisors told him to listen, but note 1 Kings 12:13-16, *Then the king answered the people roughly, and rejected the advice which the elders had given him; and he spoke to them according to the advice of the young men, saying, "My father made your yoke heavy, but I will add to your yoke; my father chastised you with whips, but I will chastise you with scourges!" So the king did not listen to the people; for the turn of events was from the LORD, that He might fulfill His word, which the LORD had spoken by Ahijah the Shilonite to Jeroboam the son of Nebat. Now when all Israel saw that the king did not listen to them, the people answered the king, saying: "What share have we in David? We have no inheritance in the son of Jesse. To your tents, O Israel! Now, see to your own house, O David!" So Israel departed to their tents.* The nation divided (primarily because of God, but Rehoboam's demeanor facilitated the division).
- c. Consider what Jesus taught in Matthew 7:12 – the golden rule.
- d. 2 Timothy 2:23-25, Paul instructed Timothy what the conduct of a servant leader of the Lord would be – avoid foolish disputes, be gentle, patient and humble, etc.
- e. We need to remember that ALL of mankind is made in the image of God – Genesis 1:26, James 3:9. It does not matter if you agree with someone or not, they are worthy of that level of respect. And until they act otherwise (e.g., the corrupt religious leaders who clearly sought to silence and destroy Jesus and true believers), respect is where you begin.

- f. If you do not show someone respect, how can you expect them to study with you?

II. He was not a respecter of persons –

- a. Jesus did not look at the outward appearance to determine worth. Unlike us, He knew what was in man – John 2:25.
- b. Like God speaking to Samuel as he was commissioned to anoint David as king, *But the LORD said to Samuel, “Do not look at his appearance or at his physical stature, because I have refused him. For the LORD does not see as man sees; for man looks at the outward appearance, but the LORD looks at the heart.”* (1 Samuel 16:7), Jesus looks at the heart.
- c. Again, we see that in those Jesus associated with AND the diversity in those He chose as His apostles. Matthew 22:16 finds the disciples trying to entrap Jesus. The NKJV reads, *And they sent to Him their disciples with the Herodians, saying, “Teacher, we know that You are true, and teach the way of God in truth; **nor do You care about anyone**, for You do not regard the person of men.* While the literal wording, this is a weak translation in English. Other versions rightly observe it as showing no partiality (“You are not partial in any way – NASB, LSB; “you are not swayed by appearances” – ESV, “Thou regardest not the person of man” – KJV). The point is, even His critics recognize that He was biased against people because of physical characteristics beyond their control.
- d. Acts 10:34-35, as Peter goes to Cornelius, having had a vision from the Lord (Acts 10:9-16), he declared that God shows no partiality, but in every nation He would accept all who feared Him (obeyed the gospel).
- e. Galatians 3:27-28 reminds us of this.
- f. As we seek to share the gospel with others AND to build up the Lord’s body, we must not forget this either. AND, let us not forget this economically as well – James 2:1-4ff. Sometimes, the most responsive person is the one you least expect (i.e., the ones who are broken and desperately looking for an answer).

III. He spoke plainly and simply –

- a. Jesus did not teach above the head of His audience. In fact, much of His teaching was directed toward them. Consider the simplicity of the message of the “sermon on the mount” (Matthew 5-7). Consider parables which were designed to help true searchers better understand the kingdom of heaven (Matthew 13:11-13). Jesus also took time to explain when His disciples asked what He meant – e.g., Matthew 13:18-23.
- b. NOTE: While easy to understand, fulfilling His instructions was not always easy. Furthermore, Jesus EXPECTED them to use common sense and THINK – cf. Matthew 16:6-12.
- c. Matthew 11:25-27 finds Jesus praying to the Father that He had revealed His message to “babes” (the simple and common man), and NOT to “wise and prudent”. This leads to His invitation to all to come to Him (11:28-30).
- d. So WHY did some have difficulty understanding Him? For example: John 10:24-26, finds Jews (likely the leaders) surrounding Him and demanding that He plainly tell them who He was. Jesus answered, “I have told you!” The bottom line was they did not WANT to understand. They were blind to the truth.
- e. If we hope to reach others, we need to speak plainly to them. 1 Peter 3:15 – defend the hope within you. But we can only do that IF we know the word ourselves.

IV. He appealed to their deeper needs

- a. Jesus saw man as broken and in need. Matthew 9:36 sees Jesus as one who knows they had needs. He tells His disciples to “*pray the Lord of harvest to send out laborers.*” (9:38)

- b. He tried to fulfill their needs – Luke 7:19, as John sent disciples to ask if He was the Messiah, Jesus healed many on that occasion. Then in vs. 22, He told them to tell John what they had witnessed. NOTE that He included, “the poor have the gospel preached to them.”
- c. Let us also remember what our greatest need is – salvation. Luke 19:10 summarizes the reason Jesus came - *for the Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was lost.* That is why Jesus devoted so much time to teaching. They needed REAL answers.
- d. We are living in a broken world. People are searching for answers. The Bible has answers to many of the deepest needs of mankind. Why am I really here? Where am I headed? How can I live a life with meaning and hope? The gospel has the answer to anyone willing to listen – Romans 1:16-17.

V. He spoke with authority

- a. Matthew 7:28-29 as Jesus concluded the “sermon on the mount”. The way Jesus taught was different because He HAD authority. Others did not like it, but He spoke the truth.
- b. And that authority was demonstrated continually as He could not be defeated in His words. Every recorded attempt to entrap Him failed. John 7:45-46 records a time when temple officers were sent to apprehend Jesus, but they come back without Him. Why? *The officers answered, “No man ever spoke like this Man!”* He also BACKED UP His word with works (the miracles He performed showed that God was with Him). John 10:25, 37-38. Matthew 22:46, after a series of failed attempts to discredit Him, they did not dare to question Him anymore.
- c. We certainly do not have the authority that Jesus had. HOWEVER, we have His words, both from Him and His inspired followers. We CAN and should teach others with authority! That means we must BELIEVE what we teach to others. We teach with conviction!

VI. He lives what He taught

- a. Finally, Jesus lived His life consistent with His teachings. He kept the law without fault. Hebrews 4:15 notes that He did not sin. 1 John 3:5, 1 Peter 2:22. It was because He was sinless that He could be the sacrifice we needed.
- b. He taught difficult sayings, but He did them. Matthew 5:43-44 – He taught us love our enemies; Luke 23:34 – He taught forgiveness and He forgave; He taught compassion and He had compassion; He taught sacrifice and He sacrificed; etc.
- c. 1 Peter 2:21 calls for us to follow in His steps because of His sinlessness. 1 Corinthians 11:1.
- d. IF we are to have success in reaching others, they need to see that we are living what we are teaching. Unlike the Pharisees that Jesus condemned – Matthew 23:2-4. James 1:22 calls for us to be doers of the word and not hearers only. 1 John 3:18 – love in deed and truth (not just word or talk).
- e. People are unlikely to listen to you if you do not practice what you preach. Matthew 5:16, Philippians 2:15.

Concluding thoughts. These are some reasons many listened to Jesus and some became faithful followers. We do realize that many did NOT follow Him, and there was NOTHING Jesus could do or say to change their decision. However, we find in what we have discussed qualities that WE need to demonstrate if we are to reach and teach others (Matthew 5:13-16, Philippians 2:15, 1 Peter 3:15, etc.).

We are living in a time where far too many are not interested in open dialogue. Many do not want the truth and are taking steps to silence the truth. BUT I am convinced that among the common man, you WILL FIND common sense and the qualities we have noted will increase your opportunity to reach some of them.

Does your demeanor imitate that of Jesus? Does it open more doors than it closes? NOTE: Please apply this to EVERYTHING you do toward others. Think about it!