

## **They Had Been With Jesus (Part 2)**

### **Acts 4:1-13**

The Bible teaches that Peter, John, and the other apostles spent about 3 years with Jesus during His earthly ministry. What did this experience do for them? What did it teach them? What can we learn from what they learned?

One valuable lesson they learned *having been with Jesus* was **the meaning of authority**. First, they learned it in the baptism of John (Mark 11:27-33). To act with authority simply means that one has jurisdiction, or that he acts by the order or instruction of one who has legal or rightful power. The chief priests and elders of the Jews recognized the need for authority. They asked Jesus, "By what authority doest thou these things?" or "who gave thee this authority to do these things?" These questions show the following two things: (1) They recognized a need for authority in religion, and (2) that such authority must come from one who has the rightful power to grant it. Mark records that Jesus answered them with the question, "the baptism of John, whence was it, from heaven or of men?" Jesus' answer shows that there are only 2 sources of authority (heaven and men...divine and human). Many in the religious world deny that authority from God is needed for all that man does in religion. This is typically the attitude of those who either look to self or other men as authority. Note carefully...an understanding of biblical authority is imperative for all New Testament Christians! The truth is...an understanding of the need for authority causes one to approach the Scriptures in a certain way (Rev. 22:18-19). Consider what Jehovah said to the children of Israel. "Ye shall not add unto the word which I command you, neither shall ye diminish from it, that ye may keep the commandments of Jehovah your God which I command you." (Deut. 4:2) "What thing soever I command you, that

shall ye observe to do: thou shalt not add thereto, nor diminish from it.”

(Deut.12:32) Failure to recognize the need for authority in religion shows that we have failed to learn a basic bible principle governing acceptability with God. People in religion may act without authority from God, but they **cannot** do so and have God’s approval and fellowship. No doubt controversies over many things that divide religious people could be resolved through a better understanding of the need for biblical authority.

Second, Peter, John and other apostles learned the meaning of authority in the stands of Jesus (John 2:13-17). Authority will show the purpose of God, and Jesus stood upon that authority and would not yield. Those in His day who objected had yet to understand the right source of authority (John 2:18-21). Those in the religious world who object today have yet to understand the very same thing.

And third, they learned the meaning of authority in the teachings of Jesus (Matt. 28:18-20). Our Lord’s entire ministry was focused on this point. His future ministry would depend upon men and women who would accept His authority as expressed through the written word. “Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he shall guide you into all the truth: for he shall not speak from himself; but what things soever he shall hear, these shall he speak: and he shall declare unto you the things that are to come.” (John 16:13). Please note, respect for the authority which belongs to Jesus will produce a careful appeal to book, chapter, and verse for **all** that we do in His name. “And whatsoever ye do, in word or in deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.” (Col. 3:17).