

Abusive Authority

We need to understand the difference between human authority (as designated by man), and divine authority (as given by the Lord). Too many ministers are operating in the former and wondering why they do not see God manifest His presence in their work.

I am an ordained minister with the Christian & Missionary Alliance. As such I have a designated authority which reaches to the limit of my own church and, sometimes, in other (Alliance) churches. It does not give me authority in individual people's lives except where they are involved in some of my church ministries. I have seen many pastors dictating to their young people where they can go to Bible School or serve on the mission field (for example), whereas this is outside their man-given authority. Of course they can advise – but not dictate.

As a pastor, I longed to have God's authority in my ministry. It was noted of Jesus that “he taught as one having authority” (Matt 7:29). This was not designated by the scribes and Pharisees, nor granted by some seminary or university. He did not get it by some man-made ordination or educational degree. It came from God! Men listened to Him and were enlightened.

God the Holy Spirit has given men (and women) as gifts to the Body, and equipped them to carry out the ministry each has been called to do. Sadly, far too many of us are operating outside the ministry God has set and equipped us to do. This is particularly sad in the case of the many 'pastors' who (automatically) became such, simply because they graduated from Bible College or seminary. No wonder there is such little evidence of unction in their ministry – **no divine authority!** Should we not take seriously the words of Jesus who said “*I am the door of the sheep. He who does not enter by the door... is a thief and a robber*” (John 10:9,1). Could this mean (as I believe) that Jesus determines who shall enter in to pastor/teach/feed His sheep (see Eph 4:8-12), and all others (though they may be good men seeing a perceived need), are thieves and robbers for they cannot operate under God's unction – with His authority. No wonder that neither the world, nor so many in our pews, have any respect for the authority of so many church leaders.

Lord, give us men in our pulpits who speak 'as having (divine) authority'.