

# Authority

Services: Sunday, 1/28 at 8:00 & 10:45 + Monday, 1/29 at 7 PM

Church Year: Fourth Sunday after the Epiphany – 2018

**Ash Wednesday is February 14; Join Us at 11 AM or 7 PM**

**Introduction**: Dear friends in Christ: Today's topic is authority; someone with authority has been *authorized* and *empowered* to take certain action. Here are two examples:

- ⇒ A police officer is authorized to *stop a person who is speeding and issue him a speeding ticket*.
- ⇒ A pastor is authorized to announce *God's forgiveness to a person who is repentant (sorrow and faith)*.

In today's gospel reading we encounter Jesus and the topic of authority; first, *teaching with authority* and second, *exercising authority over a demon*. Let us be fully convinced that **JESUS IS GOD!**

1. **Teaching with Authority**:

- a. Jesus and the four: <sup>21</sup> **And they** [*Jesus and the four disciples He had just called – Andrew, Peter, James, and John*] **went into Capernaum, and immediately on the Sabbath he entered the synagogue and was teaching.**
  - i. Capernaum: **“Peter had a home in Capernaum, and Jesus had transferred his home from Nazareth to Capernaum early in his ministry” (Lenski, 73).**

- ii. The Sabbath: According to the Jewish way of understanding, the Sabbath *began at sunset on Friday and ended at sunset on Saturday*. As we harmonize the events in Matthew and Mark, *we can conclude that Jesus probably entered the synagogue on Saturday afternoon*.
- b. The peoples' response: <sup>22</sup> **And they were astonished** [*amazed*] **at his teaching, for he taught them as one ~~who had~~ [having] authority, and not as the scribes.**
- i. Astonished: Lenski noted that Jesus' hearers were **"dumb with amazement... as long as Jesus spoke, every eye and every ear were fixed on him in rapt attention... [Lenski also noted that] the deity of Jesus revealed itself in all that he said"** (73-74).
  - ii. Not as the scribes: They elevated **"mere memory above genius, and repetitions above originality"** (Lenski, 74), **BUT JESUS spoke beyond the literal meaning of Scripture!** For example, in Matthew chapter 5 – on the topics of ✦committing murder, ✦committing adultery, ✦getting a divorce, ✦taking an oath, ✦getting revenge, and ✦dealing with enemies – we find this pattern: Jesus said, **"You have heard that is was said [on the topic of murder...] But I say to you."** Jesus' teaching *was different and with authority!*

2. **Authority over a Demon:** Jesus' teaching was *different* and *with authority*, but could He also **act in ways** that were *different* and *with authority*? The answer is **yes!**
- a. The demon's challenge: <sup>23</sup> **And immediately there was in their synagogue a man with an unclean spirit. And he cried out,** <sup>24</sup> **“What have you to do with us, Jesus of Nazareth? Have you come to destroy us? I know who you are-- the Holy One of God.”** // Imagine being in that synagogue on that day: The setting was reverent; then, *all of a sudden*, a demon – *thus a fallen angel living inside of a man* – cried out – *and everyone was startled!* Then the demon expressed *much knowledge* as he **✦**called Jesus by name, **✦**identified who Jesus is – **“the Holy One of God,”** and **✦**said what Jesus came to do – destroy the forces of evil! The statements made by the demon were true, *but Jesus didn't want that information to come from a demon.* Instead, Jesus wanted people to know who He is because He was **✦***fulfilling many OT prophecies* and **✦***demonstrating the power of God!*
- b. Jesus' response: <sup>25</sup> **But Jesus rebuked [the demon], saying, “Be silent, and come out of him!”** <sup>26</sup> **And the unclean spirit, convulsing [shaking] [the man] and crying out with a loud voice, came out of him.**
- i. Silent: Since Jesus didn't want the demon testifying about Him, Jesus told him to **“be silent”** *and he was!* Then, *after attacking his victim one final time*, the demon came

out! The demon was not happy, but he had to obey – *he could not resist the authority of the Son of God!*

ii. In comparison: Think about the exorcism of Emily Rose, *the movie based on the real exorcisms of Anneliese Michel!* Even though the demons were ordered to come out of her 67 times, *they never did!* **So let us marvel at Jesus' authority and power!**

c. The peoples' response: **<sup>27</sup> And they were all amazed, so that they questioned** [*discussed, disputed*] **among themselves, saying, "What is this? A new teaching with authority! [And] He commands even the unclean spirits, and they obey him."** **<sup>28</sup> And at once** [*immediately*] **his fame spread everywhere throughout all the surrounding region of Galilee.** // We expect the ordinary, *but Jesus was extraordinary in His teaching and power*; therefore, *the people were amazed AND immediately told others about Him!*

**Conclusion**: We are ordinary, *but Jesus is extraordinary!* We are sinners, *but Jesus was sinless in our place!* We deserve punishment, *but Jesus was punished in our place!* We cannot earn heaven, *but God offers us the gift of heaven thru Jesus!*

Let us pray: Lord Jesus, we thank You for making it clear to us *that You are the Son of God!* We also thank You for *doing everything necessary to remove our sins!* Dear Holy Spirit, please keep us ever *contrite and trusting in Jesus!* Amen!

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