

- *They were astonished at his teaching for he taught them as one having authority and not as the scribes.*
 - Authority: Power; Right; Ability; Influence; Weight; Clout; Say-so; Last word
 - We live in an age where many claim to reject authority and rebel against it. John Cougar Mellencamp even made a fortune fighting authority and he came out grinning, despite authority’s “always wining.”
 - Authority is the power something or someone has to determine the actions of another person or a group of people.
 - I would dare say that every one of us submits to some authority. And if we’re honest, we realize that the authority we submit to even unconsciously, also shapes our perspective, focuses our outlook, determines what we see or notice, how we approach someone or something.
- Again, every one of us submits to some authority. Only question is: Which one?
 - ?Is it what I will call the “authority of the body:”?
 - This authority is based on the physical. For some, authority comes in being, better, faster stronger. Athletes recognized in their particular sports become celebrities and heroes.
 - For others, youth and physical beauty are worshipped and those who have them are lifted up as gods.

- ?Or perhaps, we submit to the authority of intellectual power:?
 - Science is the religion; scientific theory is the dogma.
 - The quest for greater knowledge and scientific breakthrough is bound only by our limited knowledge, limits which we push by learning more, doing more research, testing patterns, predicting answers.
 - The only ones who know anything are those who are the experts
- Or perhaps we submit to the authority of “social power” where the answer to any question is dictated by bigger bank accounts, better pedigrees, fancier cars, more lavish homes, better schools.
- Now, don’t get me wrong, each of these does have some value, especially within limited fields. After all we do struggle to know more, to take care of our bodies and do well for our families.
- But none of these can claim to be a definitive source of true authority.

- *They were astonished at his teaching for he taught them as one having authority and not as the scribes.*
 - Jesus was and is like no other teacher. He taught and lived with an authority that came not scripture or the law, not from what He said or did. He knew the scriptures inside out, along with what the experts of His day were saying. He did not hesitate to use either

- But none of that served as the source of His authority. His only authority was **LOVE**; the love of the Father and love for each of us. And Jesus never refused to show that love in service.
- It's why Jesus silences the demons, why He will retreat from worldly glory and refuses to let them make Him king
- Jesus does not want His authority based on the power to drive out demons, or to heal the sick, or to raise the dead. His authority is never that of force: not the brute force of the bully, the professional force of the expert, or the utilitarian force of technology
- Jesus invites, rather than forces, he teaches rather than condemns. His authority is not merely because He said so but because He has loved so, because His love is powerful, healing and creative.
- Notice, that even as He is teaching, Jesus stops to heal the demoniac. The person is in pain and Jesus cannot talk about the love of the Father and the inauguration of the Kingdom without making it happen, bringing the mercy and compassion, the nearness of the Father, the intimacy God seeks to the one who is struggling.
- In Jesus there is a perfect equality between His words and His actions, between what He preaches and what He lives, between what He does and who He is.
 - Jesus is the Son of God and puts His relationship with the Father front and center. He seeks constantly to do the will of that heavenly Father.

- But, He is also a brother to each one of us, refusing to leave us in the lurch, reaching out always to the sinner, fight any barrier or obstacle that will keep us from Him.
- It's what God promised through Moses, realizing in the immortal words of Colonel Jessep portrayed by Jack Nicholson: We can't handle the truth!
- At Christmas, we celebrated that the Son of God emptied Himself of glory, honor and power to come to us as one like us so that He could offer us what we had rejected over and over again, what we could not handle in any other way: the love of the Father.
- The Incarnation is the very essence of this and His Passion and Death shows us the love of the Father come down to our level, the equality of who Jesus is and what Jesus says and does.
- Remember, Jesus has the power to heal the sick, raise the dead, still the seas and walk on water. And Yet, on the very night before He died, with all of the police and high priests looking for him, The Master takes off His robes, gets down on His hands and knees, and washes the feet of His disciples.
- Then, because He refuses to do anything but love, carries the Cross, is crucified and dies.
- This is the authority of Jesus.
- *They were astonished at his teaching for he taught them as one having authority and not as the scribes.*

- Notice that Mark does not record what Jesus was teaching but how it made the people feel. Jesus Christ brings not just words about God’s love but the Love of God Himself, the Presence of God.
- It’s why Saint Paul asks us to put anxieties aside, not because we shouldn’t worry but because we can trust in the God who loves us and seeks for us to love others. And that’s our call
- The call is for each of us is to submit to the authority of Jesus.
 - Very simply, submitting to the authority of Jesus means matching what we say by what we do and who we are; lessening the discrepancy between word and action; treating others as I ask God to treat me. In short, it’s putting our money where our mouth is.
 - I’m very conscious after Ron spoke in our mission about doing more than just telling people what the call is. He spoke passionately about hearing over and over again what needed to be done but not being told HOW, not being equipped.
 - Two things that can help us submit to the authority of Jesus:
- First, like Jesus we need to stick close to the Father.
 - Jesus puts His relationship with the Father front and center. Before the big moments of His life, He’s off by Himself to pray and He seeks constantly to do the will of the Father.
 - Like Jesus, we need to invest in God, go off by ourselves to be with God. Taking quiet moments, certainly before big life decisions but also every day. A few moments of peaceableness, of time allowing God to fill you with love and presence.

- If you haven't done it before or perhaps not in awhile, it will seem at first awkward and a waste of time. But if you keep at it, God will make Himself known, and start to fill you.
- Even as a priest, it is one of the hardest things I do every day and there are some days, I'm ashamed to admit, that I just blow right by it but we cannot submit to the authority of Jesus if we do not spend time with Him and our heavenly Father.
- Secondly, we take on the perspective of Jesus. Jesus never saw a problem to be solved, a question to be answered, a waif who needed to be helped. Rather, He saw each person, no matter how troubled or difficult as an opportunity to share God's love.
 - Focus on what will help the others, to put aside force, the need to be right or in charge or on top.
 - Share his way of reaching out, the way that brings comfort, consolation and peace even to one who is struggling.
 - Reference, as Jesus did, only the love of the Father, saying no word that does not also bring that love into play, teaching no ideology than serving the other, than meeting her needs, helping lift him up.
 - Accompany each person, no matter how challenging to the love God has for that individual. Break through any barrier, overcome any obstacle to show and to share the love of the Father.
- *They were astonished at his teaching for he taught them as one having authority and not as the scribes.*