

Authority and Satan's End-Time Deception

written by Tim Jennings, M.D. | August 29, 2024



The people were amazed at his teaching, because he taught them as one who had **authority**, not as the teachers of the law (Mark 1:22 NIV84, emphasis mine).

What was this authority that Jesus wielded?

Did Jesus teach with the authority of the Sanhedrin—an organizational church authority? In other words, did Jesus teach with the support and endorsement of the organized religious system and leadership? Clearly not!

Then how could His teachings be with *authority* if the *authorized* church (God's chosen institution, one blessed with the oracles of God) did not recognize, endorse, and support Him? In fact, how could He teach as one who had authority if the organized and "authorized" leadership were actively telling people He was teaching heresy? (Luke 5:21; John 7:46-49).

Was Jesus the only godly person in history to lack the “authority” of official organizational church leadership and face official opposition? Sadly, no. In fact, history reveals that religious leaders have often chosen loyalty to an institution and its dogmas over the message of truth coming from God. In Old Testament times, the priests of Israel often opposed the truth from God (Jeremiah 5:31; Hosea 6:9). Jesus and the apostles were equally opposed by the temple priests and rulers. The Reformers were also opposed by the institutional church “authority” of their day.

What about today? Could those who are advancing God’s truth for this time be actively opposed by church leadership, by the “authority” of those in church office?

Is there a difference between the authority of the organized church and the authority with which Jesus taught? Could God’s faithful today teach with the same authority that Jesus wielded while being opposed by the “authority” of the organized church?

What is the difference between these two types of authority? (I challenge you to pause and answer this question).

Did Jesus teach with the authority of the state? Did He have the endorsement of a government office? Pilate spoke with the authority of Rome. And Matthew spoke with the authority of Rome on matters of taxation. But did Jesus speak with the authority of the government? Clearly not—so what was the basis of Jesus’ authority? And did the apostles, after Jesus’ ascension, speak with that same authority that Jesus did and also end up facing the same opposition from an opposing governmental authority?

What is the difference between these two types of authority?

Did Jesus speak with the authority of academic credentials or the endorsement, recognition, and certification of various theological schools, academic institutions, or certifying bodies? Did the apostles, after Jesus’ ascension, speak with that same authority that Jesus did and also end up facing the same opposition from an opposing theological and academic authority?

What is the difference between these two types of authority?

Dark World Authority

Consider the voices of authority that speak today—whether church authorities, governmental authorities, academic and professional authorities, what is the basis of their authority?

Do you remember a recent global health “crisis” in which various voices of authority arose and spoke, making all kinds of claims, demanding all types of obedience, and promising all types of results—what was the basis of their authority? And did their authority work? Did their authority actually bring about what they promised? Why not? Does this reveal something about the difference between the authorities of this world and the authority of God and His kingdom?

Finally, be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power. Put on the full armor of God so

that you can take your stand against the **devil's schemes**. For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the **rulers, against the authorities**, against the **powers of this dark world** and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms (Ephesians 6:10-12 NIV84, emphasis mine).

There are different types of authority, and one of Satan's traps is to get people to surrender to the authorities of this dark world—the methods, motives, and principles of imposed law, coercive force, and the mere claims of others (opinions of experts)—rather than standing upon the authority of God. Many today are just as confused about authority as the people were when Jesus walked upon the Earth.

The people in Jesus' day wondered how He could teach with such wisdom having never gone to their universities and never completed an academic degree, having no endorsement from the church authorities, and not holding any office.

Those who believe the worldly authorities are right will argue that might and power are what constitute the authority of God. They will argue that Jesus spoke with the authority of the divine power, with the authority of His office as King of kings and Lord of lords. However, while it is true that Jesus is fully God and is King of kings and Lord of lords, that is not the authority He wielded! The people did not recognize Him as God, nor as King of kings, but they recognized that He spoke with authority.

So, again, what is the authority that Jesus wielded? It is an authority that Satan can never wield and, thus, God's enemy does not want you to recognize and begin using this authority.

Satan and his followers *can* wield the authority of organizational office, whether church or government, and they *can* wield the authority of position, power, and academic credential, endorsement, and certification—but they *can never* wield the authority of truth, because the truth always exposes their fraud, their lies, and it leads people back to God.

Nor can Satan and his followers wield the authority of God's design laws, of reality, because his kingdom is false, fantasy, make-believe, artificial, operating on made-up beliefs, ideas, and rules that require external enforcement. Satan is terrified of people learning to think, reason, and discern truth, for the truth sets hearts and minds free from being captured in his artificial construct, his virtual reality world of law and order, where the powerful rule and have authority through threats, force, and punishment.

Jesus spoke with the authority of truth, reality, the methods, principles, and protocols of God, which our Creator built into the fabric of the cosmos when He spoke things into existence. God's laws are the design protocols for life, not made-up rules like a creature imposes. Jesus spoke with authority because He spoke the truth of how reality functions.

Not as the Teachers of the Law

But notice, Mark 1:22 doesn't merely say that Jesus spoke as one with authority. It adds an important, clarifying detail: "**not** as the teachers of the law"!

Consider the implications: "Not as the teachers of the law" refers not to the Roman lawyers teaching Roman law but to the Sanhedrin, the Jewish religious leaders teaching Jewish religious law.

Now consider what those teachers were teaching. They were teaching the correct Sabbath, the right religious festivals, the correct tithe percentage, and the right list of clean and unclean meats—yet they were not teaching with authority. Why not? Because they were teaching all those correct doctrines in the false framework of Satan's imposed-law lie and, thereby, teaching that God's law functions like human law and that God is the source of inflicted punishment for sin. Thus, they were teaching a false god who is like Satan in character. This is exactly why Jesus told them in John 8 that while they claimed God and Abraham as their fathers, their true father was Satan (v. 44).

The teachers of the law had the endorsement and authority of the organized church, the authority of their offices, the authority of their theological degrees, and the authority of the written law, but they did not have the authority of truth—because all their doctrines were set in the lie that God's law functions like human law.

Jesus taught with the authority of reality, of the truth of design law, and every single teaching exposed the fallacy of their imposed legal system (see our blog [The Parables of Jesus—The Overarching Theme](#)).

God's authority rests in truth and love in harmony with His character, design laws, and methods—that is, reality.

Earthly authority rests upon made-up rules, delegated positions, external power, coercion, threat, the office itself, the laws enacted, the degrees attained, and enforcement of those policies, rules, and positions of power.

Consider Saul of Tarsus before the Damascus Road experience, when he was arresting and persecuting the followers of Christ; he did so with the authority of the Sanhedrin, his appointed office, the written law, and the local government, but he did not speak with the authority of God. He did not have the authority of truth! He was not wielding the authority of God's design laws of love and freedom!

The Bible teaches that prior to the second coming of Christ, a beastly power will rise to dominate the world, a power that will ultimately have Satan as its leader, and the whole world, except for the elect, will follow after this power. It will wield the authority of its office, of governmental endorsement, of imposed human law, of religious endorsement, academic degree, expert opinion, and professional certification, of might, power, and even miraculous signs and wonders—but it will not speak with the authority of heavenly truth nor practice the design law principles of love and freedom!

For the billions who have never recognized truth as authoritative, who have surrendered their minds to the authority of others, whether church, academic, or political leaders, to tell them what to think, who have submitted to this type of authority—they will be deceived and believe what the authority of the beastly system tells them.

At this late hour, it is now that we must become lovers of truth and recognize only the authority of the truth itself, for the truth always leads back to our Creator God, the source of all truth. This requires that we become mature people who have developed by practice the ability to discern the right from the wrong (Hebrews 5:14). We cannot surrender our thinking to others, including those in church office. Every person must be fully persuaded in their own minds by an examination of the evidence and their own individual experience with the truth (Romans 14:5).

I challenge you to reexamine the sources of authority you have trusted in the past and actively work to establish the truth, as Jesus revealed it, as your only source of authority.