

# The Authority of the Son

**MEMORY VERSE:** “For as the Father hath life in himself; so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself; And hath given him authority to execute judgment also, because he is the Son of man” (John 5:26, 27).

“My authority, [Jesus] said, for doing the work of which you accuse Me, is that I am the Son of God, one with Him in nature, in will, and in purpose. In all His works of creation and providence, I cooperate with God.”—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 208.

**Suggested Reading:** *Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing*, pp. 123–129. (At the bottom of this page)

## 1. EQUAL WITH GOD

Sunday, Mar 16

**a. Besides the healing of the paralytic on the Sabbath, for what other reason did the Jews hate Jesus? John 5:17, 18.**

### John 5:17, 18

But Jesus answered them, My Father worketh hitherto, and I work. **18** Therefore the Jews sought the more to kill him, because he not only had broken the sabbath, but said also that God was his Father, making himself equal with God.

“Jesus claimed equal rights with God. . . .

“The whole nation of the Jews called God their Father, therefore they would not have been so enraged if Christ had represented Himself as standing in the same relation to God. But they accused Him of blasphemy, showing that they understood Him as making this claim in the highest sense.”—*The Desire of Ages*, pp. 207, 208.

**b. How did Christ vindicate the authority of God’s commandments above human traditions? Matthew 15:1–9, 13.**

### Matthew 15:1–9

Then came to Jesus scribes and Pharisees, which were of Jerusalem, saying, **2** Why do thy disciples transgress the tradition of the elders? for they wash not their hands when they eat bread. **3** But he answered and said unto them, Why do ye also transgress the commandment of God by your tradition? **4** For God commanded, saying, Honour thy father and mother: and, He that curseth father or mother, let him die the death. **5** But ye say, Whosoever shall say to his father or his mother, It is a gift, by whatsoever thou mightest be profited by me; **6** And honour not his father or his mother, he shall be free. Thus have ye made the commandment of God of none effect by your tradition. **7** Ye hypocrites, well did Esaias prophesy of you, saying, **8** This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth, and honoureth me with their lips; but their heart is far from me. **9** But in vain they do worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men.

### Matthew 15:13

But he answered and said, Every plant, which my heavenly Father hath not planted, shall be rooted up.

“These adversaries of Christ had no arguments with which to meet the truths He brought home to their consciences. They could only cite their customs and traditions, and these seemed weak and vapid when compared with the arguments Jesus had drawn from the word of God and the unceasing round of nature.”—*Ibid.*, p. 208.

## 2. UNITY WITH THE FATHER

Monday, Mar 17

### a. How did Jesus explain His relationship with the Father? John 5:19, 20.

#### John 5:19, 20

Then answered Jesus and said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, The Son can do nothing of himself, but what he seeth the Father do: for what things soever he doeth, these also doeth the Son likewise. **20** For the Father loveth the Son, and sheweth him all things that himself doeth: and he will shew him greater works than these, that ye may marvel.

### b. What authority and power pertaining to the Father did Christ declare that He also possessed? John 5:21–23.

#### John 5:21–23

For as the Father raiseth up the dead, and quickeneth them; even so the Son quickeneth whom he will. **22** For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son: **23** That all men should honour the Son, even as they honour the Father. He that honoureth not the Son honoureth not the Father which hath sent him.

“The priests and rulers had set themselves up as judges to condemn Christ’s work, but He declared Himself their judge, and the judge of all the earth. The world has been committed to Christ, and through Him has come every blessing from God to the fallen race. He was the Redeemer before as after His incarnation. As soon as there was sin, there was a Saviour. He has given light and life to all, and according to the measure of light given, each is to be judged. And He who has given the light, He who has followed the soul with tenderest entreaty, seeking to win it from sin to holiness, is in one its advocate and judge.”—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 210.

### c. Describe the change in attitude that occurs as we realize that Christ is our judge. Romans 2:1–3; Matthew 7:1.

#### Romans 2:1–3

Therefore thou art inexcusable, O man, whosoever thou art that judgest: for wherein thou judgest another, thou condemnest thyself; for thou that judgest doest the same things. **2** But we are sure that the judgment of God is according to truth against them which commit such things. **3** And thinkest thou this, O man, that judgest them which do such things, and doest the same, that thou shalt escape the judgment of God?

#### Matthew 7:1

Judge not, that ye be not judged.

“He who indulges a censorious spirit is guilty of greater sin than is the one he accuses, for he not only commits the same sin, but adds to it conceit and censoriousness.

“Christ is the only true standard of character, and he who sets himself up as a standard for others is putting himself in the place of Christ. And since the Father ‘hath committed all judgment unto the Son’ (John 5:22), whoever presumes to judge the motives of others is again usurping the prerogative of the Son of God. These would-be judges and critics are placing themselves on the side of antichrist, ‘who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshiped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God.’ 2 Thessalonians 2:4.”—*Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing, pp. 125, 126.*

“We cannot read the heart. Ourselves faulty, we are not qualified to sit in judgment upon others. Finite men can judge only from outward appearance. To Him alone who knows the secret springs of action, and who deals tenderly and compassionately, is it given to decide the case of every soul.”—*Ibid., p. 124.*

### 3. THE PRECIOUS ASSURANCE

Tuesday, Mar 18

#### a. What assurance is given to every devoted believer in Christ? John 5:24.

##### John 5:24

Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life.

“In every command and in every promise of the word of God is the power, the very life of God, by which the command may be fulfilled and the promise realized. He who by faith receives the word is receiving the very life and character of God.”—*Christ’s Object Lessons, p. 38.*

“The great work that is wrought for the sinner who is spotted and stained by evil is the work of justification. By Him who speaketh truth he is declared righteous. The Lord imputes unto the believer the righteousness of Christ and pronounces him righteous before the universe. He transfers his sins to Jesus, the sinner’s representative, substitute, and surety. Upon Christ He lays the iniquity of every soul that believeth. ‘He hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him’ (2 Corinthians 5:21). . . .

“Although as sinners we are under the condemnation of the law, yet Christ by His obedience rendered to the law, claims for the repentant soul the merit of His own righteousness. In order to obtain the righteousness of Christ, it is necessary for the sinner to know what that repentance is which works a radical change of mind and spirit and action. The work of transformation must begin in the heart, and manifest its power through every faculty of the being; but man is not capable of originating such a repentance as this, and can experience it alone through Christ, who ascended up on high, led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men.”—*Selected Messages, bk. 1, pp. 392, 393.*

#### b. What divine prerogatives did Christ reveal that He possessed? John 5:25–29.

##### John 5:25–29

Verily, verily, I say unto you, The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God: and they that hear shall live. **26** For as the Father hath life in himself; so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself; **27** And hath given him authority to execute judgment also, because he is the Son of man. **28** Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, **29** And shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation.

“Because He has tasted the very dregs of human affliction and temptation, and understands the frailties and sins of men; because in our behalf He has victoriously withstood the temptations of Satan, and will deal justly and tenderly with the souls that His own blood has been poured out to save—because of this, the Son of man is appointed to execute the judgment.”—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 210.

“Christ is invested with power to give life to all creatures.”—*Selected Messages*, bk. 1, p. 249.

#### 4. JESUS, THE CENTRAL THEME OF SCRIPTURE

Wednesday, Mar 19

##### a. How did Jesus explain the cause of the Jews' unbelief? John 5:37, 38.

###### John 5:37, 38

And the Father himself, which hath sent me, hath borne witness of me. Ye have neither heard his voice at any time, nor seen his shape. **38** And ye have not his word abiding in you: for whom he hath sent, him ye believe not.

“Instead of apologizing for the act of which they complained, or explaining His purpose in doing it, Jesus turned upon the rulers, and the accused became the accuser. He rebuked them for the hardness of their hearts, and their ignorance of the Scriptures. He declared that they had rejected the word of God, inasmuch as they had rejected Him whom God had sent.”—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 211.

##### b. Why did the Jews fail to understand the Scriptures? John 5:39, 40.

###### John 5:39, 40

Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me. **40** And ye will not come to me, that ye might have life.

“In every page, whether history, or precept, or prophecy, the Old Testament Scriptures are irradiated with the glory of the Son of God. So far as it was of divine institution, the entire system of Judaism was a compacted prophecy of the gospel. To Christ ‘give all the prophets witness.’ Acts 10:43. From the promise given to Adam, down through the patriarchal line and the legal economy, heaven’s glorious light made plain the footsteps of the Redeemer. Seers beheld the Star of Bethlehem, the Shiloh to come, as future things swept before them in mysterious procession. In every sacrifice Christ’s death was shown. In every cloud of incense His righteousness ascended. By every jubilee trumpet His name was sounded. In the awful mystery of the holy of holies His glory dwelt.

“The Jews had the Scriptures in their possession, and supposed that in their mere outward knowledge of the word they had eternal life. But Jesus said, ‘Ye have not His word abiding in you.’ Having rejected Christ in His word, they rejected Him in person. ‘Ye will not come to Me,’ He said, ‘that ye might have life.’

“The Jewish leaders had studied the teachings of the prophets concerning the kingdom of the Messiah; but they had done this, not with a sincere desire to know the truth, but with the purpose of finding evidence to sustain their ambitious hopes. When Christ came in a manner contrary to their expectations, they would not receive Him; and in order to justify themselves, they tried to prove Him a deceiver. When once they had set their feet in this path, it was easy for Satan to strengthen their opposition to Christ. The very words that should have been received as evidence of His divinity were interpreted against Him. Thus they turned the truth of God into a lie.”—*Ibid.*, pp. 211, 212.

#### 5. THE GLORY OF GOD

Thursday, Mar 20

**a. What led the Jews to reject Jesus and seek false teachers? John 5:41–44.**

**John 5:41–44**

I receive not honour from men. **42** But I know you, that ye have not the love of God in you. **43** I am come in my Father's name, and ye receive me not: if another shall come in his own name, him ye will receive. **44** How can ye believe, which receive honour one of another, and seek not the honour that cometh from God only?

“Jesus said, ‘I receive not honor from men.’ It was not the influence of the Sanhedrin, it was not their sanction He desired. He could receive no honor from their approbation. He was invested with the honor and authority of Heaven. Had He desired it, angels would have come to do Him homage; the Father would again have testified to His divinity. But for their own sake, for the sake of the nation whose leaders they were, He desired the Jewish rulers to discern His character, and receive the blessings He came to bring them.

“‘I am come in My Father's name, and ye receive Me not: if another shall come in his own name, him ye will receive.’ Jesus came by the authority of God, bearing His image, fulfilling His word, and seeking His glory; yet He was not accepted by the leaders in Israel; but when others should come, assuming the character of Christ, but actuated by their own will and seeking their own glory, they would be received. And why? Because he who is seeking his own glory appeals to the desire for self-exaltation in others. To such appeals the Jews could respond. They would receive the false teacher because he flattered their pride by sanctioning their cherished opinions and traditions. But the teaching of Christ did not coincide with their ideas. It was spiritual, and demanded the sacrifice of self; therefore they would not receive it. They were not acquainted with God, and to them His voice through Christ was the voice of a stranger.

“Is not the same thing repeated in our day? Are there not many, even religious leaders, who are hardening their hearts against the Holy Spirit, making it impossible for them to recognize the voice of God? Are they not rejecting the word of God, that they may keep their own traditions?”—*The Desire of Ages*, pp. 212, 213.

**PERSONAL REVIEW QUESTIONS**

*Friday, Mar 21*

- 1. What authority and rights did Christ claim?**
- 2. What relationship has always existed between Jesus and the Father?**
- 3. What life-giving power does Christ possess?**
- 4. Explain John 5:39.**
- 5. Describe the result of the Jewish nation's rejection of Jesus as Messiah.**

**Suggested Reading: Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing, pp. 123–129.**

“Judge not, that ye be not judged.”—**Matthew 7:1.**

The effort to earn salvation by one's own works inevitably leads men to pile up human exactions as a barrier against sin. For, seeing that they fail to keep the law, they will devise rules and regulations of their own to force themselves to obey. All this turns the mind away from God to self. His love dies out of the heart, and with it perishes love for his fellow men. A system of human invention, with its multitudinous exactions, will lead its advocates to judge all who come short of the prescribed human standard. The

atmosphere of selfish and narrow criticism stifles the noble and generous emotions, and causes men to become self-centered judges and petty spies. **(MB 123.1)**

The Pharisees were of this class. They came forth from their religious services, not humbled with a sense of their own weakness, not grateful for the great privileges that God had given them. They came forth filled with spiritual pride, and their theme was, “Myself, my feelings, my knowledge, my ways.” Their own attainments became the standard by which they judged others. Putting on the robes of self-dignity, they mounted the judgment seat to criticize and condemn. **(MB 123.2)**

The people partook largely of the same spirit, intruding upon the province of conscience and judging one another in matters that lay between the soul and God. It was in reference to this spirit and practice that Jesus said, “Judge not, that ye be not judged.” Matthew 7:1. That is, do not set yourself up as a standard. Do not make your opinions, your views of duty, your interpretations of Scripture, a criterion for others and in your heart condemn them if they do not come up to your ideal. Do not criticize others, conjecturing as to their motives and passing judgment upon them. **(MB 123.3)**

“Judge nothing before the time, until the Lord come, who both will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts.” 1 Corinthians 4:5. We cannot read the heart. Ourselves faulty, we are not qualified to sit in judgment upon others. Finite men can judge only from outward appearance. To Him alone who knows the secret springs of action, and who deals tenderly and compassionately, is it given to decide the case of every soul. **(MB 124.1)**

“Thou art inexcusable, O man, whosoever thou art that judgest: for wherein thou judgest another, thou condemnest thyself; for thou that judgest doest the same things.” Romans 2:1. Thus those who condemn or criticize others, proclaim themselves guilty, for they do the same things. In condemning others, they are passing sentence upon themselves, and God declares that this sentence is just. He accepts their own verdict against themselves. **(MB 124.2)**

“These clumsy feet, still in the mire,  
Go crushing blossoms without end;  
These hard, well-meaning hands we thrust  
Among the heartstrings of a friend.” **(MB 124.3)**

“Why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy brother’s eye?”—**Matthew 7:3.**

Even the sentence, “Thou that judgest doest the same things,”(Romans 2:1) does not reach the magnitude of his sin who presumes to criticize and condemn his brother. Jesus said, “Why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy brother’s eye, but considerest not the beam that is in thine own eye?” Matthew 7:3. **(MB 125.1)**

His words describe one who is swift to discern a defect in others. When he thinks he has detected a flaw in the character or the life he is exceedingly zealous in trying to point it out; but Jesus declares that the very trait of character developed in doing this un-Christlike work, is, in comparison with the fault criticized, as a beam in proportion to a mote. It is one’s own lack of the spirit of forbearance and love that leads him to make a

world of an atom. Those who have never experienced the contrition of an entire surrender to Christ do not in their life make manifest the softening influence of the Saviour's love. They misrepresent the gentle, courteous spirit of the gospel and wound precious souls, for whom Christ died. According to the figure that our Saviour uses, he who indulges a censorious spirit is guilty of greater sin than is the one he accuses, for he not only commits the same sin, but adds to it conceit and censoriousness. **(MB 125.2)**

Christ is the only true standard of character, and he who sets himself up as a standard for others is putting himself in the place of Christ. And since the Father "hath committed all judgment unto the Son" (John 5:22), whoever presumes to judge the motives of others is again usurping the prerogative of the Son of God. These would-be judges and critics are placing themselves on the side of antichrist, "who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshiped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God." 2 Thessalonians 2:4. **(MB 125.3)**

The sin that leads to the most unhappy results is the cold, critical, unforgiving spirit that characterizes Pharisaism. When the religious experience is devoid of love, Jesus is not there; the sunshine of His presence is not there. No busy activity or Christless zeal can supply the lack. There may be a wonderful keenness of perception to discover the defects of others; but to everyone who indulges this spirit, Jesus says, "Thou hypocrite, first cast out the beam out of thine own eye; and then shalt thou see clearly to cast out the mote out of thy brother's eye." Matthew 7:5. He who is guilty of wrong is the first to suspect wrong. By condemning another he is trying to conceal or excuse the evil of his own heart. It was through sin that men gained the knowledge of evil; no sooner had the first pair sinned than they began to accuse each other; and this is what human nature will inevitably do when uncontrolled by the grace of Christ. **(MB 126.1)**

When men indulge this accusing spirit, they are not satisfied with pointing out what they suppose to be a defect in their brother. If milder means fail of making him do what they think ought to be done, they will resort to compulsion. Just as far as lies in their power they will force men to comply with their ideas of what is right. This is what the Jews did in the days of Christ and what the church has done ever since whenever she has lost the grace of Christ. Finding herself destitute of the power of love, she has reached out for the strong arm of the state to enforce her dogmas and execute her decrees. Here is the secret of all religious laws that have ever been enacted, and the secret of all persecution from the days of Abel to our own time. **(MB 126.2)**

Christ does not drive but draws men unto Him. The only compulsion which He employs is the constraint of love. When the church begins to seek for the support of secular power, it is evident that she is devoid of the power of Christ—the constraint of divine love. **(MB 127.1) 11**

But the difficulty lies with the individual members of the church, and it is here that the cure must be wrought. Jesus bids the accuser first cast the beam out of his own eye, renounce his censorious spirit, confess and forsake his own sin, before trying to correct others. For "a good tree bringeth not forth corrupt fruit; neither doth a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit." Luke 6:43. This accusing spirit which you indulge is evil fruit, and shows that the tree is evil. It is useless for you to build yourselves up in self-righteousness. What you need is a change of heart. You must have this experience before

you are fitted to correct others; for “out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh.” Matthew 12:34. **(MB 127.2)**

When a crisis comes in the life of any soul, and you attempt to give counsel or admonition, your words will have only the weight of influence for good that your own example and spirit have gained for you. You must be good before you can do good. You cannot exert an influence that will transform others until your own heart has been humbled and refined and made tender by the grace of Christ. When this change has been wrought in you, it will be as natural for you to live to bless others as it is for the rosebush to yield its fragrant bloom or the vine its purple clusters. **(MB 127.3) 2 I**

If Christ is in you “the hope of glory,” you will have no disposition to watch others, to expose their errors. Instead of seeking to accuse and condemn, it will be your object to help, to bless, and to save. In dealing with those who are in error, you will heed the injunction, Consider “thyself, lest thou also be tempted.” Galatians 6:1. You will call to mind the many times you have erred and how hard it was to find the right way when you had once left it. You will not push your brother into greater darkness, but with a heart full of pity will tell him of his danger. **(MB 128.1)**

He who looks often upon the cross of Calvary, remembering that his sins placed the Saviour there, will never try to estimate the degree of his guilt in comparison with that of others. He will not climb upon the judgment seat to bring accusation against another. There can be no spirit of criticism or self-exaltation on the part of those who walk in the shadow of Calvary’s cross. **(MB 128.2)**

Not until you feel that you could sacrifice your own self-dignity, and even lay down your life in order to save an erring brother, have you cast the beam out of your own eye so that you are prepared to help your brother. Then you can approach him and touch his heart. No one has ever been reclaimed from a wrong position by censure and reproach; but many have thus been driven from Christ and led to seal their hearts against conviction. A tender spirit, a gentle, winning deportment, may save the erring and hide a multitude of sins. The revelation of Christ in your own character will have a transforming power upon all with whom you come in contact. Let Christ be daily made manifest in you, and He will reveal through you the creative energy of His word—a gentle, persuasive, yet mighty influence to re-create other souls in the beauty of the Lord our God. **(MB 128.3)**

“Give not that which is holy unto the dogs.”—**Matthew 7:6.**

Jesus here refers to a class who have no desire to escape from the slavery of sin. By indulgence in the corrupt and vile their natures have become so degraded that they cling to the evil and will not be separated from it. The servants of Christ should not allow themselves to be hindered by those who would make the gospel only a matter of contention and ridicule. **(MB 129.1)**

But the Saviour never passed by one soul, however sunken in sin, who was willing to receive the precious truths of heaven. To publicans and harlots His words were the beginning of a new life. Mary Magdalene, out of whom He cast seven devils, was the last at the Saviour’s tomb and the first whom He greeted in the morning of His resurrection. It was Saul of Tarsus, one of the most determined enemies of the gospel, who became Paul



the devoted minister of Christ. Beneath an appearance of hatred and contempt, even beneath crime and degradation, may be hidden a soul that the grace of Christ will rescue to shine as a jewel in the Redeemer's crown. **(MB 129.2)**