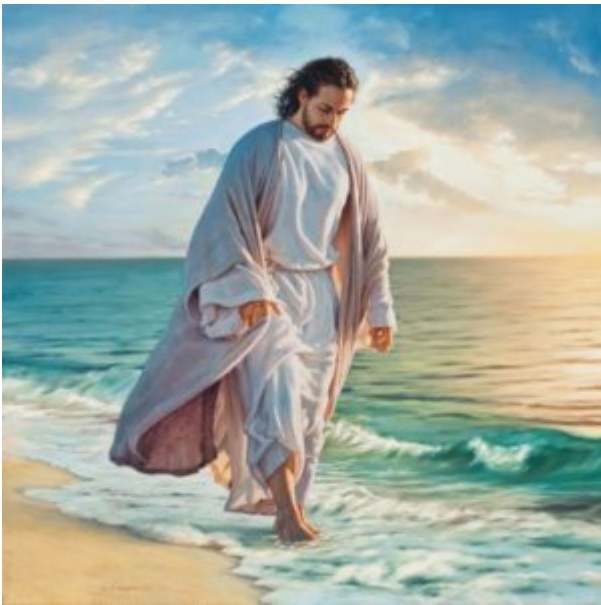


Who is the ultimate authority? Most Churches believe, preach and teach the following:

“In this Trinity . . . None is greater, or less, than another. But the whole three Persons are . . . coequal”—Athanasian Creed

The Trinity is implied to be the ultimate authority in the famous creed quoted above. Not all Christians are in agreement about the roles of God the Father, Jesus, the holy Spirit and the Trinity. Some say God is the ultimate authority, some say Jesus is the ultimate authority, and some say the Trinity is the ultimate authority, and a few even say the holy Spirit is the ultimate authority . Some say they are equal. And some say **Jesus is Almighty God**. Red-letter Bibles put words the editors think were spoken by Jesus in red, which implies that Jesus’ words are more important than God’s words. But what does the Bible say? Let’s examine some scriptures to find the answer.



“He has given him authority to judge because he is the Son of Man” (John 5:27). “I am not here on my own authority but he who sent me is true.” (John 7:28) Jesus plainly states his authority came from his Father, and that he didn’t come on his own authority, but God sent him.

“If anyone’s will is to do God’s will, he will know whether the teaching is from God or whether I am speaking on my own authority.” (John 7:17 ESV). “I do not speak on my own authority.” (John 14:10) Jesus does not even

“All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me...” – by whom?

He says that his authority to speak and teach came from God the Father.

“Father . . . glorify your Son that the Son may glorify you, since you have given him authority over all flesh” (John 17:2 ESV). Jesus’ authority and glory is granted, or given, by his Father.

“The times or dates the Father has set by his own authority.” (Acts 1:7) God the Father’s authority is not granted or given to him by anyone else. He is the ultimate authority himself.

“All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me.” (Matthew 28:18) Even when stating that he had been given “all authority,” Jesus makes clear it had been “given” to him – that he is not the ultimate authority.

“One like a son of man... approached the Ancient of Days and... was given authority.” (Daniel 7:13-14) Daniel makes clear that Jesus’ authority comes from God.

“The Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins.” (Mark 2:10) When stating he has authority to forgive sins, Jesus makes clear his role as Son of Man, a title that belongs to him – not God. **“The Ancient of days,”** however, has **“authority”** over **“the Son of Man”**.

“They praised God for sending a man with such great authority” (Matthew 9:8 NLT 2013). The crowd recognized that Jesus’ authority came from God the Father, who has the ultimate authority.

“When God made his promise to Abraham, since there was no one greater for him to swear by, he swore by himself.” (Hebrews 6:13) This makes clear that God the Father is the ultimate authority.

“Jesus answered them, ‘My teaching is not mine, but his who sent me. If anyone’s will is to do God’s will, he will know whether the teaching is from God or whether I

am speaking on my own authority'" (John 7:16,17 ESV). "I have not spoken on my own authority, but the Father who sent me has himself given me a commandment – what to say and what to speak" (John 12:49 ESV). Jesus made it clear that his authority did not come from himself, but from God the Father, who has the ultimate authority.

"When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth, for he will not speak on his own authority, but whatever he hears he will speak"—John 16:13 ESV. The holy Spirit is not a person, but is personified in the above verse. The point is that the holy Spirit doesn't speak on its own authority. Jesus foretold that his **"Father . . . will give you another Advocate . . . the Spirit of truth, which the world neither sees nor knows it. But you know it, because it remains in you" (John 14:16,17 NAB).** The Spirit is called it three times, so it is not a person. Its authority comes from the Father, the ultimate authority.

Although not all Christians are in agreement about who is the ultimate authority, the Bible does make it clear. Trinitarians say that after Jesus' ascension back into heaven, he has had authority equal to his Father. The Bible says that God the Father is the ultimate authority, but he has *given* authority in heaven and on earth to his Son, Jesus. Notice, however, what is the case now, and also what happens in the end:

"The Scriptures say, 'God has put all things under his authority.' (Of course, when it says 'all things are under his authority,' that does not include God himself, who gave Christ his authority.) Then, when all things are under his authority, the Son will put himself under God's authority, so that God, who gave his Son authority over all things, will be utterly supreme over everything everywhere"—1 Corinthians 15:27,28 NLT

The text above shows that Jesus is never equal in authority to his Father, not now, not in the future. This fact is further confirmed in the Bible's final book:

“Even as I received authority from my Father”—Revelation 2:28 ESV

Jesus makes clear in the Bible’s final book that his authority comes from his Father, the ultimate authority. Thus, the Bible makes it very clear that Almighty God the Father, not Jesus, not the holy Spirit nor the Trinity, is the ultimate authority!

All Bible verses quoted from the New International Version (NIV), except where otherwise noted.