



Family Formation Home Lesson

Authority and Obedience

The Epiphany of the Lord

Week of January 8, 2012

MEMORIZE:

Grades K-3: "Speak, LORD, for your servant is listening." 1 Samuel 3:9

Grades 4-6: Family Vocation Prayer (See inside cover.)

MONTH OUTLINE:

Lesson 1: Authority and Obedience

Lesson 2: The Call of Samuel

Lesson 3: God's Call to Us

Lesson 4: Intercessory Prayer

FOCUS:

All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to Jesus by God. This lesson will take a closer look at the authority of Jesus and our obedience as a response to it.

SUPPLIES NEEDED:

Bible, Catechism of the Catholic Church, tape (optional: permanent markers, construction paper, glue, scissors)

BEFORE YOU BEGIN:

1. Light a candle as a reminder of Jesus' presence.
2. Sing some favorite songs to the Lord.
3. Ask the Holy Spirit for a greater understanding of how God wants you to serve Him.

HEY DAD:

"The Story of Sir Victor the Braveheart" would make a great bedtime story for your saints. You may want to divide it, and read it over the course of a few evenings.



"Human society can be neither well-ordered nor prosperous unless it has some people invested with legitimate authority to preserve its institutions and to devote themselves as far as is necessary to work and care for the good of all."¹⁵



By "authority" one means the quality by virtue of which persons or institutions make laws and give orders to men and expect obedience from them.

Every human community needs an authority to govern it.¹⁶ The foundation of such authority lies in human nature. It is necessary for the unity of the state. Its role is to ensure as far as possible the common good of the society.

The authority required by the moral order derives from God: "Let every person be subject to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and those that exist have been instituted by God. Therefore he who resists the authorities resists what God has appointed, and those who resist will incur judgment."¹⁷

The duty of obedience requires all to give due honor to authority and to treat those who are charged to exercise it with respect, and, insofar as it is deserved, with gratitude and goodwill.

Catechism of the Catholic Church (CCC) 1897-1900

¹⁵ John XXIII, PT46.

¹⁶ Cf. Leo XIII, *Immortale Dei*, *Diuturnum illud*.

¹⁷ Rom 13:1-2; cf. 1 Pet 2:13-17.

Quiz Answers

Younger Saints

1. God
2. A and c are correct. B is not always correct because feelings are too easily moved in the wrong direction.
3. All are correct.
4. b
5. He stopped a storm, caused a fig tree to wither, healed people, used five loaves and two fish to feed 5,000 people, turned bread and wine into His Body and Blood, raised people from the dead, walked on water, changed water into wine at a wedding, etc.
6. "Speak, LORD, for your servant is listening." 1 Samuel 3:9

Older Saints

1. This means that Jesus has absolute control of everything that exists in the created universe.
2. He stopped a storm, caused a fig tree to wither, healed people, used five loaves and two fish to feed 5,000 people, turned bread and wine into His Body and Blood, raised people from the dead, walked on water, changed water into wine at a wedding, etc.
3. b
4. A and c are correct. B is not always correct because feelings are too easily moved in the wrong direction.
5. God
6. See below.

Family Vocation Prayer

Memory Prayer: Grades 4–6

Oh God, we earnestly ask You to bless this diocese with many priests, brothers, and sisters who will love You with their whole strength and gladly spend their entire lives to serve Your Church and to make You known and loved. Bless our families, bless our children. Choose from our homes those needed for Your work. Mary, Queen of the Clergy, pray for us, pray for our priests and religious, obtain for us many more. Amen.

Nihil Obstat: Rev. Michael Byron
Censor Librorum

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Archbishop of St. Paul and Minneapolis
January 23, 2007

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Family Formation is designed to help parents respond to the Church's call to be "the first and foremost educators of their children."* It is our purpose to aid families as they grow in their love and knowledge of the Catholic Faith.

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Scripture quotations are from the Saint Joseph Edition of the New American Bible unless otherwise noted.

*Gravissimum Educationis, 3

CHRIST RULES!

THE AUTHORITY OF JESUS

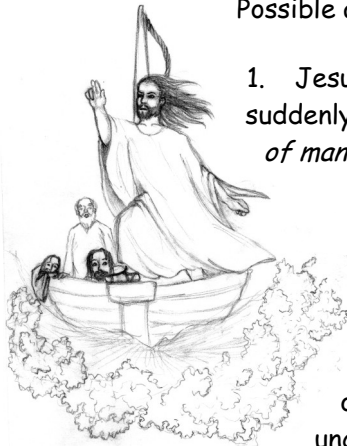
SUNDAY CONNECTION: John the Baptist announces, "One mightier than I is coming." Mark 1:7

"Then Jesus approached and said to them, 'All power in heaven and on earth has been given to me.' " Matthew 28:18

All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to Jesus by God, His Father. This means that Jesus has absolute control of everything that exists in the created universe.

A. CAN YOU THINK OF INSTANCES IN THE BIBLE WHERE JESUS SHOWED HIS AUTHORITY OVER THINGS SUCH AS WEATHER, FOOD, DISEASE, DEATH, ETC.?

Possible answers:

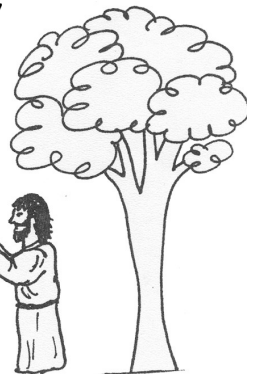


1. Jesus, by speaking a word, immediately stopped a violent storm that had suddenly come up on the sea. His disciples "were amazed and said, 'What sort of man is this, whom even the winds and the sea obey?'" Matthew 8:27

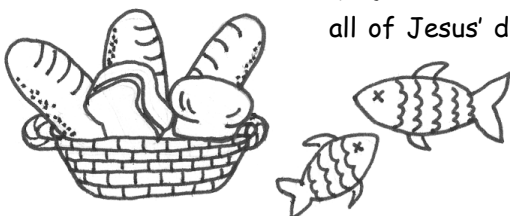
2. In John 21:1-14, Jesus told Peter and the other fishermen to cast their nets on the other side of the boat. So many fish got into their nets that the nets were breaking!

3. In Mark 1:21-28, Jesus' command cast demons out of people. Those present were amazed that even the unclean spirits obeyed Him.

4. In Matthew 21:18-22, Jesus cursed a fig tree, and it withered immediately before the eyes of the disciples.



5. Jesus healed so many people that John says if all of Jesus' deeds were recorded, "I do not think the whole world would contain the books that would be written." John 21:25



6. In John 6:1-13, Jesus fed 5,000 people with five loaves of bread and two fish.



7. In Matthew 26:26-28, Jesus turned ordinary bread and wine into His Body and Blood at the Last Supper.



8. In John 11, Jesus raised Lazarus from the dead. In Acts, Chapter 9, Peter raised Dorcas from the dead in Jesus' name.



9. Jesus walked on water in John 6:16-21.

10. John 2:1-12 talks about how Jesus changed water into wine at a wedding at Cana.

These are just a very few of the examples that show how Jesus reigns over absolutely everything in the universe—the birds in the air, the fish in the sea, the spiritual world (angels and demons), trees, plants, the weather, and everything else you can think of. Everything was made for Him and through Him (See John 1:1-14.) even though much of the world does not acknowledge this. (See CCC 1918.)

B. BUT WHAT ABOUT HUMAN BEINGS? DOES JESUS RULE OVER US, TOO?

Yes, we were made for and through Jesus. He paid for us with His own blood. He owns us and has the authority to do whatever He wants with us. (See CCC 279.)

C. WHY, THEN, DOESN'T HE SIMPLY ORDER US AROUND?

The reason He doesn't order us around is because we have such great dignity in His eyes (we are created in His image, after all). He could have created us like robots who are forced to obey Him, but true love is never forced. It is in freely choosing to love God that our love becomes genuine. He has great respect for our free will and will never force Himself on us. We must choose to love Him. In other words, Jesus has given us free will. (See CCC 1730.)

D. WHAT DOES FREE WILL MEAN?

In Sirach 15:15-19, God tells us what this means:

"If you choose you can keep the commandments; it is loyalty to do his will. There are set before you fire and water; to whichever you choose, stretch forth your hand. Before man are life and death, whichever he chooses shall be given him. Immense is the wisdom of the LORD; he is mighty in power, and all-seeing. The eyes of God see all he has made; he understands man's every deed."

It is our choice whether we obey or disobey God and His commandments. (See CCC 1731.)

E. IS IT EASY TO OBEY GOD?

Jesus says, *"Strive to enter through the narrow gate, for many, I tell you, will attempt to enter but will not be strong enough."* Luke 13:24

In Matthew 7:13b-14, Jesus also says:

"The gate is wide and the road broad that leads to destruction, and those who enter through it are many. How narrow the gate and constricted the road that leads to life. And those who find it are few."

It isn't easy, but Jesus says that He will always give us the help we need if we ask Him.

F. WHAT HAPPENS TO THOSE WHO LIVE THEIR LIVES MAKING BAD CHOICES TO DISOBEY GOD?

Jesus says, *"Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only the one who does the will of my Father in*

heaven." *Matthew 7:21* Then Jesus says that He will tell those who have chosen to disobey Him to go away from Him and that He will consider them to be "evildoers." Those who choose to reject Him will be choosing hell instead of heaven. (See CCC 1033 and 1470.)



IMPORTANT! Every person messes up! All we need to do is repent (be truly sorry) and know that Jesus will **ALWAYS** forgive us when we have failed to obey Him. The important thing that God cares about is that we keep trying to obey.

G. HOW DO YOU KNOW IF YOU ARE OBEYING GOD?

1. You obey God by listening to those whom God has put in authority over you. Your parents, for example, have been specially chosen from all other billions of people in the world to have authority over you. God wants and expects you to obey them. By obeying them, you are actually obeying Jesus. Especially blessed are those children whose parents are Catholic and who treasure and teach their children all of the Church's teachings. They are so wise to see the protection and beauty of their Faith and know that following it pleases God and is their assurance of entry through the narrow door. (See CCC 1900.)
2. Through prayer, reading Scripture, and by following the teachings of the Church, you will be able to know in your heart what God is asking of you. Jesus promises to be with us always, giving us the strength to do whatever He asks us to do. There is no need for fear or to worry that we are unable to do what He asks of us.



Read "The Story of Sir Victor the Braveheart" together. You may choose to discuss certain topics afterwards, such as:

- a. The difference between Victor's life before and after his decision to obey God and his parents. (Obedience brought back joy, peace, and blessing to his life.)

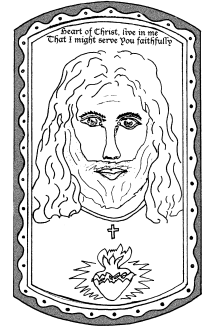


- b. Why obeying his parents was actually obeying God. (God chooses legitimate authority, especially parents, for each person and expects us to obey them.)
- c. How God wants us to grow to look more like His Son, Jesus, every day. (i.e. we are meant to be conformed to His image—not in physical appearance, but in our hearts.)
- d. What decisions do we need to make daily in order to look more like Jesus? (We must get rid of our pride, selfishness, anger, jealousy, laziness, etc. and ask Jesus to fill in our now empty hearts with the gifts of His Holy Spirit.)



ACTIVITY: Reflecting the Face of Jesus

In "The Story of Sir Victor the Braveheart," Victor looks into a mirror at one point and sees the face of Jesus. At that point, a prayer was placed in his heart by Jesus:



**Heart of Christ, live in me,
that I might serve You faithfully.**

In your lesson is a picture of Jesus printed on a transparency. Hang this picture on a bathroom or bedroom mirror (wherever your child gets ready in the morning). Its purpose is to remind us that Jesus lives in us and in others and that we are to remember to act like Him and treat others accordingly. Have your saints pray this prayer daily as a reminder that Jesus wishes to live in their hearts and that He can, and will, help them all day and night to look like Him (spiritually) and to act like He would. You may wish to make and glue a colorful "frame" around the picture before hanging it on a mirror. You may also color the picture with permanent markers.

Read together:

"We know that all things work for good for those who love God, who are called according to his purpose. For those he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son." Romans 8:28-29

"All of us, gazing with unveiled face on the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, as from the Lord who is the Spirit." 2 Corinthians 3:18

In other words, we are supposed to look more and more like Jesus until, like Saint Paul says, *"Yet I live, no longer I, but Christ lives in me."* Galatians 2:20

What Did You Learn About Authority and Obedience?

for younger saints

1. When we obey those in authority over us, who are we really obeying?
2. You know you are obeying God when
 - a. you listen to parents and others that He has placed in authority over you.
 - b. you feel good about whatever it is you are doing.
 - c. you follow what Scripture and Church teachings say.
3. Jesus is present in
 - a. your parents' teachings.
 - b. the Holy Eucharist.
 - c. the priest.
 - d. Holy Scripture.
4. What do we mean when we talk about the authority of Jesus?
 - a. Jesus was the author of a great book.
 - b. Jesus rules over everything.
5. Name a place in the Bible where Jesus showed that He rules over nature.
6. Recite your memory verse for this month.

What Did You Learn About Authority and Obedience?

for older saints

1. What do we mean when we talk about the authority of Jesus?
2. Name three places in the Bible where Jesus showed that He rules over nature.
3. Free will means
 - a. an offering taken during the Mass.
 - b. we can choose whether or not to obey God.
 - c. a sale on legal advice.
4. You know you are obeying God when
 - a. you listen to parents and others that He has placed in authority over you.
 - b. you feel good about whatever it is you are doing.
 - c. you follow what Scripture and Church teachings say.
5. When we obey those in authority over us, who are we really obeying?
6. Recite your memory prayer.