

What does it mean to authorize?

To authorize means both to entitle (\equiv to give the title, or the right, to) and to empower (\equiv to give the power, or the ability, to)—these being the senses of "authority" underlying the distinction in orthodox dogmatics between "*auctoritas normativa*" and "*auctoritas causativa*" respectively, in the discussion of the authority of scripture.

Keeping this in mind, one could say that, if Jesus is, as Christians claim, the explicit primal ontic source of all that is Christianly—and therefore, for Christians, religiously and existentially—authorized, then each of us has the right and the power to exist in the radical freedom of faith working through love and thereby to believe the beliefs of radical monotheism and to perform the actions of universal justice.

July 1980; rev. 5 September 2003