

Insofar as *x* is a source of Christian religious authority (secondary, primary, or primal) authorizing the self-understanding of faith as such, *x* functions as a source of *executive* (or executive-performative) authority, such as is exercised paradigmatically by the direct witness of proclamation, through either preaching the word or administering the sacraments. On the other hand, insofar as *x* is a source of Christian religious authority (again, secondary, primary, or primal) authorizing the understanding of human existence that faith as such necessarily implies, *x* functions as a source of *nonexecutive* (i.e., epistemic/exemplary) authority, such as is exercised paradigmatically by the indirect witness of teaching by precept or example, be it instruction in the meaning of faith or instruction in the things that are to be believed (*credenda*) and the things that are to be done (*agenda*) if one is to continue in faith.

Accordingly, if Jesus is rightly said to be not merely *an* authority (and so, possibly, no more than a *secondary* source of authority), or even *the* authority (and so the *primary* source of authority), but, rather, the *source* of authority that is not, in turn, either *an* authority or *the* authority (and so the explicit *primal* ontic source of authority), then Jesus is thereby said to function as just such a primal authorizing source of both the executive and the nonexecutive religious authority specific to Christianity. He functions as the first insofar as he is the explicit primal ontic source authorizing specifically Christian self-understanding; and he functions as the second insofar as he is the explicit primal ontic source authorizing the specifically Christian understanding of human existence.

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