

**Sermon Sunday 31<sup>st</sup> August 2025**  
**The Authority to Move to the Higher Table**

One of my favourite stories is of the councillor who knocks on the door of a constituent.

A young boy answers

Looking up at this well-dressed man and asks "What do you want"

"I want to speak to your mother" states the chap indignantly

And insulted adds

"Do you know who I am?"

The boy leans back and call out

"Mam"

"There is a feller here who does not know who he is"

The joke like all great humour contains so much truth

The pompous visitor did not know who he was

He was an idiot

Assuming a position of authority that meant nothing outside his own sense of self-importance.

True self-awareness allows for authority

True self-awareness

Replaces pomposity

With authority

The authority to speak, the authority to act.

There is a need for authority

True authority

Based upon the reality of humility

I speak as a priest occasionally with authority

Authority if valid based upon humility

Authority based upon priests who have gone before me

Priests who have sacrificed, served, and established traditions of ministry.

With this authority comes responsibility

To abuse the authority

Is to abuse those who have served and established the trust that this function is based upon

To cower from the use of that authority is also an abuse of the position I am in.

I am to speak of love

I am to speak of forgiveness

I am on occasion to speak with the uncomfortable prophetic voice

I am to place myself in the dangerous position of uncertainty

But based upon what my faith calls me to see as true

This can only happen if I am true to self.

Many of you are parents

Mothers and Fathers

There is a need for authority

True authority

Based upon the reality of humility

You speak and act on occasion with authority

Authority if valid based upon humility

Authority based upon the love that has gone before you

Love which has sacrificed, served, and established traditions of trust

With this authority comes responsibility

To abuse this authority

Is to abuse the very relationship in which it resides

To cower from the use of this authority is to betray the love given

You are to speak with truth

You are to forgive with significance

On occasion to speak with the uncomfortable prophetic voice

To place yourself in the dangerous position of uncertainty

But based upon what faith calls you to see as true

All of you are politicians in our democracy

All of you who have a vote have an obligation within our community to act with authority

There is a need for authority

True authority

Based upon the reality of humility

You are needed on occasion to make use of that authority

Authority if valid based upon humility

People have died, spent lives in struggle, and established these fragile traditions of democracy

To abuse this authority by neglect or arrogance

Is to abuse those who have served and established its functions

To cower from the use of that authority is also to abuse the memory of those who gave in the past

You are to speak of love

You are to speak of forgiveness

On occasion you are to make your voice heard with the uncomfortable prophetic voice

To not just speak of THEY

To not just blame THEM

But to recognise that you have a voice

To place yourself in the dangerous position of uncertainty

Based upon what your faith calls you to see as true

The fool pushes self to the front without the authority of humility

The weakling stays at the back in fear of accusation

Speaking the truth can lead to sharing in the crucifixion

But those of truth will always be called forward by faith

To speak out and to act.