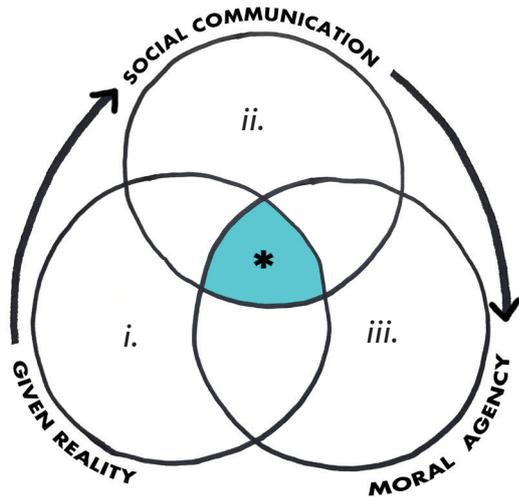


**\* LEGITIMATE EXERCISE OF AUTHORITY**



**Authority is being legitimately exercised when...**

- Some given aspect of reality<sup>1</sup>
- ...is mediated to another's moral agency
- ...through social forms of communication<sup>2</sup>

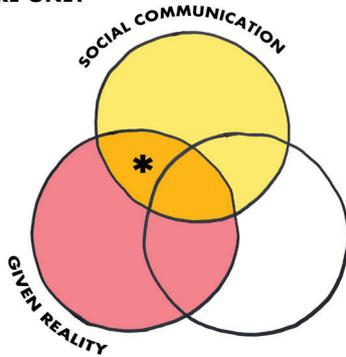
While each of the above might be said to be authoritative in nature on their own terms, the absence of any of them will compromise the legitimacy of any exercise of authority.

**NOTES:**

1. If any communication is not grounded in God's given reality, then it will ultimately fail to be authoritative. Both reason and revelation are at work in disclosing God's given reality, and both legitimate the exercise of authority. Without a correspondence to God's given reality, we'll be left with naked exercise of power or influence. Legitimate exercise of authority will ultimately always be grounded in some disclosure of God's given reality, even if only implicitly.

2. All exercise of Authority is mediated through social forms of communication - ie. various institutions, vocations, and relationships that give shape to human living. Any claim to authority that either denies or negates the proper social dimensions of human life fails to be an exercise of legitimate authority.

**\* DISCLOSURE ONLY**

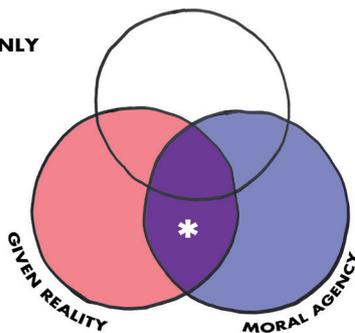


**A Failure of Authority: 3 examples**

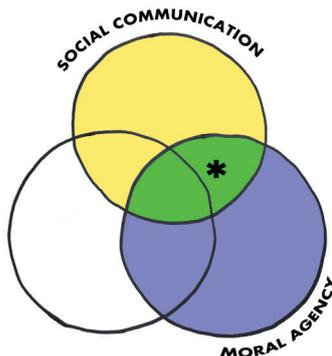
i) + ii) results in disclosure only.

The given structure of reality may be witnessed to in the form of various vocations or charisms: however, such a witness remains vulnerable to being ineffective and frustrated in the face of the next misuse of authority.

**\* PERSONAL INSIGHT ONLY**



i) + iii) yields personal insight only. (spiritual credibility)  
This is perhaps closest to the enlightenment notion of "individual conscience". However this is no proper ground for authoritative action: it neglects the inescapably social, political, and embodied nature of human existence. It makes any notion of institutional or communal authority virtually impossible.



ii) + iii) result in an exercise of power or influence only. (ie. positional authority).

Without i), any action will be inexplicable: an expression of arbitrary power or influence rather than authority. It will lack credibility and comprehension, and therefore invite resistance, suspicion, and rebellion.

**\* POWER / INFLUENCE ONLY**