

Who is this?

This question of those listening to Jesus is critical

And it is critical for us as well

Who is this?

Who is Jesus to me?

The people knew who Moses was

He was the leader of their ancestors

One who communicated directly with God

He spoke with God

And he spoke for God

He became their mediator with God

When on Mt Horeb, their ancestors heard the voice of God

They were frightened

And told Moses

If we hear the voice of God again

We shall perish

You speak with Him

We will listen to you

Moses was the one who received the Law from God

He passed this on to the Israelites

Their Levitical priests received their authority from Moses

The law was passed down from generation to generation

Rabbi to rabbi to rabbi

Tracing this backward to Moses

This was their authority

At the end of Moses' life

God made another promise through him

A prophet like me will the Lord, your God,

Raise up for you from among your kin

To him shall you listen

Other prophets would come and go after Moses

Some false prophets

Some true prophets

**But the only way to know for sure would be to see if their
prophecies came about**

Until Christ arrives

He is the true prophet foretold by Moses

But more than a prophet

He is the second person of the Trinity

All Christ spoke was given God's seal of approval in his resurrection

The fact that he died

Was laid in the tomb for 3 days

And rose from the dead

This is proof that all he taught was true

The things that make us feel good about ourselves

And the things that challenge who we are

What we believe

How we live our faith

Our Gospel today reflects that he is the one they were expecting

Jesus comes into the temple

He took his turn at reading the scripture

Teaching from scripture

But Jesus is not like the others

They would have mostly been Levites

It would have been known who their teachers would have been

That would have established their authority

But Jesus had no outside authority

He taught on his own authority

None of what he taught would ever contradict what Moses taught

But it did not come from Moses

Then this man comes forward

We know who you are

This man speaks in the plural

Because he is possessed by an evil spirit

The one who divides and spreads discord

Have you come to destroy us?

The spirit knows a confrontation is at hand
The battle that would culminate with the cross of Christ has begun
Christ shows his authority over even unclean spirits
He commands that the spirit be quiet
And to come out of the man
In doing this, Jesus is confirming that he has authority in himself
It is not dependent on any other person or teacher
His identity as Son of God will come
For today, it is about his authority to do what he does
To teach as he teaches
In our lives, we have a more holistic approach to Christ
We accept who he is
And we accept his authority
For those that were with him
These things came bit by bit
And it never hurts us to look at these individually as well
We need to know who he is
Who we are
And what is our relationship to him?
And as our understanding grows
Are we willing to change?
Are we willing to enter into the conversion we are called to?

If we take a deep look at our lives

We see that we are caught up in dysfunction and sin

Addictions and attachments to this world

As individuals

As a local community

Our world

A struggle between good and evil

Good intentions and what we actually do

The struggle of human mortality and failure

And the desire for immortality and success

And we often realize that when it is up to me

The finite, fallen person often has the upper hand

The good, the infinite gets the upper hand only when we cooperate:

When we heed the invitation of God

In humility, entering into the conversion he desires for us

To do this, we need to know who to turn to

How often do we listen to the words of a politician?

Thinking this message or that sounds good

Only to find that it fails

What do we do when we hear from a doctor:

Nothing more can be done

How do we react when we hear another priest has failed in his call?

Another child has been abused

Who do we turn to?

When chaos reigns

We need to listen for the voice of Christ

Be quiet! Come out!

This is not a human authority

Not something the Rabbi's had

Not something the scribes or Pharisees had

In our Gospel, the demons know who Christ is

They know his authority

The people do not yet grasp this

He is the prophet described by Moses

He has the authority of God

Yet again and again he finds himself in conflict

Especially with the scribes and Pharisees

They had their own preconceived expectations

Their own ideas of who the Messiah would be

How he would act

Who he would be attentive to

And Jesus did not meet their expectations

So they demand Jesus change

If you are the Son of God

Come down from that cross

And we will believe in you

Rather than enter into a conversion themselves

When we hear and heed the voice of Christ in our midst

When we enter into our conversion

We are freed from the voices that have hold of us

We can be liberated from harmful lifestyles

From addictions and attachments

From a lust for power, hate and greed

From a desire to be in control and to control others

To have things always my way

Listen to the Word that has authority

The Word of God in Sacred Scripture

In the Sacraments

The Word of forgiveness and mercy

Listening to his Word

Entering into the conversion he is calling us to

In humility, we hear, surrender and obey

So we can live less divided lives

He has not come to destroy us

He has come so that we might have life

And have it more abundantly