

Ember Friday, 05 June 2020

In today's Gospel, Jesus, arguing with the scribes, flips around the Jewish understanding of the term, *Son of David*, and the other implications of it. He turns the tables on the scribes, pointing out that even the great King David in the Psalms calls the Christ, "Lord." It simply doesn't sound right that a superior, a father, should call an inferior, his son, "Lord".

Jesus is really setting out an important aspect of the doctrine of the Incarnation. According to the flesh, the Christ *is* the son of David, but in his identity as a Person, he is David's Lord, for Jesus is the Second Person of the Trinity. Jesus is not some kind of hero-king figure, he is God in the flesh. As the Athanasian Creed puts it, Jesus is "*Equal to the Father, as touching his Godhead: and inferior to the Father as touching his manhood. Who although he be God and Man: yet he is not two, but one Christ.*" It is this very claim that infuriates the Jews on Good Friday and gets Jesus killed.

Jesus is One with the Father, "*not by conversion of the Godhead into flesh, but by taking of the Manhood into God.*" Or to put it another way, God is not changed by the Incarnation, we are. This is the source of our understanding that God loves us, for he truly sent his co-equal Son into the world to save it. God himself comes to our help.

In today's era, there has been a resurgence of the heresy of Arianism; the denial that Jesus was co-eternal with the Father and the Holy Spirit. For many, who may not even know themselves to be Arians, Jesus is a sort of nice, wise, understanding man, who taught about love and peace and how to get along. He might have died a martyr's death sticking up for Truth even, but so did Socrates. For them, the social gospel is what's important, not the real Gospel. These modern Arians, even those found within the Catholic Church, are all fine with good causes, charities, apostolates, feeding the poor and social outreach, all of which are great things, but when it comes to proclaiming that Jesus is the Son of God, in glory equal, in majesty co-eternal, with the Father and the Holy Spirit, that he is the Way, the Truth, and the Life, and that there is no other, they go profoundly quiet. Their version of Christianity is a pallid, lacklustre, a plaster-statue kind of Christianity. It is not the fulness of the Catholic Faith, which demands for salvation a right belief in the Trinity and the Incarnation of Our Lord Jesus Christ, and which, the necessary reponse of faith.

The Word became flesh. This truth should shake up our entire world. It should shock us to the core. It should disturb every fibre of our being. We are changed by the Incarnation. *What has not been assumed has not been redeemed*, as the great Saint Athanasius taught. Well he has taken it on. He has accomplished. Let us proclaim this full Gospel of Christ in our lives, do the good works, but don't forget to publish the truth of his Gospel either - Jesus the only Way, the whole Truth and the endless Life!