



Identity Confusion

January 23, 2017

Monday of the Third Week in Ordinary Time?

Author: *Father Walter Schu, LC*

Mark 3:22-30

The scribes who had come from Jerusalem said of Jesus, "He is possessed by Beelzebul," and "By the prince of demons he drives out demons." Summoning them, he began to speak to them in parables, "How can Satan drive out Satan? If a kingdom is divided against itself, that kingdom cannot stand. And if a house is divided against itself, that house will not be able to stand. And if Satan has risen up against himself and is divided, he cannot stand; that is the end of him. But no one can enter a strong ~~man's~~ man's house to plunder his property unless he first ties up the strong man. Then he can plunder his house. Amen, I say to you, all sins and all blasphemies that people utter will be forgiven them. But whoever blasphemes against the Holy Spirit will never have forgiveness, but is guilty of an everlasting sin." For they had said, "He has an unclean spirit."

Introductory Prayer: Lord, I believe that you are the source of all goodness. I know that your goodness is both a challenge and a promise. I trust that your goodness will envelop me if I allow myself to be found by you. I love you for wanting to fight the battle against evil for my sake.

Petition: Lord, help me not to be afraid of the battle against ~~with~~ evil.

1. Not Indifferent:- With Jesus on earth, another world becomes evident around us: the world of evil spirits. Jesus has come to take control of the kingdom. The devils are in a panic and begin to lose ground. Jesus is a threat to evil. His goodness, truth and holiness are capable of putting the devils into submission. When Christ takes a stronger hold on my life, things begin to change. Do I let Christ challenge evil in my heart? In the world around me?

2. Not One of Them:- Jesus brings change: But change is not evil *per se*. The change that Jesus brings is good, since and he comes to put demons in their place, bringing about good. This awakening of the good worries the devil. The conquest over evil is not always done in peace and tranquility. Does the spiritual opposition I face as I try to overcome evil in my life cause me to hesitate in the fight or to wish that Jesus and his teachings would not be so demanding? Do I realize that facing difficulties is a sign of growth in Christian authenticity? Do I let the goodness of Christ radically define my life? Even in the face of opposition?

3. Only Good:- Think of the joy that people experienced when Jesus freed them from the power of the Evil One.² Think of the joy I feel after making a good confession, attending a good retreat, or progressing in virtue. Jesus comes into our life to bring the joy of freedom from evil. He is God's goodness made flesh. Do I rejoice to have Christ as my friend? Do I try to listen to his teachings with a willing heart, thankful for the chance I have to abide in God's heart by living the life of grace? What an amazing friend I have! I can trust in his power to lead me along the path of life.

Conversation with Christ: Christ, I know that you are more powerful than evil. Help me to face up to evil in my life, encouraged by your friendship and strength. In your name Lord, I will walk with confidence.

Resolution: I will do something to share my faith with others today.