

Just a little bit after our Gospel reading for today, the crowds ask this question: "Who is this? Who is this who has come into our city? Who is this that is causing such a disturbance?" And we might think that that's the easiest question in the world to answer. It's so obvious, isn't it? Jesus has come to Jerusalem. Jesus, who is the son of David, Jesus, who is riding on a donkey, just as the Prophet Zachariah said. It's obvious that he is the king of kings. How could anybody get this question wrong?

But the crowds do get this question wrong. Because when asked the question, "Who is this," they give an answer that is something less than who Jesus is. They say "this is the prophet Jesus, from Nazareth of Galilee." Just a prophet. Yes, Jesus is a prophet, in fact, the greatest of all of the prophets. But he's so much more than that, too. But they don't quite get who Jesus is. And the leaders of this people too don't quite get who he is. Because they have seen all of his miracles, they have seen and heard all that he has done, and yet they refuse to believe. They refuse to come to him. They'd rather answer anything else than what's right in front of them. When asked the question, "Who is this," Jerusalem gives something less than what the true answer is.

We might be tempted to look down on them for that. How could anybody mess this up? How could anybody get this question wrong? It all seems so obvious. And yet Christians, how often, especially in the face of difficult times, do we give an answer to that question, "Who is this," that is something less than who Jesus is? Often because we want some kind of comfort, often because we want something that we can latch on to, something that we can easily understand. And so we give an answer of something less than the full truth.

Let me use a few examples. We might say that Jesus is our dear friend. He's our buddy, someone who listens to us, someone who lifts us up when we're down, someone who's always there for us. And that's true. Jesus is our friend. Jesus is the dearest friend that we will ever have, because there is no one more faithful than him. But is that all that Jesus is? Is that all that he has come to be? And if he is just our friend, well, he does things that we don't think friends should be doing. Because he sends these things that are fairly difficult into our lives. He treats us more like children than like buddies. And so we can become discouraged wondering why Jesus is letting all of this happen. But Christians, Jesus is more than just our friend. Jesus is the one who has come to set us free. So if we answer the question of "who is this" with "a friend," and just a friend, we haven't quite got the full picture of who Jesus is.

Maybe when asked the question, we would say, Jesus is someone who solves our problems. And boy, we really want someone to solve our problems right now! Someone who would set things right again, someone who would help everything go back to normal again. But is that all that Jesus has come to do? To just fix problems, to just set things right again? Because if that's the only reason we think he has come, well then, do we go to him for any other reason? We might go to him when we're having problems, but then forget to give thanks when he gives us what we asked for, or maybe even become discouraged when we don't get the help that we think that we need. Christians, Jesus is more than just someone who has come to solve problems.

Do we think that Jesus is just someone who has come to tell us what is right and what is wrong? Someone who sets us on the right path and tells us what we should do, so that we can become better people? And yes, it's true. Jesus does tell us what is right and what is wrong, because Jesus is the way, the truth, and the life. But if he is just a moralist, just someone who has come to make us into better people so that we can go on without him, we haven't really understood why he has come either. Because Jesus is more than just someone who shows us the way. Jesus is the one who is also our life, the very reason why we are who we are at all. Without him, we would have nothing. And so if we answer the question of "who is this" with "someone who shows us just what is right and what is

wrong," we haven't quite got the full picture either.

So Christians, it is so easy to miss this question of "who is this," to answer it with something less than who Jesus truly is. Because even though Jesus reveals Himself to us, sometimes we struggle. Sometimes we look for anything else. But Jesus comes to us today, Christians. He comes to us, and he shows us who he truly is, the fullness of what he has come to do. Jesus is more than just a friend. Jesus is more than just someone who solves problems. Jesus is more than someone who just tells us what is right and what is wrong. Jesus is God. Jesus is the king of kings. Jesus is the one who has come to set us free. And as he rides into Jerusalem on this day, he rides as the King, the king who is going to the cross, to die for us and to take upon himself all of our sins. Because Jesus has revealed himself as our Savior, the one who has come to forgive us and to give us life eternal. Jesus is truly God, and he is truly man, the one who is our deliverer from all of our sins and from every problem which has come upon us.

So Christians, when you're asked the question of who this is, don't look for something less than who Jesus is. But go to who he has revealed himself to be: true God and true man who died to forgive us and who now lives forever so that we too would live.

To him be the glory now and forever. Amen.