

5th Thursday of Lent "Either Or"
Fr. Frank Schuster
April 2, 2020

I like one of Bishop Barron's takes on this Gospel reading. I don't mind robbing him since he sometimes robs the dialectic of Karl Barth. There is also some Kierkegaard in him as well at times with his either/or approach. He wouldn't approve, but I think he has a lot of Scheiermacher in him as well, trying to help people gain a better taste and feel for the infinite. But today, I think he would prefer Barth and Kierkegaard. Why? Jesus says, "Before Abraham was I AM". This is about as unambiguous as it gets in the bible. Jesus is clearly stating that he is God. This is why everyone picked up rocks to throw at him. You see there are only two outcomes for anyone reading this (Here comes the either/or). Either Jesus is in fact the Son of God or he is a fraud and a very bad person. Either we should be picking up rocks with the scribes and Pharisees; or we should be on our knees before the Lord. There is no other outcomes. Jesus didn't claim to be just a teacher or a historical leader. He claimed to be God's son. He is either right or wrong there. This requires us to either make a profession of faith before Jesus or to walk away from him altogether.

This is a great scripture reading leading up to Holy Week because it really pushes us away from anything that is remotely lukewarm. We can't have it both ways and we can't decide to stand in the middle either. The ground simply gives away. We are either all in or are we out. There is no other acceptable position. And so, we can ask ourselves to day. As we approach Holy Week, how much of a believer am I anyway? How much time am I going to give for the development of my faith in the coming days? Holy Week only comes once a year. And the Holy Week we are participating in this year only comes maybe once every century. This is not a year to be lukewarm in our faith. Now more than ever, we need to stay close to Jesus as we follow him to the cross for the sake of our salvation.