

ADVENT WEEK ONE

December 7, 2019

Who Are You?

John 1:19-28

Then they said to him [John], "Who are you? Let us have an answer for those who sent us. What do you say about yourself?" John 1:22

Producers of the TV show *CSI* used as their theme song "Who Are You" (sung by The Who) to reveal each week the identity of those who had committed crimes and thus bring justice to the victims. The concern over identity is certainly a motif in the fourth Gospel, as well as in our current society. Who we are, who we are not, and who we sometimes pretend to be address issues of authenticity and truthfulness.

Unlike the synoptic gospels, John's baptizing activity does not produce his identity. Though he does baptize, the Fourth Evangelist is concerned with John's role as a witness, pointing people away from himself and his work to the coming of Jesus. When questioned about his identity, John proclaims, "I am not the Christ; I am the voice who prepares the way." John knows who he is and who he is not. He is not the light but testifies and points people to the light. Isn't that our role as well?

Our world contains much darkness, even at this celebratory time of year. Darkness overcomes many who experience brokenness, loss, hurt, and hopelessness. Many who live in darkness are searching for an authentic expression of Christ revealed in this time and place. For those whose faith provides a sense of hope, it is our calling to point to God's life-giving light breaking into the world. William P. Brown writes in *Sacred Sense: Discovering the Wonder of God's Word and World*, "the Word [was] made flesh for a world made of flesh... God's embodiment in Jesus Christ establishes once and for all a divine link with the body, and all bodies, of the world." In this time of anticipation as we wait to celebrate the event of Incarnation, we already know the identity of Jesus. Let's give witness and testify to that.

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