

Sermon on the Transfiguration (Luke 9.28-36) 3/3/19

I'd like to begin this morning by asking the question, "what were some of the things you hoped for, had as a child"? Perhaps it was a puppy you hoped and longed for, a new bike, or even a sibling to love and share life with? For me it was always a horse!

Well no doubt as you grew older and matured, those hopes changed with the seasons in your life.

Like buying your first home, starting a family of your own, and then paying off that mortgage

(PAUSE)

Perhaps today, you're just hoping to remain in good health?

Like all of you I'm sure. One of the things Bruce and I have always tried to do with our children is to encourage and support both of them in striving for their hopes and dreams, with the intention of them leaving a legacy behind, of the people who they really are, of who they've grown to be in their faith. Because ultimately, we all know that the things of this world as we live it today don't last. We come into this world with nothing but the love and grace of God, and hopefully later we leave this world with grace and love of God!

However, It seems everywhere we look in this post modernistic world in which we live today, it's all about human enhancement's, and quick conveniences. The fact is, many of our young people today are with the opinion that if you're not connected on Facebook, snap chat, Instagram, twitter, facetime, or whatever else, you may as well be dead, because as they see it, without it you don't exist.

Life in this world is not always pretty! And sometimes, what life does to us, can depend on what life finds us in. Sadly, the same can be said today for those desperately looking for that moment of escapism from the difficulties of this world. All too often we see those that we love or know of, looking for, and constantly chasing that moment of Euphoria through the use of drugs. (PAUSE) . . .

The old saying, "where there's life, there's hope" is still quoted today, and like most sayings, it does have an element of truth, but no guarantee of certainty.

Well, thankfully! Life in the world as we live it every day is not the whole story. Because It's not the fact of life that determines our hope, but rather the faith of life. God knows that we will have trials, He knows that we will fail, but it doesn't have to end there. There is always hope in Jesus Christ, and it's never too late. There is a reality beyond what we see or recognize in today's world, and it's glorious beyond all words.

What we see here in our gospel reading today is known as a theophany. The word Theophany, comes from the Greek word for "God" - *theos*, and the Greek verb "*to appear*" - *phainein*. And It's meaning refers to the manifestation of God or the divine, where God actually, visibly reveals Himself to human beings.

Our gospel today is all about the glory of Jesus, and Luke's goal in writing it, is to show us Jesus as He really is, the all-powerful, all glorious Messiah of God.

So what is glory? My definition based on everything the bible says about the glory of God, is this. The glory of God is everything He is, All of His goodness and power, and wisdom and transcendency, made visible . . . God's glory is what we see, when we see God, AS He is, in all His attributes.

We live in an age in which “tolerance” is a key word. But truth, by its very nature, is intolerant of error, and what we believe must be true in order to be real (John 14:6).

The truth is, Christ moved history as only God could. Without money or arms, he conquered more millions than Alexander, Caesar, Muhammad and Napoleon. Without science and learning, he shed more light on matters human and divine than all the philosophers and scholars combined, without the eloquence of schools, he spoke such words of life as were never spoken before or since, and produced effects which lie beyond the reach of any orator or poet, without writing a single line, he set more pens in motions for sermons, learned volumes, works of art and songs of praise than the whole army of great men of ancient and modern times.

God tells us that in order to be the kinds of people He created us to be, that it's not enough to do the right thing, we must see the right thing and love the right thing, and that "right thing" we are meant to see and love, is the glory of God, IN the FACE of Jesus Christ!

The truth is, Christ is the only one who's done the work that God requires, and He calls us to trust Him, and identify with Him, and follow Him.

Jesus lifted the corner of the veil and His disciples saw unimaginable glory. There is laid for Jesus and all who believe in Him, such glory as the heart of man never conceived. It's not only promised, but part of it has been seen by three competent witnesses, Peter, James and John.

Peter, James and John after witnessing this must have been both terrified and shocked. The memory would later serve them well. They would face incredible difficult things in years to come. The death of Jesus Himself, persecution, and eventually even death. I would imagine that this vision of God's glory would have also been an incredible comfort to them during those difficult times. That glory of God is how they would think of Christ, that glory is what they would later testify to Him.

Here in our narrative He gives the church a glimpse of the transcendent glory that the Lord enjoyed before His incarnation, and will return to following His passion, death and resurrection. A glory that He shares with His church and His with His people, a glory that He invites all His people into.

Our view of God's glory is what is meant to help sustain us through our trials, and even more, it is what allows us to not simply survive difficulty, but to actually grow from it.

Pauls says in ??? Therefore, since we have been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ his glory (vs 5 etc. . . .

When we see God's glory we have what we need to survive, even in the most difficult of circumstances. . . . So how do we do that???? Well thankfully God doesn't set unobtainable goals before us.

God the Father Himself tells us today . . . And a voice came out of the cloud, saying "This is my Son, my Chosen One". The one who I have chosen to reveal my glory to and through. He is the same as me, we are equal. Listen to Him"! Jesus heard almost identical words from His father at the beginning of His earthly ministry through His Baptism "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased" (ch, vs). Now as He faces the culmination of that ministry, the Father is lovingly reaffirming His Son in preparation for the agony that awaits Him. Those words will buoy Him up, they will carry him forward. They will sustain Him in the worst agony man has ever faced!

There can be no higher an authoritative testimony of who Jesus is than God the Father. It doesn't matter what books are written, how people speculate, or what the polls would indicate. God the Father says Jesus is God become man, and He alone possesses the glory of God.

So, we listen to Him and we continue to learn and grow in our faith, and we live, giving honour and glory to Him in all that we do.

Through the transfiguration we see the foundation of our faith. The hope of our resurrection is the core of Christianity that forever transforms our spiritual life and all of our hopes for tomorrow.

Of all the great religious leaders of the world, Christ alone claims deity!

Jesus' supreme credential to authenticate his claim to deity was His resurrection from the dead, His rising again authenticates who He was and why He came.

We have only to look at the testimonies of our disciples

Paul declares : *If Christ is not risen, then our preaching is empty" (1Cor 15:14)*

The confident hope we encounter in the glory of God, gives us the encouragement which enables us to keep on going when our burdens are heavy, and battles hard. Like an anchor, our hope in Christ stabilizes us in the storms of life (Heb. 6:18-19). That is not to say that our Christian life remains a static one! Because our hope moves us forward, and doesn't hold us back. It is constantly drawing us closer into a deeper loving relationship with the one who created us, and who sustains us.

Dr James Grey expresses it beautifully in one of his songs "*who can mind the journey, when the road leads home*".

We must continue to listen and learn from Jesus as He guides us through the journey of life. Life will have its problems, but the Lord will keep us safe. Trials don't last forever, they are "for a season"

Today we see the completion of our Epiphany season as the Son of God is revealed. Today we see His glory. This is who Jesus is, this has been what epiphany has been all about, the cross is where it was all leading.

And there is still glory yet to come as we travel through our lenton season. and journey to the cross.

The glory of Jesus we encounter on that mountain today, is a promise of hope to all our hearts and minds, that the world we all want, the world we were made for, a world of glory and perfection, not marred by sin. The world we all want is coming. We have the privilege every Sunday when we gather here for worship, the opportunity to kneel before Christ, to peer over the alter rail of this

world, and into the beauty of the world to come, this is God's promise to all who will believe. This world is not the whole story, and that's what the Transfiguration tells us.