

The Festival of the Transfiguration of our Lord  
St. Matthew 17:1-9  
February 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2020  
Sts. Peter & Paul Evangelical Lutheran Church, UAC  
Simpsonville, SC  
Pastor Jerald Dulas

### This Is My Beloved Son

*In Nomine Iesu!*

In the Name of the Father and of the + Son and of the Holy Ghost. Amen.

#### **Prayer in Pulpit before Sermon:**

O Merciful and Everlasting God, heavenly Father: We thank Thee that Thou hast revealed unto us the glory of Thy Son, and let the light of Thy gospel shine upon us: We pray Thee, guide us by this light that we may walk diligently as Christians in all good works, ever be strengthened by Thy grace, and conduct our lives in all godliness; through the same, Thy beloved Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, Who liveth and reigneth with Thee and the Holy Ghost, one true God, world without end. Amen.

Grace, mercy, and peace be to you from God our Father and from our Lord and Savior + Jesus Christ. Amen.

Our Lord + Jesus Christ takes with Him up onto the mountain of transfiguration His three Apostles, Sts. Peter, James and John. Of these three saints, we have a record of their experience recorded in Holy Scripture by two of them: St. Peter and St. John (St. James was martyred early on and did not record any Scripture for us). Of the transfiguration St. John records in the first chapter of his Gospel, "And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth." The words of St. Peter regarding the transfiguration are recorded in our Epistle reading, "For we did not follow cunningly devised fables when we made known to you the power and coming of our Lord + Jesus Christ, but were eyewitnesses of His majesty. For He received from God the Father honor and glory when such a voice came to Him from the Excellent Glory: 'This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.' And we heard this voice which came from Heaven when we were with Him on the holy mountain."

Both of these Apostles mention our Lord's glory. He was glorified on the mountain of transfiguration. His divine nature was revealed to Sts Peter, James and John when He was transfigured and His face shone as the sun, and His clothes became as white as a bright light. This man Who they called the Lord + Jesus was not just a man, but He was also the Lord God Almighty. The Lord God had become man. The Lord God had taken upon Himself the flesh of mankind. He took our flesh into the Godhead, and cleansed it and purified it. He made it holy. And in making it holy, through Holy Baptism we are also made holy, for in Holy Baptism we put on the Christ. We bear His righteousness and image. He has restored the image of God which we lost through the transgression of our first parents, and He has given that has a gift to on out of His great love for us.

Our heavenly Father even confirms the glory of His One and Only Beloved Son with a voice from Heaven. "This is My beloved Son." The same words that were proclaimed at the Holy Baptism of our Lord + Jesus Christ, when He was baptized by St. John the Baptist in the Jordan River. The Son of God is declared the heir of eternal life through the voice of the heavenly Father. He inherits eternal life because He has fulfilled the Law perfectly, the same Law which we break daily through our sinful thoughts, words, and deeds. And then He offers up His life as a ransom for our lives by sacrificing

Himself on the tree of the holy cross. By His death, He wins life and life eternal. Through our Holy Baptism, having put on Christ's righteousness, we are now co-heirs with the Lord + Jesus Christ. We also inherit eternal life.

Just as His face shone as bright as the sun, and His clothes were whiter than any launderer could launder; as bright as the light, we too will be given new and glorious bodies when we inherit our heavenly reward. Our faces will shine like the sun, and our clothes will be as white as light. And we will proclaim for eternity, just as the heavenly Father did from Heaven on this day, that our Lord and Savior + Jesus Christ is the beloved Son of the Father. He is the One Who does the will of the Father perfectly, and then credits His works and merits to us. The Beloved Son of the Father makes us Beloved children of the heavenly Father. He makes us His brothers, and if we are brothers than we have a share in the inheritance. We have this gift through our Holy Baptism.

We also as heirs of the Kingdom of Heaven get to join our Lord and Savior at the heavenly table prepared for the heirs in His Kingdom. We get a foretaste of this heavenly banquet when we come to this holy altar and receive our Lord's Body and Blood in bread and wine. The heirs of eternal life get to share in the meal that grants them not only eternal life, but also forgiveness of their sins, and salvation from sin, death and the devil. We get to enjoy this meal because we are baptized into the Name of the Triune God. We bear the Name of our Lord God on our hearts and in our minds. Even as the minister made the sign of the holy cross on your head and upon your breast. The heavenly Father through our Holy Baptism declares us to be His beloved sons. In us He is well-pleased, because we do as He says, and in faith we listen to our Lord and Savior + Jesus Christ.

It is His Word we believe. It is His promises we cling to in faith. It is in His works and merits we cling to for life and salvation. For He has done all things good. He has fulfilled the Law perfectly, and He has borne our punishment on the tree of the holy cross. He did what we are unable to do. He suffered in a way which we are unable to bear. Sts. Peter, James and John beheld His glory on that day when He was transfigured before them on the mountain. Moses and Elijah talked to our Lord + Jesus about His upcoming sacrifice for the whole world; that He would suffer and die to make atonement for the sins of the whole world, so that those who believed on Him might have eternal life. He is glorified on the mountain of transfiguration, but His throne of glory is the holy cross.

He took His place upon the throne of the cross so that we might eternally worship Him on this throne. For in taking His place upon this throne of the holy cross, we have forgiveness, life and salvation. We have the rewards of Heaven. He hands out to us from the tree of the holy cross the gifts of His Kingdom. We receive eternal life and white robes of His righteousness, and heavenly glorified bodies. For He has also taken His place upon the throne of Heaven, where He sits on the right hand of God the Father and intercedes for us to the Father, so that we might not suffer eternally as He did on the holy cross. He bore the weight and burden of the sins of all mankind. In Hell mankind will bear eternally the weight and burden of their sins in the lake of fire prepared before the foundation of the world for the devil and his angels.

When we look upon the holy cross, we see our Lord + Jesus Christ's glory. We behold His sacrifice for us. We behold in Whom we are baptized; into Whose death we were baptized. And, we behold the sacrifice that feeds our souls. For the Body and Blood which He offered and shed on the tree of the holy cross is the same Body and Blood which He offers to us in His blessed Sacrament, in which we eat His Body and drink His Blood under the bread and wine.

The crucifix reveals the Lord's glory. For we see His sacrifice for us on the tree of the holy cross. This is why we worship the way that we do; with all reverence and humility. For if worship is not appropriate at the foot of the cross—at the feet of the crucified Lord + Jesus—it is not appropriate in church. This is why many of those churches that endorse so-called "contemporary worship" shun the

existence of a crucifix in their buildings. For they know deep down that their worship is inappropriate in the presence of a crucified Lord. Their worship does not glorify the Lord + Jesus, even though their worship songs continuously talk about glorifying the Lord. They are like St. Peter in the Gospel reading from the Evangelist and Apostle St. Matthew who completely misunderstands the situation he is in. He wants to build three tabernacles for the Lord, Moses and Elijah. But he does not know what he is saying because of his fear. This scene is not about him. It is about the Lord + Jesus and His sacrifice for us.

It is Him to Whom we are to listen. It is Him we are to hear. It is His crucifixion upon which we are to look, for in His death, we have life, and life eternal. In His death He is glorified, and in His death, we are glorified when we cling to this death in faith. For in it we receive the rewards He won for us by His death on the tree of the holy cross. In His death we behold His glory, glory given to Him by God the Father, full of grace and truth.

Sts. Peter, James and John beheld that glory on the mountain of transfiguration. Sts. Peter and John recorded that glory in Holy Scriptures. When we hear of our Lord's deeds; when we hear of His transfiguration, we also behold His glory, the glory that we have a share in account of what He has done for us. We have been clothed with the glory of Christ in our Holy Baptism, and we feast upon the glory of our Lord + Jesus Christ when we come and kneel before this holy altar and receive our Lord's Body and Blood in bread and wine. And this glory is bestowed upon us, when we hear in the absolution from the minister as from God Himself, that our sins are forgiven. Behold the throne of our Lord's glory. Behold the Beloved Son of the heavenly Father. For in His sacrifice for you, you inherit eternal life. May the heavenly Father say of us all, "This is my beloved son in whom I am well-pleased." He is well-pleased with us, because He is well-pleased with His One and Only Beloved Son + Jesus, the Christ. In the Name of our Lord + Jesus Christ. Amen.

**Prayer in Pulpit after Sermon:**

Almighty and Everlasting God, we give Thee most hearty thanks that Thou hast given us Thy holy Word as a bright light in the darkness of this present world, and humbly beseech Thee, enable us by Thy Holy Spirit to heed diligently the light of the Word, that the Day-star from on high, Thy Son, with grace divine, may arise in our hearts, and as the true Light continually shine, until the night is fully spent and the great Day at hand; through the same Thy dear Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord, Who liveth and reigneth with Thee and the Holy Ghost, ever one God, world without end. Amen.

**The Votum:**

The peace of God, which passeth all understanding, keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus. Amen.

*Soli Deo Gloria!*