

The Festival of the Transfiguration of our Lord  
St. Matthew 17:1-9  
January 29<sup>th</sup>, 2023  
Sts. Peter and Paul Evangelical Lutheran Church, UAC  
Simpsonville, SC  
St. Michael and All Angels Evangelical Lutheran Mission, UAC  
Augusta, GA  
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.

#### **Sermon Text:**

While he was yet speaking, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them: and behold, a Voice out of the cloud, saying, "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye Him." And when the disciples heard it, they fell on their face, and were sore afraid. And Jesus came and touched them and said, "Arise, and be not afraid." And lifting up their eyes, they saw no one, save Jesus only.

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

O Lord, send out Thy Light and Thy Truth, let them lead us. O Lord, open Thou my lips, that my mouth may show forth Thy praise. O Lord, graciously preserve me, lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be rejected. Amen.

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

Throughout the season of Epiphany our Lord + Jesus has been manifested to us as both God and man. The Savior of the whole world Who came down from Heaven and was incarnate of the Holy Ghost at the annunciation of His birth by the angel Gabriel, and Who was born of the Virgin Mary on Christmas Day, and was wrapped up in swaddling clothes, and laid in a manger is revealed as both God and man. The Lord God came down from Heaven to be born a man out of the womb of the Blessed Virgin. This we stated in no uncertain terms at Christmas. St. John, the Apostle and Evangelist, made this clear in the Gospel reading for Christmas Eve. He Who was in the beginning, was the Word, and the Word was with God and the Word was God. This Word became man born of the Virgin Mary.

On Christmas Day we also bore witness once again to the birth of our Lord + Jesus in our flesh to the Blessed Virgin Mary as the angel announced to the shepherds, and the whole company of Heaven sang, "Glory to God in the Highest! And on Earth peace among men in whom He is well pleased" declaring that this Baby Boy born in Bethlehem was indeed the Lord God. The heavens declared that this Child would be and was the Savior of the world. For only the Lord God in our flesh could deliver us from sin, death, and the power of the devil.

This revealing of our Lord + Jesus as our Savior Who is both God and man in one Person continued throughout the season of Epiphany. Wise-men from the east came and sought this Child, this Baby Boy born to the Blessed Virgin. And despite the lowly appearance and surroundings of the Boy + Jesus, they worshiped Him as a King; they worshiped Him and gave Him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh because He was the Lord God in the flesh. These Wise-men bore witness that this Child was the Lord God in our flesh, even as the angels of Heaven bore witness that the Babe

wrapped up in swaddling clothes and lying in a manger was the Lord God in our flesh.

Our Lord + Jesus was also revealed as the Lord God in our flesh when He was twelve years old and His parents brought Him with them to Jerusalem. He sat in His heavenly Father's temple asking the teachers about the Scriptures. They were astounded by His learning. They also bore witness that this Child was more than meets the eye. His mother also kept all those events in her heart and pondered them throughout His life. This Child's mother bore witness, along with the teachers in the temple, that this Child was the Lord God come down from Heaven to take upon Himself our flesh.

His disciples also bore witness that He was the Lord God in our flesh when He performed His first miracle at the wedding in Cana of Galilee. There He changed water into wine. This was the beginning of signs that He did as a testimony that He was the Lord God in His flesh. And by it His disciples believed on Him.

Last week there were two more who bore witness that the Lord + Jesus was the Lord God in our flesh come down to save us from sin and death. The leper who the Lord + Jesus healed, and then sent him off to the priest to be examined, in order that both the leper who was cleansed and healed by the Lord + Jesus, and the priest who examined him, had to testify that this man was the Lord God; that this man + Jesus, healed this leper from his leprosy. The centurion who came the Lord + Jesus on behalf of his paralyzed servant; who suffered torment because of the paralysis, also bore witness that the Lord + Jesus was truly God and man; that He was the One Who came to heal our afflictions, for the centurion recognized the authority that the Lord + Jesus had. He had true authority not like one of the scribes. His authority was from Heaven. He could command a thing to happen—to be healed—and it was so.

All these individuals have borne witness to the Lord + Jesus, the Man, as being the Lord God throughout the season of Epiphany. Angels, shepherds, Wise-men from the east, the scribes of the temple, His own mother, His disciples, the large crowds, the leper and the priest, and the centurion and his healed servant all bore witness that this was the Beloved Son of the heavenly Father.

Today, on the Last Sunday after the Festival of the Epiphany of our Lord, our Lord + Jesus is revealed fully as both God and man. He was transfigured before Sts. Peter, James, and John. They would later testify that the Lord + Jesus revealed Himself in this way; that He manifested His glory before them in this way. We heard St. Peter's testimony in the Epistle reading. St. John also wrote of this in his writings. They bore eyewitness that the Lord + Jesus was the Savior of the world; that He was the Lord God come down in our flesh to redeem us from sin and death. Moses and Elijah also appeared with the Lord + Jesus on that mountain. They also bore witness that this Man + Jesus was the Lord God. They discussed with Him His approaching suffering, death, and resurrection. The same things we will begin to turn our attention to starting next Sunday with the advent of Gesimatide.

Throughout the season of Epiphany we have been given a whole host of eyewitnesses that the Lord + Jesus is the Savior of the world; that He is the Lord God come down from heaven to be our Redeemer and Lord. Today, even His heavenly Father declares this to be so. A Voice from Heaven declares Him to be His Only-Begotten Son; the Son in Whom He is well pleased. This is the same Voice that declared the same thing at the very beginning of our Lord's ministry on earth. At our Lord's baptism by St. John the Baptist in the Jordan River, the Voice from Heaven declared Him to be His Son in Whom He was well pleased when He came up from the water. The Holy Ghost also declared this Man + Jesus was the Son of God, when He alighted on Him like a dove.

Therefore, my dear friends, since we have this great cloud of witnesses declaring and bearing witness that this Man + Jesus is the Well-Beloved Son of God; that He is God in our flesh, let us also believe on Him and hear Him. For what does He say to us? He says the same thing that He said to His disciples that were on the mountain with Him, "Be not afraid." There is no reason any longer to fear, for

our Lord + Jesus has come down from Heaven; He has taken upon Himself our flesh, and He has perfectly fulfilled the Law on our behalf. In a few weeks He will offer up that perfect, holy and sinless flesh on the tree of the holy cross. There our sins will be paid for in full. There at the cross salvation is found for all those who cling to it in faith.

But our Lord + Jesus did not remain in the grave. He also rose again from the dead on the third day. He was raised as a testimony that our faith truly does justify us before God in Heaven. This is after all, what our Lord + Jesus was discussing with the Prophets Moses and Elijah. They were discussing His resurrection from the dead. We learn this from another Gospel. But, my dear friends, how do we know that there will be a resurrection from the dead? We certainly have the resurrection of our Lord + Jesus as a testimony. The Apostles bore eyewitness to this resurrection from the dead, as they bore witness also of the resurrection of Jairus' daughter, the son of the widow of Nain, and the resurrection of Lazarus. We have all these resurrections recorded for us in holy Scripture.

These are all eyewitness testimonies of our own resurrection from the dead. But there is even one more. For who stands with our transfigured Lord + Jesus on that mountain? He is with both Moses and Elijah. Moses had died and was buried by the Lord God. Elijah was taken up into Heaven as Elisha bore witness in the chariot from Heaven. That they are standing on the mountain alive with the Lord + Jesus shows that all those who cling in faith to the Lord + Jesus; who trust in His death and resurrection for salvation, will be saved and raised again from the dead.

For Elijah and Moses are not dead but living. The Lord God is the Lord of the living. He is the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. He is the God of the living. He is our Lord God come down from Heaven to take upon Himself our flesh, and be our Savior and Redeemer. He will take us to Heaven to live with Him there for all eternity, for we believe what the Voice from Heaven declared, what all the host of eyewitnesses declared, this is the Son in Whom the Lord God is well pleased. He has declared that we need not be afraid, for He has redeemed us from sin and death, and has called us to dwell with Him in His holy Church, where He forgives all our sins, and heals all our infirmities. This One we hear and believe. In the Name of our Lord + Jesus Christ. Amen.

**Prayer in Pulpit after Sermon:**

Almighty God, be pleased to accompany Thy Word with Thy Holy Spirit and grant that Thy Word would increase faith in us; bring into the Way of Truth all such as have erred; turn the hearts of the unrepentant; and for sake of Thy Name grant succor to all heavy hearts and those who are heavy-laden, that they may through the mercy of the Lord Jesus Christ be relieved and preserved so that they succumb not to the temptation of despair but rather that they gain the victory over the world, the flesh, and the devil; through the same Jesus Christ, Thy Son, 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!*