

Grace to you and peace from God our Father and our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Amen.

The word of God for this Transfiguration Sunday is taken from the Gospel of Mark 9:2-9.

“Now after six days Jesus took Peter, James, and John, and led them up on a high mountain apart by themselves; and He was transfigured before them. ³ His clothes became shining, exceedingly white, like snow, such as no launderer on earth can whiten them. ⁴ And Elijah appeared to them with Moses, and they were talking with Jesus. ⁵ Then Peter answered and said to Jesus, “Rabbi, it is good for us to be here; and let us make three tabernacles: one for You, one for Moses, and one for Elijah” — ⁶ because he did not know what to say, for they were greatly afraid. ⁷ And a cloud came and overshadowed them; and a voice came out of the cloud, saying, “This is My beloved Son. Hear Him!” ⁸ Suddenly, when they had looked around, they saw no one anymore, but only Jesus with themselves. ⁹ Now as they came down from the mountain, He commanded them that they should tell no one the things they had seen, till the Son of Man had risen from the dead.”

So far our text. Dear fellow redeemed.

Has anyone here ever said something at the wrong time? You don't need to acknowledge whether or not this has happened, just answer the question in your head.

Even in the short time that I've been in Clarkston I've wished that I could rewind time and take back or change something I've said. We are certainly imperfect people.

I know that I would think back on a situation and wondered why I just didn't listen to the advice that the professors in seminary gave us. This can be extended to all portions of our lives. Little children are told by their parents, “Don't touch that, it's hot!” But what do we do? We touch it. And then immediately go running to our parents for help with our boo-boo.

We are told by our employers how to do our jobs. But for some reason we think we are smarter than they are. We go about our day doing things as we see fit and then cause a problem and sometimes lose our jobs because of it.

The opposite can be true as well. The friends that we have impact us just as much. They may give us poor advice. And regretfully we will follow that as willingly as we shrug off good advice. We might associate ourselves with a certain group of people who tempt us. But unlike our parents who are willing to kiss that boo-boo and put a bandage on it, the group of friends I described will usually scatter before the incident even occurs.

The children of Israel had both things going on. They had the Lord on one side telling them through His chosen prophets to listen to Him. But they also had a group of people making themselves out to be friends who were really evil. That group of friends is typically described in Scripture as the Scribes and Pharisees.

The nation of Israel certainly had the truth within their possession. The Lord decided to send His Holy word to people of that nation. They were a special people chosen by God to handle the oracles of God.

But the Scribes and Pharisees were the ones put in charge by the people to handle it. The problem is that they were unfaithful to the message of the Gospel. The people who they instructed were filled with a message of works by which they were save themselves from God's wrath.

So in our text for today we see that God needed to remind His people of all time that we should **"Hear God's beloved Son!"**

Our text today begins, **"Now after six days Jesus took Peter, James, and John, and led them up on a high mountain apart by themselves."** Previous to our text Jesus and His disciples had left the area of Caesarea Philippi. While traveling on the road Jesus asked the disciples who the people thought He was. The answer is quite important. The opinion of the people was that He was Elijah or one of the prophets. During this trip Jesus revealed to the disciples very plainly that He was about to suffer many things and be killed by the hand of the Chief Priests and Scribes.

This alarmed the disciples greatly. So much in fact that Peter took Jesus aside and rebuked Jesus telling Him that this thing He spoke of shouldn't happen. Jesus in turn rebuked Peter saying that he didn't have in mind the things of God but the things of men.

The Jewish people were waiting for someone to come and free them. But they were waiting for someone who would free them from earthly oppression and restore back to that strong, proud nation as occurred during the reign of Elijah.

The people were not hearing what the word of God was telling them so our account for today was vital in showing the people that they should **"Hear God's beloved Son!"**

After they were up on the mountain Jesus was transfigured before them. The word transfigured means to have an outwardly perceivable change in form. **"His clothes became shining, exceedingly white, like snow, such as no launderer on earth can whiten them."** Our text reveals to us in what way the Lord was transfigured. Mark specifically states that the clothing of the Lord became so white that no launderer on earth could whiten them. It is also stated in another Gospel that the face of the Lord shone. It's interesting to see that Jesus is the only One in our text that is changed. It is a way to clearly show that we should **"Hear God's beloved Son!"**

The people that were there, that didn't have their appearance changed are also found in our text. **"And Elijah appeared to them with Moses, and they were talking with Jesus."** On the way down to the mountain the disciples had stated that the people thought He was Elijah or one of the prophets. How loving is it for Jesus to have those exact people appear to Him for the sake of the disciples with the intention that they **"Hear God's beloved Son!"**

Our text also states **"...and they were talking with Jesus."** The Gospel of Mark doesn't specify what the Lord was about but we do find it recorded in the Gospel of Luke. **Luke 9:31 "30 And behold, two men talked with Him, who were Moses and Elijah, 31 who appeared in glory and spoke of His decease which He was about to accomplish at Jerusalem."**

After being awoken by this wonderful scene the disciples were able to hear to whom the Lord was speaking and what they were speaking about. The very same thing that was the topic on the road. The Lord laying down His life for the sins of all mankind. What a wonderful thing the Lord did for those disciples. They were clearly weak in regards to who the Messiah was going to be. Jesus had been teaching them about themselves and earlier asked who people thought He was. Peter tried to convince Jesus not to go and die and actually showed that he still desired the bread king.

Our Lord in another way for the sake of all of His people showed us that we should **“Hear God’s beloved Son!”** and not listen to our own sinful hearts and the desires of the world. But unfortunately our sinful hearts are slow to hear and understand.

“Then Peter answered and said to Jesus, “Rabbi, it is good for us to be here; and let us make three tabernacles: one for You, one for Moses, and one for Elijah” — ⁶ because he did not know what to say, for they were greatly afraid.”

I can’t imagine what it would’ve been like to be in Peter’s sandals. To see Jesus’ transfiguration and two of the most important patriarchs of the Jewish religion standing before you must’ve been an emotional time. I know that when I’ve had the chance to meet famous people I froze up and really didn’t know what to say. I would stand there staring and would simply ask, “Could I have your autograph.” What Peter was experiencing was on a whole different level. Our text reveals that he offered to make a tent for all three men, **“because he did not know what to say, for they were greatly afraid.”**

Peter likely desired to remain in contact with those patriarchs whom he had heard of his entire life. Effectively Peter was star struck. I know that I can relate to this on a certain level.

But just as Peter was beginning to make plans of his own, the Father intervened. **“And a cloud came and overshadowed them; and a voice came out of the cloud, saying, “This is My beloved Son. Hear Him!”** We need to remember the Lord’s ways are not our ways, and His thoughts are not His thoughts. But He has revealed to us, and most vividly to Peter that we should **“Hear God’s beloved Son!”**

We can be told to listen to someone but the source is a matter of importance. If the person saying listen to what someone is saying doesn’t have any credibility what use is it. The fact that our Heavenly Father revealed Himself in the cloud is of great comfort.

From Exodus 14:19-20 we see why. **“And the Angel of God, who went before the camp of Israel, moved and went behind them; and the pillar of cloud went from before them and stood behind them. 20 So it came between the camp of the Egyptians and the camp of Israel. Thus it was a cloud and darkness to the one, and it gave light by night to the other, so that the one did not come near the other all that night.”**

The Lord revealed Himself in a way very familiar to the disciples and in a way that would show a connection to God. The Father couldn’t show His presence. No one can stand in the presence of God and live. But He showed Himself in a way and with words connected to His appearing. Words that should give us great comfort.

We do not have anything to fear in listening to Jesus. Jesus Christ came asking nothing of us. He came offering everything to us. Mat. 11:28-30 **"Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. 29 "Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. 30 "For My yoke is easy and My burden is light."** The burden of God is that we believe in Him. Something that He even supplies for us. A faith in the transfigured Son of God who was preparing Himself to take our yoke of sin upon Himself. And in turn He gives us a yoke of comfort. A yoke of peace and safety which gives us rest for our souls.

Which results in this situation. **"Suddenly, when they had looked around, they saw no one anymore, but only Jesus with themselves."** What a dramatic scene. The cloud and the light, Moses and Elijah, the voice suddenly all gone and there before them was Jesus.

And Mat. 17:7 records these wonderful words, **"But Jesus came and touched them and said, "Arise, and do not be afraid."** Do not fear what you said. Do not fear the cloud. Do not fear the voice. Do not fear your lack of understanding of who I Am. Do not fear any of your sins. Because I Am who you have heard would come. Not to be a king of this earth but I Am the King of Heaven. The One sent to bring you peace. Take this understanding I have given you and let it be joy for you.

Would you be able to keep such a sight to yourself? I would likely be like Peter and now instead of fear of not knowing what to say, but out of excitement I would want to run about telling everyone what I just witnessed.

But the Lord said to the disciples, **"Now as they came down from the mountain, He commanded them that they should tell no one the things they had seen, till the Son of Man had risen from the dead."**

Once again Jesus needed to make sure that those who were closest to Him wouldn't desire or make others desire that He be made some kind of earthly king. It was vital that He be allowed to fulfill our plan of salvation. Jesus was never intended and will never be a king of this earth. He is who was and who is and who is to come.

But He did instruct to the disciples to only keep back this wonderful sight until His resurrection. Once again our Lord provides us peace in knowing that He not only needed to die, but that He would rise again from the dead. He is not the God of the dead, but the God of the living.

He is your God. Your living God. We do not have the command that Jesus gave these men. Instead we have the command to tell others of this wonderful day in the life of Jesus. Knowing full well on the basis of those witnesses that were there that Jesus is the One in whom we should hear and believe. Amen.

And the peace of God which surpasses all understanding guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus. Amen.