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The Transfiguration of Our Lord (One-Year Series)

January 21, 2018

Text: Matthew 17:1–9

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

The apostle Peter was in the unique position of having been on the Mount of Transfiguration. He saw the Moses and Elijah in heavenly glory. He saw and experienced the Lord's transfiguration Peter witnessed the Lord's facing shining like the sun and His clothes becoming white as light. Peter saw the bright cloud of divine glory. Peter heard the voice of the God the Father almighty.

Yes, Peter was in a very unique position. He saw of brief glimpse into our Lord's true but hidden nature. And what does Peter do with His unique position of being one of the few who saw this great event in the life of our Lord Jesus? Cash in on the hype of such an event? Make a lot of money, increase His fame and fortunes as being chosen *by God* to see what the rest of us can only imagine? Perish the thought!!

Peter obeys the preaching of the God the Father, heard on the Mount of Transfiguration, "This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased; listen to him" (vs. 5). Listen to Jesus; that's what Peter learns. Peter writes in his second epistle (1:17–19):

<sup>17</sup>For when he received honor and glory from God the Father, and the voice was borne to him by the Majestic Glory, "This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased," <sup>18</sup>we ourselves heard this very voice borne from heaven, for we were with him on the holy mountain. <sup>19</sup>And we have something more sure, the prophetic word, to which you will do well to pay attention as to a lamp shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts...

We have the prophetic word, a more sure and reliable testimony to God's will and intention for this world, to which well do well to pay attention. We have Holy Scripture, the books of the Old and New Testaments. And we are to listen to Jesus as He reveals Himself to us through the words, phrases, and sentences recorded in His inspired, inerrant Word.

Using the preaching of God the Father on the Mount of Transfiguration as our guide and outline – “This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased; listen to Him.” – we will pay attention to the prophetic Word from the Old Testament about Christ Jesus, our Lord and Savior. These Old Testament words reveal who Jesus is; for He is the subject and content. Through these words we will listen to God the Father speak about His Son.

The Father proclaimed about Jesus, “This is my beloved Son.” Jesus is God’s Son. Psalm 2:7–9 had already alerted God’s people about the Son of the Father:

<sup>7</sup>I will tell of the decree: The LORD said to me, “You are my Son; today I have begotten you. <sup>8</sup>Ask of me, and I will make the nations your heritage, and the ends of the earth your possession. <sup>9</sup>You shall break them with a rod of iron and dash them in pieces like a potter’s vessel.”

God the Father speaks in timeless eternity to His Son, “You are my Son; today I have begotten you.” The eternally begotten Son was revealed to the world when He was conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary in Bethlehem. This is who the Christ is, the Son of the Father Almighty, begotten of the Father before all eternity. In time, this Son of the Father was conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary. The Lord Jesus is fully and completely God in one person. In Psalm 2, the Father speaks to the Son about His divine inheritance. All who receive the Son as their Savior share in His inheritance; all who reject His grace and life will receive His chastening hand and be shattered with eternal judgment.

We would do well to listen to this Jesus revealed in Holy Scripture. We are people of the nation who make His inheritance by faith.

Next, the Father proclaims that He is well pleased with His beloved Son. It’s pretty natural for parents to be pleased with their children. As a father, I am pleased with my children simply because they are my children. Certainly the Father is pleased with His Son as His Son. But the sure word of prophecy from the OT makes clear why Jesus is well-pleasing to His Father. For Jesus, the Son of the Father is the revelation of the well-pleasing man described in Psalm 15.

<sup>1</sup>O LORD, who shall sojourn in your tent? Who shall dwell on your holy hill?  
<sup>2</sup>He who walks blamelessly and does what is right and speaks truth in his heart;  
<sup>3</sup>who does not slander with his tongue and does no evil to his neighbor, nor

takes up a reproach against his friend; <sup>4</sup>in whose eyes a vile person is despised, but who honors those who fear the LORD; who swears to his own hurt and does not change; <sup>5</sup>who does not put out his money at interest and does not take a bribe against the innocent. He who does these things shall never be moved.

We would do well to listen to the inscripturated testimony of the Son's well-pleasing life. For His perfect life, His well-pleasing obedience in completing the will and purposes of His Father are the foundation of our own salvation. For Jesus is the revelation of who can dwell in God the Father's holy presence. For He walks blamelessly, speaks what is right, rejects the vile while honors those who fear the Lord. He swore to complete His Father's will to save the world even though it cost Him the torment and agony of Calvary. He did these things and shall never be moved from the right hand of God the Father Almighty.

Because of Jesus' well-pleasing, willing obedience to the Father, we are made sons and daughters of God. Through Jesus, we are heirs of the Father's eternal kingdom. Our Lord's active obedience was pleasing to the Father. In Christ Jesus alone, we are declared righteous and well-pleasing to the Father.

We would do well to listen to this Jesus revealed in Holy Scripture. Through faith in Him, we are declared to be well-pleasing children of God the Father.

Finally, the Father gives us a command, "listen to him (Jesus)" (vs. 5). Even though Moses and Elijah are there in heavenly glory with Jesus, we are commanded to listen to Jesus. There are at least two reasons. First, as God the Father's well-pleasing, beloved Son, He is far superior to Moses and Elijah. Jesus is God and man in one person who fulfills the Father's will in all things. Second, Jesus is THE prophet promised by the Father through Moses in Deuteronomy 18:15, 18:

<sup>15</sup>"The LORD your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among you, from your brothers—it is to him you shall listen— ...<sup>18</sup>I will raise up for them a prophet like you from among their brothers. And I will put my words in his mouth, and he shall speak to them all that I command him..."

Our Lord Jesus speaks all that the Father commands, without error or mixture. Jesus is the supreme, authoritative revelation of the Father's will and desire for this world. And we listen to Jesus as we listen to inspired Scripture. God the Father Himself speaks through His Son through the words of the Bible. All our hope, present, future and into eternity, is built upon hearing Jesus from the Old Testament scriptures as

well as the New Testament scriptures. Turn your listening ears to Jesus by hearing the words of the Bible. Learn them, read them, live upon them, and be nourished by them.

This morning, I am presenting you a faithful, God-pleasing way to hear and know Jesus. It's the pattern of Christian devotion established in Hebrews 1:

<sup>1</sup>Long ago, at many times and in many ways, God spoke to our fathers by the prophets, <sup>2</sup>but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed the heir of all things, through whom also he created the world. <sup>3</sup>He is the radiance of the glory of God and the exact imprint of his nature, and he upholds the universe by the word of his power. After making purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high, <sup>4</sup>having become as much superior to angels as the name he has inherited is more excellent than theirs.

After preaching that the Father speaks through His Son – the exact imprint of divine nature –, that the Son upholds the universe by the word of his power, and that the Son secured purification for sinners, the writer to Hebrews then quotes 8 Old Testament texts. This is listening to Jesus, the author and perfecter of our salvation.

The theme and content of the Bible is the present and eternal salvation of sinners won through the perfect, life, death, and resurrection of the Lord Jesus. To hear that message of salvation, we must listen to Jesus, the Jesus who speaks through Holy Scripture.

We have something more sure than Mount of Transfiguration experiences: the prophetic word of Holy Scripture. We do well to pay attention to Christ Jesus, the Jesus of the Bible.

✠ In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. ✠ Amen.

Now the peace of God which surpasses all understanding, keep your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus unto life everlasting. Amen.