

“Listen to Him”

“And they saw His glory” – His glorious face and dazzling white garments. What an epiphany – a manifestation – a showing forth that this man is truly God! So, let me ask you – why doesn’t He always manifest His glory like this? Why doesn’t Jesus come down the Mountain of Transfiguration with His face glowing and His clothes shining. Why not this radiant glory at His birth, or growing up – or always?

Why not show this glory throughout the Old Testament? As we heard last week, the Lord was with Joseph – but he didn’t see the glory of the Lord. And why not now – for you – after all, He promises, “I will be with you always.”

God the Father answers us with His voice from the cloud – “This is my Son, my Chosen One; listen to Him!” This is the epiphany that we need – God revealing Himself to us BY HIS WORD. Why? Because we live by faith, not by sight.

Sight can be deceiving. We look at a successful person and think that God must favor that person, that he is blessed – when in reality, what we cannot see, is that he does not believe in God, or the gifts He offers.

Thomas said that he had to see to believe – but seeing isn’t believing. Again, our sight can be deceiving. Our sight cannot fully comprehend what God is doing. He may very well be at work – but we look on and think – how can this be for our good?

Take God’s people of old, Israel. They were often attacked by their enemies – at God’s direction. He was showing them His wrath caused by their rebellious sin – all for the purpose of calling them to repentance – that He might restore them once again. But that’s not what they see.

Before Jesus ascends the Mountain of Transfiguration (taking with Him Peter, James and John) – He had given them and the other disciples this warning. “For whoever is ashamed of me and of my words, of him will the Son of Man be ashamed when He comes in His glory and in the glory of the Father and of the holy angels.”

And now, here on the mountain, the Father says – “Listen to Him!”

Jesus is not alone on the mountain – Moses and Elijah appear with Him, talking to Him. If we have listened to Jesus – then we have heard Him say that He has not come to abolish the Law and the Prophets, but to fulfill them. And now, the Law and Prophets (signified by Moses and Elijah) stand with Jesus on the mountain – but the Father says, “Listen to [Jesus].”

It’s not that their words don’t matter – that the Old Testament is abolished and we can throw it away – but rather, that all of which the Law and the Prophets have spoken have been brought to their completion in Jesus. So, don’t hold on to the words of Moses and Elijah, and be ashamed of Jesus and His words.

In Jesus, we see that the Law of God is good – that it shows us the good life that God desires for all people. It also shows us that we fall short of what God desires, and our sin separates us from God.

In Jesus, all that the Prophets have spoken about the Savior to come, is now fulfilled – it is finished. Jesus is the sacrifice that atones for the sin of the whole world. In Jesus, sinners are redeemed, and reconciled to our heavenly Father.

“Listen to Him!” He’s talking to you, folks. Listen to Jesus, who this very morning said – “I baptize you.” Patia was baptized in the name of Jesus for the forgiveness of all her sin, and she received the gift of the Holy Spirit. Did you see that? No. But we live by faith, not by sight.

We listen to Jesus who has baptized you. He says that it is a washing of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit – that you are born again, born from above – you are a child of God.

“Listen to Him” – who says that He confesses you before your Father in heaven. He is not ashamed of you. For He has redeemed you, sanctified you, and presents you to the Father as one who is holy and precious – because you “listen to Him” – you live by faith in Jesus and His words.

“Listen to Him” – when He tells you to “take eat, take drink, my Body, my Blood, for you, for the forgiveness of your sins.

Again, you do not see His glorious Body and Blood – you do not see the shackles of your sins removed – but with His Body and Blood He sets you free from the sin that binds you. You “listen to Him” – living by faith in His Word, not by sight.

Dearly beloved, “Listen to Him!” whose glory was revealed on the Mountain of Transfiguration – for that same glory is revealed to you this day by His Word. And what is His glory? That Christ, the Son of God has come to save sinners. That Christ has come for you, and for your salvation. Amen.

The peace of God which passes all understanding, guards your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus. Amen.