

The Transfiguration of our Lord
 Luke 9:28-36

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“And behold, two men were talking with him, Moses and Elijah, who appeared in glory and spoke of his departure, which he was about to accomplish at Jerusalem.”

No guts, no glory, no pain, no pleasure. Without hard work there is nothing to be achieved. Through hard work and struggle you can achieve your goals, and your dreams. In early 2016, the Chicago Cubs had a goal to get to the World Series, but without all the hard work winter in conditioning and spring training they wouldn't have been able to be crowned world series champs.

A wrestler who wins the state in his weight division does so with great sacrifice. He works hard after practice to eat right and not put on any extra weight. We too struggle. We work hard to get ahead to provide a good future for ourselves and our family.

Apart from struggle there is no achievement and apart from the Cross there is no glory. In today's gospel we have an account of what happened on top of the mountain. Jesus gives us a glimpse of glory. Moses and Elijah are present; the two pillars of the Old Testament.

Moses pointed to Jesus, throughout his life he represented the law and he testified about the coming Messiah. In **Deuteronomy 18:15** "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.

Elijah represents the prophets-all those who testify to the coming Christ. During the transfiguration Moses and Elijah are back doing what they always did-confessing to Christ. What is the goal or objective of the Christian Church? What is her focus?

Many people will answer this question wrong. Some say the goal of the church is evangelism, to make disciples of all nations. Others will say it's to do good works; to cloth the naked, to feed the hungry.

Others say the goal of the church is to be fervent in your prayers, to be zealous in your prayer life. All these goals are good; all these goals are in the Bible. But none of these goals are THE objective of the Christ's Church. So, what's the goal of the Church? Moses and Elijah's conversation with Jesus give us the answer.

“And behold, two men were talking with him, Moses and Elijah, who appeared in glory and spoke of his departure, which he was about to accomplish at Jerusalem.”

They spoke about Jesus' Exodus. What does this mean? How did Jesus depart? He was crucified. It is what he is getting ready to fulfill at Jerusalem. His body being broken and his blood being shed for you and your salvation.

So often the church gets it wrong. So often the church misses what the goal is, why? Because she's caught up in her own struggles, and difficulties.

The church faces struggles and difficulties, because she's poor, she's hungry; she's hated and persecuted for the sake of Christ and his gospel. The goal of the church is Jesus. If the focus isn't on Jesus, then the church gets it wrong.

In Luke 9:22, Jesus speaks these words to his disciples: "The Son of Man must suffer many things and be rejected by the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and on the third day be raised." Before it unfolds, Jesus tells us how glory comes.

The weight of the sin of the world begins to bear on Christ's shoulders. The mount where the Transfiguration happens is not some place where they can stay; they must leave this mountain and go to another mountain. It is the mountain of Olives.

On the eve of Jesus Exodus, he prays 3 times" in **Luke 22:42-44**, Jesus prayed "Father, if you are willing, remove this cup from me. Nevertheless, not my will, but yours, be done.

Jesus prays, father if there is any other way show me now. Yet, not my will be done, your will be done. Is this a moment of weakness for Jesus? Is he trying to sidestep the Cross? No! Jesus knows exactly what the Cross brings. It brings the wrath of God. It brings God's hatred and anger against the sins of the world that are placed on Jesus.

All your sins and my sins were placed on Jesus. For all the times you acted in wickedness, Jesus bleeds, for every time you have had another God, whatever that might be; money, possessions, whatever took the place of the one true God. Jesus goes to the Cross to suffer your punishment.

For every time you took God's name and used it in vain, Jesus hands are pierced with nails. For every time you broke the third commandment: Remember the Sabbath Day, by keeping it Holy. Every time you refused to be in God's house and hear his Word and receive his body and blood; Jesus suffers your hell and he dies your death.

Paul says in **Galatians 2:21**" "I do not nullify the grace of God, for if justification were through the law, then Christ died for no purpose." You deny Jesus' Cross if you think you can get to heaven by what you do. Before all these events Transfold, Jesus takes us to the Mt of Transfiguration, to show us his glory.

Jesus was forsaken on the Cross, so you won't have to be, He gives you life and salvation through the Glory of the Cross. This is what comes throughout all the struggle—it's GLORY. And his glory surpasses all the glory this world has.

The goal, and focus of the church is Jesus. Jesus is the Alpha and the Omega, He is the beginning and he is the end. Jesus says in **John 14:3**" "And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, that where I am you may be also."

Jesus preparation has everything to do with what he fulfills at Jerusalem on the Cross for you. Glory only comes through the Cross—it's what Moses and Elijah testified to, it's

what God the Father testified to through the cloud. Verse 35 **“And a voice came out of the cloud, saying, “This is my Son, my Chosen One; listen to him!”**

And yet the church struggles wanting to know what the goal is. It doesn’t listen very good. It spends more time talking about what it is doing rather than focusing on what Christ has done.

The church struggles with leaders, it struggles with sin. It struggles with attacks from Satan, bringing false teachings into the church by saying something else is more important than listening to Jesus.

Peter was on top of the mountain, he not only heard the testimony of Moses and Elijah, he saw these things unfold. But when it came to the Cross, when it came to the crucifixion he struggled, he denied our Lord three times. Do you think that if Peter struggled, you won’t?

We all struggle with this issue of faith. The key during our struggle is where we turn. If we turn to our self as Peter did, we deny Christ. If we turn our eyes to Jesus, who struggles for us, the one who died our death, there we see glory. We see what comes through the struggle of Jesus works—its salvation, and life everlasting.

The church is like a sports team that needs to be reminded why they put in all the hard work and sacrifice all year long. Brothers and sisters in Christ, this is why we gather on Sunday. This is why we gather as the church, not to get a to do list, but to hear Christ and him crucified and risen, who took away all your sins.

Paul boasts in **1 Corinthians 2:2** “For I decided to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ and him crucified.”

Jesus Word’s strengthens you, and forgives you. Jesus speaks during absolution, He forgives your sins. In Baptism he puts his name on you. I baptize you in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

Jesus gives life to the church through his Words that bring light to our hearts. The apostle John was also present at Jesus transfiguration. When he sees Moses and Elijah, he sees a glimpse of his future revelation that God would give him to write the Book of Revelation

Revelation 7:9-12 After this I looked, and behold, a great multitude that no one could number, from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and languages, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed in white robes, with palm branches in their hands, ¹⁰ and crying out with a loud voice, "Salvation belongs to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb!" And all the angels were standing around the throne and around the elders and the four living creatures, and they fell on their faces before the throne and worshiped God, saying, "Amen! Blessing and glory and wisdom and thanksgiving and honor and power and might be to our God forever and ever! Amen."

Revelation 7:13-14 Then one of the elders addressed me, saying, "Who are these, clothed in white robes, and from where have they come?" ¹⁴ I said to him, "Sir, you know." And he said to me, "These are the ones coming out of the great tribulation. They have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.

This Sunday is the end of the Epiphany. We close out the season that reveals who Jesus is. Next Sunday, we start Lent and hear about Jesus journey to the Cross and what he did for you-crucified and risen to take your sins away. Amen.