

Transfiguration

February 15 & 16, 2026

1 How good, Lord, to be here! Your glo - ry fills the night;
your face and gar - ments, like the sun, shine with un - bor - rowed light.

Sermon – 1. To Witness Your Glory

Matthew 17:1-2

^{17:1} After six days Jesus took with him Peter, James and John the brother of James, and led them up a high mountain by themselves. ² There he was transfigured before them. His face shone like the sun, and his clothes became as white as the light.

The bigger the secret, the harder it is to keep—right? Have you ever had a friend or family member share something so compelling, so life-changing, that every part of you wants to ignore the whole “secret” part and start telling people? Maybe one of your children has told you that you’re going to be a grandparent—followed immediately by the words, “But you can’t tell anyone yet.” Yet? You’ve got to be kidding! Even if you manage to keep quiet, the urge is still there, isn’t it? It’s hard to keep a secret that big. However, you know that you can’t say a word...at least until it’s Facebook official.

I wonder if the three disciples on the mountaintop felt that same tension on the day of our text. They were about to witness something only a handful of people in all of history had ever seen—the very glory of God revealed before their eyes. And then they were told to keep it to themselves, at least for a time.

Why? Perhaps, Jesus wanted them to see the full picture. He wanted them to understand the whole story—from the humble beginning at Christmas to the suffering and sacrifice of Good Friday. Only by seeing the glory on the mountain could they begin to grasp the depth of what would unfold at the cross.

Think about it—that’s really what the season of Epiphany is all about in the Church Year. What began with a brilliant star guiding the wise men to the infant Jesus now culminates on a mountaintop, where the radiant glory of God shines from Christ Himself. What started at the Jordan River, when Jesus was baptized and a voice from heaven declared, “**This is my Son,**” now reaches a climax with that same voice, those same words, and one important addition: “**Listen to him!**” What began in humility—a baby laid in a manger—now pulls back the curtain, if only for a moment, to reveal the true glory behind it all. For a brief time, we are given a glimpse of the divine glory of the Son of God.

As we begin the journey toward the cross in Lent, we are reminded exactly who it is that goes there. Soon Jesus will come down one mountain only to climb another. Before those events unfold, he wants his disciples to understand who he truly is. They had already seen him heal the sick, give sight to the blind, and even raise the dead—but what they were about to witness would surpass it all.

It is good to be here. The Transfiguration was necessary. The disciples needed to see it and hear it—to experience it. As people who learn through our senses, especially sight and sound, this moment left a lasting impression. On that mountain, their eyes and ears were opened to see Jesus more clearly for who he really is.

“There he was transfigured before them. His face shone like the sun, and his clothes became as white as the light.” The word transfigured is related to our word *metamorphosis*—like a caterpillar becoming a butterfly. On that mountain, Jesus’ hidden glory broke through. For 33 years it had been veiled beneath humility, poverty, and human flesh.

Here the disciples saw where his true glory is found. Not merely in power, but in love. Though all-powerful and all-knowing, he chose to live in perfect obedience for us and then die for us—so that our sins would be forgiven and we would share in his glory forever. Let’s join in singing about that glory in the next two verses of the hymn of the day.



3 Ful - fil - ler of the past, and hope of things to be,
4 Be - fore we taste of death, we see your king-dom come;



we hail your bod - y glo - ri - fied and our re-demp-tion see.
we long to hold the vi - sion bright and make this hill our home.

Sermon – 2. To Hear Your Father

Matthew 17:5-8

⁵ While he was still speaking, a bright cloud covered them, and a voice from the cloud said, “This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased. Listen to him!” ⁶ When the disciples heard this, they fell facedown to the ground, terrified. ⁷ But Jesus came and touched them. “Get up,” he said. “Don’t be afraid.” ⁸ When they looked up, they saw no one except Jesus.

There is a small word repeated twice in the next part of the text. It’s not as obvious in the NIV, but in the King James Version it stands out: **“Behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them: and behold a voice out of the cloud...”**

That little word—**behold**—means, *“Pay attention!”* God is calling them to listen carefully. A bright cloud surrounds them; what had been clear is suddenly hidden. They are wrapped in the mystery and presence of God, reminded that they are not alone—God surrounds them.

Then, **behold**, a voice speaks from the cloud. Jesus had brought them up the mountain, but now the Father directs their focus to His Son. They are to see Jesus as the beloved Son—and they are to listen to Him.

The words of the Father words are not meant to frighten them. They are not like Dorothy, Tin Man, Lion and Scarecrow going before the mighty Wizard of Oz. These are words that are meant to comfort. They would never forget what they saw on that mountaintop.

Those same words are spoken to us. The same promise still stands—and it is worth our full attention. God’s love has no limits. It does not come to an end. On the mountain, the Father revealed who Jesus truly is—the Messiah who takes away the sin of the world. He surrounds us with that same love and says, **“Listen to him.”**

And what does Jesus say? To those burdened by sin, he declares, **“You are forgiven.”** Forgiven by the blood of the Son of God. Listen to him. Moses and Elijah were sent to proclaim that promise to struggling sinners. Now that message is fulfilled in Christ—and proclaimed to us.

That leads us to the third **“behold.”** **“Behold, there appeared to them Moses and Elijah, talking with him.”** We’re not told what all they discussed on that mountaintop, but surely it centered on who Jesus is—the promised Messiah. For years they had spoken and written about him to the people of Israel. Now the One they foretold stood before them.

Let us remember those two faithful messengers as we reflect on the next verse of our hymn.



2 How good, Lord, to be here your beau - ty to be - hold,



where Mo - ses and E - li - jah stand, your mes-sen-gers of old.

³ Just then there appeared before them Moses and Elijah, talking with Jesus. ⁴ Peter said to Jesus, “Lord, it is good for us to be here. If you wish, I will put up three shelters—one for you, one for Moses and one for Elijah.” ⁹ As they were coming down the mountain, Jesus instructed them, “Don’t tell anyone what you have seen, until the Son of Man has been raised from the dead.”

For a brief moment on that mountaintop, the curtain was drawn back again, and they were given a glimpse of heaven. They saw the great prophets of the Old Testament standing there in glory. But that glory was not reserved only for the prophets. It was meant for them, too.

The disciples wanted to remain on that mountaintop—and who can blame them? But there was still work to be done. Jesus was headed toward the cross. The disciples would soon be sent to proclaim who he is.

As the full picture unfolded before them, it would no longer be a secret to keep. Following Jesus is not about hiding his glory, as Peter, James, and John had to do for a time. It is about proclaiming it.

When Jesus rose from the dead on Easter, everything changed. The greatest revelation—the empty tomb—had been accomplished. Now he sends each of us: Go. May God give us the courage to share the glory of Jesus with the world, for his glory shines through us. Amen.



5 But you, Lord, do not stay. With mer - cy res - o - lute
6 How good, Lord, to be here! Yet we may not re - main;



you leave this glo - rious hill to die— our per - fect sub - sti - tute.
but since you bid us leave the mount, come with us to the plain.