

## Transfiguration of our Lord

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In Psalm 50 we hear:

*“Our God will come and will not keep silence; with consuming flame before, and round about a raging storm. God calls the heavens and the earth from above to witness the judgment of the people.”*

For some, the announcement of the approaching judgment of God will be received as GOOD NEWS!

For others, the announcement of the approaching judgment of God will be received as TERROR!

The first six verses of Psalm 50 introduce God as the speaker for the rest of the Psalm.

Please pick up a Pew Bible and turn to Psalm 50, it is found on or near page 509 in the Pew Bible. Please follow along as I read the rest of Psalm 50 beginning at verse 7.

(Read verses 7-23.)

God’s judgment takes center stage in these verses.

**Is** God’s judgment GOOD NEWS or TERRORIZING NEWS? Depends doesn’t it.

In verse one we heard, *“The mighty one, God the LORD, speaks and summons the earth from the rising of the sun to its setting.”* That means that God is summoning all people from the beginning of time to the end of time.

**Not one person is excluded from the coming judgment.**

And those who are summoned have only one task and that is:

## **TO LISTEN!!!**

To the faithful God says; *“Offer to God a sacrifice of **thanksgiving** and **pay your vows** to the Most High. Call on me in the day of trouble; I will deliver you, and you shall glorify me.”*

To the unfaithful God says; *“Mark this, then, you who forget God, or I will tear you apart, and there will be no one to deliver.*

*Those who **bring thanksgiving** as their sacrifice honor me; to those who **go the right way** I will show the salvation of God.”*

We hear very clearly in these words that what matters to God is for us to have an attitude of giving thanks **to God**.

But how can this truly be done? How can we truly have an attitude of thanksgiving towards God?

Martin Luther's explanation of the Third Article of the Apostles' Creed states:

*"I believe that I cannot by my own understanding or effort believe in Jesus Christ my Lord or come to him. But the Holy Spirit has called me through the Gospel, enlightened me with his gifts, and sanctified and kept me in true faith."*

It is **the work of the Holy Spirit** to open our eyes, to open our ears, to open our hearts, and to open our minds to Jesus Christ as our Lord and Savior, and to enable us to have an attitude of thanksgiving towards God for freely giving us the gift of our salvation.

It is Saint Paul's conviction that **IF** the Gospel Message is veiled; that if it is hidden, obscured, or unknown to people – it is only veiled to those who have been blinded by Satan.

We express some problems with Paul's expressed thought by asking question such as:

*"Can the Gospel's Message truly be veiled?"*

*"Is not the Gospel's Message the power of God?"*

*"Is not the Gospel's Message the life-line to those who are perishing?"*

*"Is not the Gospel's Message supposed to protect people from Satan?"*

What Saint Paul is suggesting here is that it is the intent of Satan to blind us, to make us deaf, to harden our hearts, to close our minds, and to thus make us un-believers.

That is Satan's intend, **NOT GOD'S!!** And since there is free will in the world Satan does have the ability to affect some people in this way and they turn away from God.

The answer to this intent by Satan is the proclamation of our faith in this world: ***"By God's grace alone we are saved by faith alone on account of Jesus Christ our Lord and Savior lone."***

We proclaim Christ Jesus to be **The LIGHT** that has come into the vast darkness of this world of ours.

Our calling **as believers** is to proclaim **this LIGHT** into the darkness that we come in contact with in our everyday dealings.

Peter, James, and John saw Jesus become dazzling **LIGHT** in front of them and we hear Peter say, *"Rabbi, it is good for us to be here; let us make three dwellings, one for you, one for Moses, and one for Elijah."*

The mistake the disciples make is that of equating Jesus to Elijah and Moses. They interpret what they have seen as Jesus being on par with those prophets of old.

Then a cloud overshadowed them and they were terrified. From this terrifying cloud came God's voice, ***"This IS My SON, the Beloved, LISTEN to Him!"***

God sets them straight.

Jesus who is transfigured before them, Jesus who becomes brilliantly dazzling white light is not on equal footing with Moses and Elijah.

Jesus who is transfigured before them, Jesus who becomes brilliantly dazzling white light  
**IS GOD'S SON!!!**

The words of Mark chapter 9 verse 7 remind us of Psalm 50 where God summons all of humanity from the beginning of time to the end of time, and they are summoned to  
**LISTEN** to HIM.

As they came down from the mountain Jesus ordered Peter, James, and John to tell no one about what they had experienced on the mountain top, until after the Son of Man had risen from the dead.

Verse ten of Mark, chapter nine, furthers the story:

*“So they kept the matter to themselves, **questioning what this rising from the dead could mean.**”*

With Peter, James, and John we too walk in the way of discipleship **without** complete understanding of what we have seen, heard, felt in our hearts, or understood in our minds concerning Jesus as **The LIGHT of the World** come to save us from ourselves and from the darkness of this world.

Martin Luther's words of explanation of the Third Article of the Apostles' Creed help us with our questions:

*“I believe that I cannot by my own understanding or effort believe in Jesus Christ my Lord or come to him.*

*But the Holy Spirit has called me through the Gospel, enlightened me with his gifts, and sanctified and kept me in true faith.*

*In the same way he calls, gathers, enlightens, and sanctifies the whole Christian church on earth, and keeps it united with Jesus Christ in the one true faith.*

*In this Christian church day after day he fully forgives my sins and the sins of all believers.*

*On the last day he will raise me and all the dead and give me and all believers in Christ eternal life.*

*This is most certainly true. ”*

**This is most certainly true!!**

Amen.