

"Imagine you've spent years studying or teaching a truly monumental structure"

- For 12 years, Tricia taught about Victoria Falls - located on the Zambezi River on the border between Zambia and Zimbabwe in southern Africa, near Livingston Zambia.
- She taught about it's discovery, its breathtaking heights, and every nuance that could be studied or explained.
- But nothing could prepare her for the day she actually stood at the top of the Falls
- All the books, photos, and descriptions, as good as they were, simply cannot compare to the awe-inspiring experience of being directly in its presence.

In the Old Testament, God continually gave His people glimpses, blueprints, and photographs of His glory.

- He revealed His divine power through burning bushes, thundering mountains, pillars of fire, and clouds of His presence filling His Tabernacle and Temple.
- These were powerful, undeniable displays of His majesty, showing His worth and authority.

But on the Mount of Transfiguration, three disciples—Peter, James, and John—were given a moment to step beyond the blueprints and the photographs.

- They were ushered into the very inner sanctuary, not of a building, but of God's own Son. They saw, not a temporary display of divine power, but the *Divine Person* Himself, Jesus Christ, unveiled in His unmasked, radiant glory.
- It was the ultimate reveal, far surpassing anything seen before, inviting us to not just know *about* God's glory, but to behold it in the face of Jesus."

Matthew 17:1 - Now after six days Jesus took Peter, James, and John his brother, led them up on a high mountain by themselves;

- You may remember what we studied last week – Peter's confession Thou art the Christ
- Jesus said some of you will not die until you see the Son of Man coming in His kingdom.

Matthew 17:2 - ² and He was transfigured before them. His face shone like the sun, and His clothes became as white as the light. ³ And behold, Moses and Elijah appeared to them, talking with Him. ⁴ Then Peter answered and said to Jesus, "Lord, it is good for us to be here; if You wish, let us make here three tabernacles: one for You, one for Moses, and one for Elijah."

Matthew 17:5 - ⁵ While he was still speaking, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them; and suddenly a voice came out of the cloud, saying, "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. Hear Him!" ⁶ And when the disciples heard *it*, they fell on their faces and were greatly afraid. ⁷ But Jesus came and touched them and said, "Arise, and do not be afraid." ⁸ When they had lifted up their eyes, they saw no one but Jesus only.

Matthew 17:9 - ⁹ Now as they came down from the mountain, Jesus commanded them, saying, "Tell the vision to no one until the Son of Man is risen from the dead."

Matthew 17:10 - ¹⁰ And His disciples asked Him, saying, "Why then do the scribes say that Elijah must come first?"

The Glory Revealed

Two Insights into the Transfiguration...Three Action Steps

The Transfiguration of Jesus on the mountain is a pivotal moment that reveals the true identity of Christ.

- To truly grasp its significance, we must look back to how God, in His infinite wisdom, chose to reveal His glory in the Old Testament, setting the stage for the ultimate display in His Son.

Divine Power on Display in the Old Testament

Throughout the Old Testament, God demonstrated His glorious power through awe-inspiring manifestations that left no doubt about His presence and might. These were not mere symbolic acts but tangible, visible, and often terrifying displays of His divine essence.

- **The Burning Bush and Mount Sinai:**
 - When God called Moses, He appeared in a **burning bush** that was not consumed, a miraculous display of His holy presence (Exodus 3:2-6).
 - Later, at Mount Sinai, the glory of the Lord descended in a **thick cloud, fire, smoke**, and terrifying thunder, causing the mountain to tremble.
- **The Tabernacle and Temple:**
 - When the Tabernacle was completed, *God's glory filled it*, preventing Moses from entering (Exodus 40:34-35).
 - Similarly, when Solomon dedicated the Temple, the glory of the Lord filled the house, demonstrating God's acceptance and His dwelling among His people (1 Kings 8:10-11)
 - This was God's powerful presence taking up residence in a consecrated space.
- **The Pillar of Cloud and Fire:**
 - For forty years in the wilderness, God's glory led His people as a pillar of cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night (Exodus 13:21-22).
 - This constant, visible manifestation of His power guided and protected them, a testament to His sovereign care.

These Old Testament encounters were powerful, mediating God's glory through external elements, clouds, fire, and physical structures. They were clear, undeniable *displays* of God's power and presence, but they pointed forward to a fuller revelation.

Divine Power on Display in the Old Testament

Divine Person on Display in Jesus

At the Transfiguration, the glory of God is no longer merely displayed *through* creation or *within* a building; it is embodied and emanates *from* the very person of Jesus Christ.

He is the ultimate revelation of God's glory.

Matthew 17:2 - 2 and He was transfigured before them. **His face shone like the sun, and His clothes became as white as the light.**

- This is not an external manifestation like the burning bush or the cloud on Sinai, but an internal, inherent glory bursting forth from His divine nature. He is the light, the radiance of God's glory
- **Hebrews 1:3** – (Jesus is...) "...the brightness of *His* glory and the express image of His person, and upholding all things by the word of His power...
- One Commentator said, "Jesus "did not become something that He was not but He was transformed into something that He had always been, yet obscured in the Incarnation...
 - It prefigured what lay beyond the cross. It unveiled for a brief glimpse what believers shall gaze upon without hindrance in eternity.
 - It foreshadowed the triumphant splendor of Christ the King upon His return to the earth at the consummation of the ages so that "every eye will see Him."" (Precept Austin: Mt. 17:2 – [Link](#))
- Matthew tells us that Moses and Elijah appeared as well (v. 3)
 - The significance... Moses (representing the Law) and Elijah (representing the Prophets) appear with Jesus,
 - Remember Jesus said in the Sermon on the Mount – **Matthew 5:17** - "Do not think that I came to destroy the Law or the Prophets. I did not come to destroy but to fulfill.
 - Jesus is not only the fulfillment of the Law and the Prophets; he is the embodiment of them.
 - **Embodiment of the Law:** Jesus perfectly *obeyed the Law in every detail*, living a sinless life, which no other human could do (Hebrews 4:15; 2 Corinthians 5:21). More than just obeying it, **He is the righteous standard that the Law pointed to**. He is the living manifestation of God's holy character that the Law reflected.
 - **Embodiment of the Prophets:** The Prophets spoke of God's character, His plans, and the coming Messiah. **Jesus is the very personification of the God they proclaimed and the Messiah they longed for**. He is the living Word (John 1:1, 14), the living message that the prophets delivered. His life, death, and resurrection are the ultimate realization of all prophetic hope.
 - At the Transfiguration, the appearance of Moses (Law) and Elijah (Prophets) with Jesus, and the Father's declaration to "listen to Him," powerfully illustrates that Jesus is the culmination and the living personification of all God revealed in the Old Testament. He is not just *connected* to them; He *is* what they were all ultimately about.
 - **Matthew 17:5** - ⁵ While he was still speaking, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them; and suddenly a voice came out of the cloud, saying, "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. Hear Him!"
 - This voice affirms Jesus' unique divine identity and authority, placing Him above Moses and Elijah.
- **The Incarnate Glory:**

- The Transfiguration is a powerful preview of this incarnate glory, a moment where the disciples were allowed to glimpse the divine Son in His unmasked splendor.
- It reveals that the ultimate display of God's power is in His Person, His Son, who is God with us (Matthew 1:23).
- **John 1:14** - And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.
- **2 Peter 1:16** – "...but were eyewitnesses of His majesty."

The Transfiguration is the crescendo of God's self-revelation. The awesome power displayed in the Old Testament, which pointed to God's majesty and holiness, ***finds its ultimate fulfillment in the divine person of Jesus***. He is the perfect image of the invisible God, in whom all the fullness of God dwells (Colossians 1:15, 2:9, ESV). Therefore, to truly see the glory of God, we must look to Jesus.

Three Implications: Responding to the Revealed Glory

"Knowing that the Old Testament points to Jesus, the Transfiguration calls us to respond in a way that truly transforms our lives."

The Transfiguration challenges us to respond clearly and faithfully...Here's How...

1. Let us look to His worth.

I can only image what that moment must have been like...The Transfiguration was a moment where the veil was pulled back, and the disciples glimpsed the inherent, incomparable worth of Jesus Christ.

His face shone like the sun, and His clothes became dazzling white, a visible manifestation of His divine essence. This was not a temporary borrowing of glory, as with Moses, but an unveiling of His true, intrinsic glory.

- **We must Recognition of Supremacy:**
 - We are called to recognize Jesus' supremacy above all else.
 - He is greater than Moses (the Law) and Elijah (the Prophets) because He is their fulfillment.
 - **Luke 24:27** - And beginning at Moses and all the Prophets, He expounded to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself. (Everything in the OT Points to Jesus)
 - **Colossians 1:18** - And He is the head of the body, the church, who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in all things He may have the **preeminence. Highest rank**
- **When we truly grasp His worth, our natural response is worship.**
 - The disciples were terrified, falling on their faces, a posture of reverence and submission before such overwhelming glory – Mt. 17:6
 - **Revelation 4:10-11** - the twenty-four elders fall down before Him who sits on the throne and worship Him who lives forever and ever, and cast their crowns before the throne, saying: ¹¹ "You are worthy, O Lord, To receive glory and honor and power; For You created all things, And by Your will they exist and were created."

- **Revelation 5:13** - ⁹ And they sang a new song, saying: "You are worthy to take the scroll, And to open its seals; For You were slain, And have redeemed us to God by Your blood Out of every tribe and tongue and people and nation, ¹⁰ And have made us kings and priests to our God; And we shall reign on the earth." ¹¹ Then I looked, and I heard the voice of many angels around the throne, the living creatures, and the elders; and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands, ¹² saying with a loud voice: "Worthy is the Lamb who was slain To receive power and riches and wisdom, And strength and honor and glory and blessing!" ¹³ And every creature which is in heaven and on the earth and under the earth and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, I heard saying: "Blessing and honor and glory and power. *Be* to Him who sits on the throne, And to the Lamb, forever and ever!" ¹⁴ Then the four living creatures said, "Amen!" And the twenty-four elders fell down and worshiped Him who lives forever and ever.
- **Prioritizing Christ:** To look to His worth means to re-evaluate our own lives and priorities.
 - Is He truly first? We want Jesus as Savior... just enough to get us out of hell, but not enough to change our lives –
 - Paul said in Romans 10:10 – Confess him as Lord – In other words, He is in control!
 - Is His value reflected in our time, our resources, our decisions? We are to "seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness" (Matthew 6:33, ESV), and that kingdom is centered on the King, Jesus.

2. Let us listen to His Word.

Perhaps the most direct command from the Transfiguration account comes from the Father Himself:

Matthew 17:5 - ⁵ ... "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. Hear Him!"

2 Peter 1:16-18 - For we did not follow cunningly devised fables when we made known to you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eyewitnesses of His majesty. ¹⁷ For He received from God the Father honor and glory when such a voice came to Him from the Excellent Glory: "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." ¹⁸ And we heard this voice which came from heaven when we were with Him on the holy mountain.

2 Peter 1:19-21 - ¹⁹ **And so we have the prophetic word confirmed**, which you do well to heed as a light that shines in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts; ²⁰ knowing this first, that no prophecy of Scripture is of any private interpretation, ²¹ for prophecy never came by the will of man, but holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit.

Hear Him – Greek word is "akoo-o" Hebrew is "shema"

- **"Attentive hearing that leads to understanding, belief, and obedient action.**
- It means taking His words seriously and allowing them to shape our lives entirely.
- **Matthew 7:24** - "Therefore whoever **hears** these sayings of Mine, **and does them**, I will liken him to a wise man who built his house on the rock: (whose house withstands the storm)

- **Matthew 7:26** - "But everyone who **hears** these sayings of Mine, and **does not do them**, will be like a foolish man who built his house on the sand: (his house fell, and great was the fall of it)
- **Matthew 11:15** - He who has ears to hear, let him hear!

Hearing and Obeying are inextricably link!

- **"True hearing is always followed by doing."** James 1:22 – Be doers; not hearers only
- **"Obedience is the language of love for God."**
 - Not as burdensome rule-keeping, but as a joyful expression of devotion.
 - John 14:15 - "If you love me, you will keep my commandments."
- **"The measure of our faith is seen in our steps of obedience."**
 - We don't earn faith by works, but works (obedience demonstrates that our faith is real)
 - James 2:18 - and I will show you my faith by my works.
- **"God's commands are not limitations on our joy, but pathways to His blessings."**
 - This reframes obedience as beneficial and life-giving, not restrictive.
 - Relentless Pursuit – His way is better
 - **John 15:10-11** - If you keep My commandments, you will abide in My love, just as I have kept My Father's commandments and abide in His love.¹¹ "These things I have spoken to you, that My joy may remain in you, and *that* your joy may be full.
- **"To truly 'Hear Him!' means to humbly follow Him."**
 - A direct echo of the Transfiguration command, reinforcing that listening and following are inseparable.
 - John 10:27 - My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me.
- **"Obedience is our 'Yes, Lord,' to His divine authority."**
 - A simple, powerful affirmation of God's sovereignty.
 - Luke 6:46 - But why do you call Me 'Lord, Lord,' and not do the things which I say?

Matthew 28:18-20 - And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, "All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. ¹⁹Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, ²⁰**teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo**, I am with you always, *even* to the end of the age." Amen.

These statements emphasize that obedience is a holistic response of faith, love, and action to the revealed will of God, supremely found in the person and words of Jesus Christ.

- This divine directive elevates Jesus' teaching and authority above all others.
- **Authoritative Instruction:** If God Himself commands us to listen to Jesus, then His words are not optional suggestions but life-giving, authoritative truth.
- In essence, "Hear Him!" is the divine call for humanity to submit to the sovereign authority of Jesus Christ. It demands our undivided attention, our unwavering faith, and our complete obedience to His every word. It is the core of discipleship and the pathway to truly knowing God.

Listen to His Word Personally

- God Time – How's your time with the Lord this week? 4 or More?
- We Teach the HEAR Journal Method (Highlight, Explain, Apply, Respond)

Listen to His Word Collectively –

- Gather Time, Group Time – Did you come prepared to Hear from God?

3. Let us live for His renown.

Matthew 17:9 - ⁹ Now as they came down from the mountain, Jesus commanded them, saying, "Tell the vision to no one until the Son of Man is risen from the dead."

Matthew 4:19 - Then He said to them, "Follow Me, and I will make you fishers of men."

The ultimate purpose of knowing and experiencing the glory of God in Jesus is not for our own enjoyment alone, but so that His greatness might be made known to the world. We are called to live lives that magnify His renown.

- We are Fishers of Men (Mt. 1:17) We are Ambassador (2 Cor. 5:19-20) We are Witness (Acts 1:8)
- **Glorifying God in All Things:**
 - Our lives are to be a living testament to His glory.
 - **I Corinthians 10:31** - Therefore, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God.
 - This means conducting our lives with integrity, compassion, and a spirit of service that reflects the character of Christ.
- **Sacrificial Living:**
 - Living for His renown often requires sacrifice and self-denial, just as Jesus Himself taught
 - **Matthew 16:24** - Then Jesus said to His disciples, "If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me.
- It means putting His kingdom and His glory before our own comfort or ambition, striving to make His name famous in a world that desperately needs Him.

These three steps are interconnected: ***the more we look to His worth, the more diligently we will listen to His Word, and consequently, the more passionately we will live for His renown.***

- The Transfiguration reminds us that Jesus is indeed worthy of all our devotion.
- Let us fix our attention and our affection on Jesus – Let's stop spending our lives on trivial pursuit and temporal pleasures.

Because of His Infinite Worth, Put your Yes on the Table

- Say Yes to Whatever God calls you – Some are waiting on a Call...
 - "If God wants something from me in his kingdom, he'll let me know." And barring some special instruction, I assumed his expectation of me was to find some career that suited me, do it well, go to church, tithe, and stay out of trouble.
 - J.D. Greear, *What are you going to Do with your Life?* Told this story...

- ...I realized that the lostness of the world and urgency of the gospel demand a different response. A vision came into my mind. I was walking alongside a set of railroad tracks when I noticed a small child stranded on them. In the distance, I could hear a freight train headed right toward him. I knew that in such a moment, I wouldn't calmly get down on my knees and say, "Oh God, if you want me to do something, just let me know," and then wait for some special instruction from heaven. I would know God's will in that moment without even asking: save the child. (Grear, *What Are You Going to Do with Your Life?*, p. 5).

Every follower of Jesus is called to leverage his or her life for the Great Commission (Grear, p. 36)

- All Christians are called to ministry. Not necessarily to vocational ministry but to leverage their lives for the Great Commission. (Grear, 37)
- Whatever you are good at, do it well for the glory of God, and do it somewhere strategic for the mission of God

Every Vocation done for the Glory of God is Holy

Parents, The most important contribution to advancing the Kingdom of God may not be what you do but who you raise!

- "Parents, your greatest influence on the Great Commission may come through the sons and daughters you disciple at home."

Turn your eyes upon Jesus. Look full in His wonderful face; and the things of earth will grow strangely dim – in the light of his glory and grace.