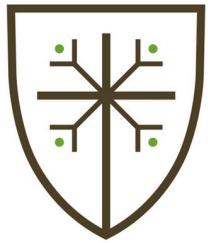




SERMON NOTES



February 15, 2026

SERMON INFO

TITLE

"Hope For Dark Days"

PREACHER

Rev. Tim Frickenschmidt

TEXTS

Exodus 24:12-18

2 Peter 1:16-21

Matthew 17:1-9, 14-16

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What things would you identify in your life that captivate your attention and distract from the beauty of Christ's glory?
2. What does it look like to heed the Father's command to listen, follow, and obey the Son?

SERMON IN SUMMARY

This week, Tim wrapped up our series for Epiphany with the story of Jesus' transfiguration, asking the question, "What hope does the Transfiguration give for our dark days?"

The Difference

We first have to consider the difference between what we see Jesus doing in the gospels and what he is echoing from the Old Testament. In the Exodus reading, we see Moses take three men up the mountain. God speaks to them out of a cloud, and the cloud of his presence transfigures Moses. When Jesus transfigures, there is no cloud. He shines first and then the cloud appears, coming out from within him. Exodus is reenacted but Jesus plays the part of both the prophet and God.

But if we are honest with ourselves, do we care? Does the unveiling of Jesus' true beauty and glory matter to us? And, if not, why? We are so often surrounded by so many other "glories." The brightness of Jesus' glory doesn't penetrate that deeply when so many other things with their beauty and importance captivate us. When life gets dark though, those things that captivate you with their glory are what you turn to in order to keep going. Will they keep you going though or will they tear you apart?

The Direction

To answer that question, we look at the direction of Jesus in the Gospel of Matthew. The same word used for Jesus "taking" Peter, James, and John up the mountain is the same word used when Satan "takes" Jesus up the mountain in his temptation. Satan tempts Jesus with the offer of staying at the mountain top. And here at the Transfiguration, Peter's request sounds similar to Satan's offer. He gets a glimpse of Jesus' glory and doesn't want to go back down to the brokenness and failures of the world below. Situations like the little boy in verse 14 are hopeless unless God comes down the mountain. The hope of the transfiguration is that "God gets involved" in the dark days of our lives. All of the darkness will eventually end because Jesus defeated all demonic work and activity in this world.

In response to this, God the Father tells the disciples (and us!) to listen. To follow. To fully and completely surrender our lives to him. In the passage immediately preceding the transfiguration Jesus tells the disciples to "take up their cross and follow me... that whoever saves his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life will save it." But here, Peter says no. He doesn't want to give up his life. Peter, like many of us, says no to his cross. But Jesus says yes. Listen to the one who bore THE cross as you bear your cross. The delight, approval, and acceptance of the Father that is yours in Christ will carry you through the dark days.