

Sermon for the Feast of the Transfiguration of Our Lord

'And he was transfigured before them, and his face shone like the sun, and his clothes became white as light.'

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Dear Christian, you know nothing about your nature. You find your glory in minutia. Success, making money, having a happy family, living a moral life. All these are good. But they are not your glory.

Was it not said that *'you shall have dominion over all creation'*? Do you not know who you are?

Was it not said of you, *'Ye are gods'*? Foolish humanity. You have been told for so long that you are but animals that you have begun to believe it. I have come this day to tell you that *ye are gods, and sons of God*.

For it is written: *'Let us make man in our image, after our own likeness.'* This is the final cause of man, his ultimate purpose, to *'participate in the divine nature.'*

You wonder whether your dog or cat shall be in heaven, as if your dog or cat are so good that they shall be transported to the *sapphire pavement* of the *eternal Jerusalem*. I tell you, you are unworthy of the *sapphire pavement*, you mortal. *All things must be made new*, if they are to enter into the *kingdom of the heavens*.

If you shall not enter the *kingdom of the heavens* without being *made new*, neither shall your pets; they are but shadows of what their reality is; even as you now are but a shadow of what you will be. Therefore, think not of them, but of the glorification for which you are destined, as children of the everlasting God.

The Son of Man is Transfigured, shining with uncreated light, the radiance of the divine, the unbegotten Father. He is not transfigured because He is the specially chosen Son of God. He is transfigured because He is what you were meant to be:

perfect humanity; Adam unfallen; resurrected flesh. He reveals to us in His Transfiguration not His divinity, but the truth and reality of our humanity; or what our humanity should have been.

Yet this same Son of Man must bleed on a cross, that He might win for us our transfiguration. Therefore you who bleed, you who suffer, you who endure this fallen life; knowing that the Son of God did bleed as we do, shall you not believe that we shall shine as the Son of Man did?

You do not know your own dignity. For you think of money, you think of pleasure, you think of success, you think of luxury, you think of relaxation. You think of rest.

All of these are fallen things, to seek after ambition and lust. All of them, but rest, for rest is the one thing that the Lord delights in. For this reason, *after six days Jesus took with Him Peter and James, and John his brother, and led them up a high mountain by themselves. And he was transfigured before them. That He might rest on the seventh day; that He might show us the glory of eternal rest.*

Now I tell you, if your pets and all created reality are but shadows of what they shall be, so too are you but a shadow of who you will be. You think your salvation will be that you will be like you, but better. I tell you, by God's Word, that you will not be you, but what you were meant to be.

For you, even as Paul, who says that *we shall not know what we will be like in the resurrection, but we know that we will be like unto Christ*; so too now do we not know who we are now, hence our anxiety, our restlessness. But it shall be revealed to us who we shall be; who we were ever meant to be; what our eternal meaning was and ever shall be in the life of the world to come.

For the Lord *'will give you a white stone, with a new name written on the stone that no one knows except the one who receives it.'* A stone with your true name, your true meaning, that meaning which, despite the mediocrity and shallowness of this passing life shall reveal to you the infinite necessity and depth of your existence, for God does no thing without purpose. [Then all the nonsense of this life *shall be broken with a rod of iron, and dashed to pieces like a potters vessel.*]

Then you shall know rest.

St. Peter sees Christ and the two prophets transfigured, and offers them tents,

that they might rest. He is not wrong; for in seeing the completion of man in Christ, and all the hopes of man's desires in the prophets, it is right, divinely right, that all things come to a rest. This is God's final will, and man's final cause.

Yet the cloud passes, the prophets fade away. For that final rest is not yet ours to have, we who live in this world.

Until then, that glorious day, when you shall leave this kingdom of Satan, this broken earth, know the glory, the deity, into which you are baptized, and:

'lift up your eyes, and see no one but Jesus.'

To Christ be all Glory, Honor, and Worship, Now and Forevermore.

Amen.

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Preached by Pastor Fields

Sermon Texts: Psalm 2, Exodus 24:8-18; 2 Peter 1:16-21; Matthew 17:1-9.