

Collect

Almighty Father, whose Son was revealed in majesty
before he suffered death upon the cross: give us grace to perceive his glory,
that we may be strengthened to suffer with him
and be changed into his likeness, from glory to glory;
who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever. **Amen**

The First Reading from 2 Corinthians 4 vs 3-6

³ And even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing. ⁴ The god of this age has blinded the minds of unbelievers, so that they cannot see the light of the gospel that displays the glory of Christ, who is the image of God. ⁵ For what we preach is not ourselves, but Jesus Christ as Lord, and ourselves as your servants for Jesus' sake. ⁶ For God, who said, "Let light shine out of darkness,"^[a] made his light shine in our hearts to give us the light of the knowledge of God's glory displayed in the face of Christ.

The Gospel Reading from St Mark 9 : vs 2-9

² After six days Jesus took Peter, James and John with him and led them up a high mountain, where they were all alone. There he was transfigured before them. ³ His clothes became dazzling white, whiter than anyone in the world could bleach them. ⁴ And there appeared before them Elijah and Moses, who were talking with Jesus.

⁵ Peter said to Jesus, "Rabbi, it is good for us to be here. Let us put up three shelters—one for you, one for Moses and one for Elijah." ⁶ (He did not know what to say, they were so frightened.)

⁷ Then a cloud appeared and covered them, and a voice came from the cloud: "This is my Son, whom I love. Listen to him!"⁸ Suddenly, when they looked around, they no longer saw anyone with them except Jesus.

⁹ As they were coming down the mountain, Jesus gave them orders not to tell anyone what they had seen until the Son of Man had risen from the dead.

This is the Gospel of the Lord. **Praise to you, O Christ.**

Reflection, from Graeme Slocombe, Deanery Lay Chair

Mark 9 vs 2-9 The Transfiguration

Let us pray: Lord as we reflect on your words today, open our hearts and minds to you, help us to deepen our faith in you, and may our meditations always be acceptable to you **Amen**

When I first read this in preparation for today, my first thoughts were of fear, and of the disciples being afraid, and of how I would have felt if it had been me on that mountaintop, The theme through Marks gospel is that of Jesus being the Son of God, and this passage today reveals his divine nature, it is not meant to frighten, it is to give them confidence for the glory that will follow the suffering, It is the high point of Marks Gospel, it is the visible revelation of the nature of Christ

The transfiguration was a vision, a brief glimpse of the true glory of the King, a special revelation to three of his disciples. Peter, James and John, Why just these three disciples? Well, they were acknowledged to be trustworthy leaders, they were men of great spiritual ability And when the time came to articulate what had happened, they

would be trusted. And they would be believed, they could convince and influence others. It had to be a small number of witnesses, if all the disciples had been there, and maybe a crowd too, there would have been no way to prevent widespread chaos, because having seen the glory of Jesus Christ on display, you can just imagine that those people would have come running down the hillside and been unable to restrain themselves. They would have repeated what they had seen, and Jesus would have been pushed into becoming the political Messiah that the people wanted him to be. His face shone like the sun, and his garments became white as light, whiter than any bleach says one translation. This transfiguration anticipates the resurrection and the ascension, its affirmation of everything Jesus had done, and was about to do. And this is the greatest testimony to Jesus Christ, of any passage in the Bible. If you want to know who Jesus is, here it is,

Now to verse 5, and I have often wondered about Peters comment here to put up 3 dwellings, it seems such an odd thing to say. But Peter was a bit of an action man, not really a contemplative person, I think we have to put ourselves in his shoes, he is literally speechless, as we would be, nothing like this has ever been seen before, and what was he to say, so Peter wanted to try and prolong this marvellous experience, he is however misguided, and focussing on the wrong thing, there would be times ahead for worship and for adoration, but this was a time of Learning, a time for prayer, for listening, for meditation. Our actions are more likely to obtain the desired results if we first take time to pray, to read, to listen, to reflect and to meditate. How often have we responded to emails or texts before giving it proper thought? I had an instance last week where I responded too quickly to an emotional email, and immediately regretted sending it. And again, sometimes our busyness stands in the way of clear thought. Then a cloud descends, maybe as a rebuke to Peter, and they were very afraid, and they heard the voice 'This is my Son, Listen to him', these few words summarize the meaning of the Transfiguration. On this mountain, God reveals Jesus as his Son, the beloved, the one in whom God is well pleased, the one who teaches with Gods authority, the one to whom we must listen. It was a very special event where God allowed 3 privileged disciples to witness this spiritual experience, which was designed to strengthen their faith for the challenges ahead. This glimpse of glory is intended to sustain us as we face the challenges of life, to help strengthen us on the road that will ultimately bring us into the endless joy of heaven.

As they are coming back down the mountain Jesus tells them not to tell anyone until after the resurrection, why did he say this? Well Jesus knew that until the resurrection they would not fully understand what they had just witnessed, and would not be able to explain what they did not understand. Indeed in the next verse of Mark after our reading today, they ask Jesus a question that reveals their misunderstanding. The 3 of them knew that Jesus was the Messiah, but they had so much more to learn about the significance of his death and his resurrection. Timing is so important, Once Jesus is revealed publicly as the Messiah, things will move quickly. Jesus has much work still to do, and that work will be interrupted if he is revealed too early. Only after the resurrection will the disciples be able to proclaim Christ, because only after the resurrection will they understand him. The truly amazing thing is how quickly the disciples will forget. Peter James and John have seen Jesus revealed in glory, but their courage will fail them at the cross. Peter will deny Jesus 3 times. Perhaps there is a lesson here for us. We, too, have experienced the hand of God in our lives, but we sometimes find faith difficult when trouble looms.

So, what does God want from us today? Not tents or tabernacles put up in memory of his Son, but for us to simply obey what God said on the mountain 'Listen to Him' ..our discipleship will be more complete if we keep our spiritual eyes open and to see the glory that often shows itself in our daily lives, I have memories from last week as the sun shone brightly on Linda as she preached on delighting in Gods creation, and to say thank you for our many blessings, for the daily grind is where we live. Let us find the glory that is present there.

Let's pray

Father we pray that you would help us to understand this scripture, it would have been so terrifying to have stood beside Peter, James, and John on that mountain, To see what they saw, so give us we pray, the eyes of understanding, **Amen**