

# THE TRANSFIGURATION OF JESUS ~ AND OURS

Dr. David Harper 8/6/2017

Lectionary Readings: Ex. 34:29-35; 2 Peter 1:13-21; Luke 9:28-36

The Scene: Jesus takes Peter, James and John to a mountain top for a time of prayer where much to their surprise they encounter Jesus as they've never seen him and two others from the distant past: Moses, leader of the Exodus, the Lawgiver; and Elijah, the mightiest and boldest of Israel's Prophets

But wait, there's more! Peter's "interruption" brings on an appearance of the rest of the Holy Trinity: God the Holy Spirit (in the cloud); and God the Father (in the voice)

## 1. JESUS' DEPARTURE (Greek ἔξοδος – exodos, as in The Exodus. Literally, "going out.")

James I. Packer: *"This was not just a way of leaving this world but also a way of redeeming his people, just as the exodus from Egypt that Moses led was to redeem Israel from bondage."*

So also Jesus comes to lead us out of the bondage of sin's PENALTY as well as its POWER.

## 2. JESUS' ARRIVAL a.k.a. "The ASCENSION" (Acts 1:8-11; John 20:17)

*"...go to my brothers and say to them, 'I am ascending to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God."*

Message: Because of what Jesus, our elder brother accomplished on the cross, those who believe in him and follow him know God as Father as well. We are family and will be reunited at his return! This speaks volumes about:

## 3. OUR OWN DEPARTURE AND ARRIVAL.

*"We know that while we are at home in the body we are away from the Lord.... and we would rather be away from the body and at home with the Lord." 2 Cor. 5:6-8*

Peter himself, in today's Epistle reading uses the same word *EXODOS* in 2 Peter 1:13 in speaking of his own death:

*"I know that the putting off of my body will be soon, as our Lord Jesus Christ made clear to me. And I will make every effort so that after my departure you may be able at any time to recall these things." 2 Peter 1:13*

*“See what kind of love the Father has given to us, that we should be called children of God; and so we are. The reason why the world does not know us is that it did not know him. Beloved, we are God’s children now, and what we will be has not yet appeared; but we know that when he appears we shall be like him, because we shall see him as he is. (1 John 3:1, 2)*

**THIS IS OUR DESTINY!** How do you view the hardships of this life? Do you view your life with eternity in mind, with his ultimate destiny in mind?

*“So we do not lose heart. Though our outer self is wasting away, our inner self is being renewed day by day. For this light momentary affliction is preparing for us an eternal weight of glory beyond all comparison, as we look not to the things that are seen but to the things that are unseen. For the things that are seen are transient, but the things that are unseen are eternal.”*  
2 Cor. 4:16-18

#### **4. HOW WE LIVE IN THE MEANTIME and in the MEAN TIMES**

Back to Peter’s “**bright idea.**” But let’s give the guy a break! He rightly recognized and appreciated the majesty and glory and beauty he saw. But Jesus leads them (and us) to the OTHER “mountain.”

*“If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. For whoever would save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake will find it.”*  
Matthew 17:24, 25 (Jesus to the Twelve, six days before the Transfiguration.)

**Finding life is not just about heaven someday, but life here; real living even in the nasty here-and-now.**

Justification (past)                      Sanctification (present)                      Glorification (future)

In the meantime God is doing something important in your life and mine. **He is transfiguring us into the image and likeness of Jesus.** This is SANCTIFICATION or what it means to become *fully and completely human.*

*“And we all, with unveiled face, beholding the glory of the Lord, **ARE being transformed** into the same image from one degree of glory to another.”* 2 Cor. 3:18

Same word “transfiguration” – the verb form of the word *metamorphosis* as in how caterpillars become butterflies - changed from the inside out. And that’s what the Holy Spirit is doing for you and me. Getting rid of the “works of the flesh” (pride, greed, anger, lust, etc.) and replacing them with “the fruit of the Spirit” (love, joy, peace, patience, etc.)