

## A Sight for Sore Eyes

### **Matthew 17: 1-9**

You know, some of us may need eye surgery or our eyes just aren't what they use to be...then again...sometimes it's only in hindsight that we can see 20/20 anyways...

As I was thinking on the next installment of my series, "Cradle to The Grave: The Transfiguration"...and how I am I going to approach this...my mind kept going to this concept of sight.

Do you know how precious eyesight is – I think it's one of the greatest gifts that God gave...

Our eyes allow us to see the beauty that surrounds us... We can see the beauty of God's creation, we can see the beauty of our family & friends...

Can you imagine having a son or daughter, a mom or dad, and never being able to see them – not knowing what they really look like...

Imagine not being able to see the blue sky or the pastures green with grass, or all the beautiful colors in the arc of the rainbow...

Can you imagine what it would be to live in a dark world – a world without light – a world without sight...

Many of us may have perfect eyesight...at least good enough eyesight, yet we don't see – Isn't that a strange thought...

One theologian once said, "The eyes are the windows into our soul..."

Our eyes, like windows, allow light to shine in...

Both our eyes & windows also allow us to see what is outside...

We need both – We need the capability to absorb what is on the outside – allowing it to come into our lives...

You would never build a house without windows, would you?

Not only do we need the light that shines in the window – but we need to be able to see through the window – so we can see & experience a whole other world, outside our window...

In a similar way, our scripture this morning is another window that allows us to see our Lord Jesus Christ in a NEW WAY...

It was on top of the mountain that through the Transfiguration of Christ, God allowed the disciples, Peter, James, & John to see Jesus Christ in His true identity as the Son of God...

Matthew tells us that Jesus: *“was transfigured before them, and His face shone like the sun, and His garments became white as light...”* (v2)

This is a very interesting & symbolic description of who Christ really is...

For in the Gospel of John, Jesus describes Himself as “the light of the world...”

We know that in the natural world, light is necessary for the life...for the growth of plants, animals, & even human beings...

It’s also necessary for spiritual life & growth...

Many people refer to their spiritual knowledge & Christian journey by saying, *“I have come to see the light”* or *“the light has shown upon me...”*

Another words, they’ve been enlightened, they no longer live in darkness – but they now live in the light of Christ...

It’s said that a picture is worth a thousand words...

Maybe you've heard this one before:

“I'm careful of the words I say, to keep them soft & sweet.

I never know from day to day, which ones I'll have to eat...”

As the disciples followed Jesus Christ, Jesus often spoke to them, teaching them lessons of life...

Through His words, He often gave them words of warning about the corrupt & phony religious leaders of their day & time...

He often gave them words about His true identity...

And on many occasions, He spoke words about His departure...

But words can only go so far... It's obvious that the disciples didn't comprehend everything Jesus was telling them...

Look at just the previous chapter in Matthew when Jesus had to rebuke Peter because he just didn't get it after Jesus laid out what needed to happen at the crucifixion.

That's why Jesus did a lot of His own ministry...what do I mean by that?

He knew that a picture was worth a thousand words... That's why He not only used words, but He used His hands...

In the presence of His disciples, Jesus healed the sick, He gave sight to the blind, He made the dumb to speak, & the deaf to hear... He fed the 5,000... He walked on the water...

He was painting pictures for His disciples to see... beautiful, powerful pictures...

Almost as to say, “Don’t you see, I am the Son of God, I am Jesus the Christ... I am the light of the world... And I have come to bring sight to the blind...

But even after all of this, Christ knew that His disciples couldn’t fully understand His message...

He knew that they needed another sign, another picture

So, Jesus took His executive group, the inner circle of the disciples, and they take a little short retreat to the top of the mountain to where there will be very little talking – but where Jesus will paint one very powerful picture...

It’s a supreme picture – overwhelmingly powerful picture...

The Transfiguration...

What a picture!

I get goose bumps just thinking about it...

On the mountaintop, God reveals His ultimate Word, what John describes in his gospel as “the Word made flesh and dwelt among us..”

The truth of that Word is revealed to these 3 disciples – the 3 who would become the anchors of the early church...

The picture that was painted for them, showed the full glory of heaven through Jesus the Son...

For Jesus was revealed as the light of the world... His face lit up like the light of the sun – His clothes turned white as light... and then suddenly, there standing with Jesus was Moses & Elijah...

Moses – the great Old Testament lawgiver and a prophet—indeed the prototype of Jesus...

Elijah – the greatest of all prophets but was also related to the law of Moses as symbolizing the one who would one day turn people's hearts back to the covenant ([Mal 4:4-6](#))....

In other words, Moses is a typological figure who reminds us of the past (the Exodus), while Elijah is an eschatological figure who points to the future as a precursor of the Messiah.

Together – The Law & the Prophets...

If you read ahead to **Matthew 22: 40**, you'll see that phrase..."<sup>40</sup> All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments."

It was the common way that the Jews referred to the Old Testament – "The Law And The Prophets..."

Can you see the connection... Can you understand the significance of this trinity – Moses, Elijah, & Jesus?

Here we have the Law & the Prophets standing there talking to Jesus – the One who came to fulfill the law and the One who fulfills the words of the prophets...Not abolish them...fulfill them

The picture painted for the disciples is the One who has come to fulfill the promises of scripture...

And as if that wasn't enough – A cloud from heaven comes and from that cloud, God Himself speaks saying, "*THIS IS MY SON, THE BELOVED; WITH WHOM I AM WELL PLEASED; LISTEN TO HIM!*"

This harkens back to Jesus' baptism, When The Holy Spirit came down like a dove and God said these same words.

This was just too much for the disciples... They couldn't believe what they were seeing, but when they heard the voice speak from heaven, the Bible says, "*they fell to the ground and were overcome with fear...*"

Do you blame them?

I think we would have been overcome with fear also...

This story is really hard for us to imagine...

It's easy to read, but hard to comprehend...

Just imagine, if you can, what would happen if God showed Himself to us this morning...

Imagine coming into the sanctuary, greeting each other and then quietly praying to yourself for God's presence... And then suddenly, in the middle of the service, out of nowhere, comes this great bright light – a blinding light that fills the whole sanctuary...

All you can see is this great, bright, shining light...

And then, out of nowhere you hear this powerful voice speaking to you...

What would you do?

What if God really showed up at The LCN one Sunday...

What would you do?

Would you fall down in fear like the disciples...

They were so overwhelmed that it knocked them to the ground...

Friends, can't you see?

If you're really sitting there wondering what it is you would do if God really showed up in Lakeville one Sunday... boy – I've missed the mark!

**GOD IS HERE!**

Can't you see Him?

Can't you hear Him?

Can't you feel Him touching you?

Or do you, like the disciples, need a picture...

Well, I'll try to paint a picture for you...

Before God's Church can see the glory of Christ, we have to experience and understand the meaning of His glory...

We have to see Him for who He really is...

We have to see Him with our own eyes & know in our hearts that He is the Son of God –

He is the One who has come to fulfill the Law & to fulfill the words of the prophets & the scripture...

He is the Word made flesh... And He has come so that we may have life, and life more abundant...

Can you see the picture?

Christ – A sight for sore eyes!

What we have before us is the Holy, Powerful Picture of the real love of God...

Friends, open your eyes... I want you to see the whole picture – the Holy Picture...

Because it's only when we can see the Holy picture, that we can experience the Holy, Supernatural, Power-filled Christ in our lives...

When we do this... watch what that Holy Christ does in our lives...

He reaches down & touches us...

Look at our scripture in verse 6, when the disciples realized what they were seeing & hearing, when the true picture of the Holy Christ was revealed to them, the Bible says, *“they fell to the ground and were overcome by fear... But Jesus came and touched them, saying, “Get up and do not be afraid...”*

Jesus touched them...

Researchers today believe that our sense of touch is important...

they suggest touching & hugging as a form of therapy, which appears to give us health & well-being...

I don't know if Jesus actually hugged the disciples, but the Greek word for touch means an intimate feeling – it also means to light, to kindle & to heal...

So, when the disciples were touched by Jesus, their hearts & souls were kindled with the light of Christ...

They were healed...

Their fears were removed & they could rise with confidence...

Someone who has been touched by Jesus is never the same...

Once touched by the Master, we are healed & our lives are changed and that allows us to have an intimate relationship with Christ...

Every time Christ reaches down & touches us, in a sense, He is transfiguring us – from what we are, to what He would have us to be...

Transfigure means to change – When we are touched by Christ, His touch changes us...

And as we are changed, He sends us out into the world to touch others  
IN HIS NAME...

Can you see the picture?

Isn't it a sight for sore eyes?

But there's something else you need to see this morning...

Not only is Jesus Christ the Word made flesh –

Not only is He the Son of God –

Not only is He the Holy Master of our lives –

HE IS OUR FRIEND...

When He reached down & touched the disciples, verse 8 says that,

*“when they looked up, they saw no one except Jesus...”*

I think this is a picture of friendship...

When they looked up, all they saw was Jesus, clothed again in full humanity...

The cloud was gone...

Moses & Elijah were gone...

No voice, No light...

Just Jesus – their old friend...

He helps them to their feet & together they head back down the mountain...

They had walked up the mountain as friends & now they walk down as friends... except... as they walked down the mountain, the disciples knew the truth... they knew;

The Messiah is their personal friend...

The glorified God is their personal friend...

The almighty God is their personal friend...

It's the picture of truth...

Jesus said in **John 15: 15**, "*No longer do I call you servants... but I call you friends...*"

Friends, what a friend we have in Jesus...

Not only is He Holy – He is personal...

He knows us & He wants us to know Him... Can you see the picture?

Maybe you can – maybe you can't...

As I said earlier, some of us need our eyes checked... Maybe you feel it & you know it, but you just don't understand it...

Maybe you hear the voice of God – but you're not quite sure what He's saying...

Maybe you need to take a hike up the mountain this morning, because on the mountain God reveals great things to us...

God paints powerful pictures on the mountaintop... And He wants you to see it...

The question is, what kind of picture do you want God to show you this morning...

Maybe you don't know who Christ really is...

You've heard about Him, you have ideas... but you haven't really seen Him in all of His glory as your personal Lord & Savior, or as your friend...

Maybe God wants to show you that this morning...

Or maybe your dealing with some problems & life is kind of got you overwhelmed & you just can't see how it's all going to work itself out & be okay...

Maybe God wants to show you that this morning...

Or maybe you just feel a sense of loneliness this morning & you're searching for "something" that will bring fulfillment in your life...

Maybe you know that you're not living the life that God wants you to live...

Maybe God wants to show you that this morning...

Or maybe you just feel disconnected, maybe your searching for a place to call home... a place where you can be surrounded by the love of Christ...

a place where you can fit into the family of faith...

maybe God is leading you to join this Church this morning...

Maybe God wants to show you that this morning...

Friends, whatever is missing in your life, Jesus Christ can fill that void...

That's what Christ came to do... That's His mission... That's the picture God wants us to see...

Open your eyes --- See Christ in all of His glory --- And say, "Thanks be to God!"