

# The Transfiguration of Our Lord

Hymns: 126, 135, 37, 36

The INTROIT

(Ps.84:1-2a)

*P: The lightnings lightened the world:*

**C: the earth trembled and shook.**

*P: How amiable are Thy tabernacles, O Lord of hosts:*

**C: my soul longeth, yea, even faintest for the courts of the Lord.**

The COLLECT

O God, who in the glorious transfiguration of Thine only-begotten Son has confirmed the mysteries of the faith by the testimony of the fathers, and who, in the voice that came from the bright cloud, didst in a wonderful manner foreshow the adoption of sons, mercifully vouchsafe to make us coheirs with the King of His glory and bring us to the enjoyment of the same; through the same Jesus Christ, Thy Son, our Lord, who liveth, and reigneth, ever one God, world without end.

The FIRST LESSON

**Isaiah 61:10-11**

I will greatly rejoice in the LORD, my soul shall be joyful in my God; for he hath clothed me with the garments of salvation, he hath covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decketh himself with ornaments, and as a bride adorneth herself with her jewels. For as the earth bringeth forth her bud, and as the garden causeth the things that are sown in it to spring forth; so the Lord GOD will cause righteousness and praise to spring forth before all the nations.

The GRADUAL

(Ps.110:1; 96:2,3)

*P: Thou art fairer than the children of men:*

**C: grace is poured into Thy lips.**

*P: The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit Thou at My right hand:*

**C: until I make Thine enemies Thy footstool. Hallelujah! Hallelujah!**

*P: Sing unto the Lord, bless His name; show forth His salvation from day to day:*

**C: Declare His glory among all people. Hallelujah!**

The EPISTLE

**2 Peter 1:16-21**

For we have not followed cunningly devised fables, when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eyewitnesses of his majesty. For he received from God the Father honour and glory, when there came such a voice to him from the excellent glory, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. And this voice which came from heaven we heard, when we were with him in the holy mount. We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts: Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation. For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.

And after six days Jesus taketh Peter, James, and John his brother, and bringeth them up into an high mountain apart, And was transfigured before them: and his face did shine as the sun, and his raiment was white as the light. And, behold, there appeared unto them Moses and Elias talking with him.

Then answered Peter, and said unto Jesus, Lord, it is good for us to be here: if thou wilt, let us make here three tabernacles; one for thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elias.

While he yet spake, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them: and behold a voice out of the cloud, which said, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him.

And when the disciples heard it, they fell on their face, and were sore afraid. And Jesus came and touched them, and said, Arise, and be not afraid. And when they had lifted up their eyes, they saw no man, save Jesus only.

And as they came down from the mountain, Jesus charged them, saying, Tell the vision to no man, until the Son of man be risen again from the dead.

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## Isaiah 61:10-11 — “I Will Greatly Rejoice in the Lord”

### INTRODUCTION

- I. I WILL GREATLY REJOICE IN THE LORD
- II. FOR HE HAS CLOTHED ME WITH THE GARMENTS OF SALVATION
- III. SO THE LORD GOD WILL CAUSE RIGHTEOUSNESS AND PRAISE TO SPRING FORTH BEFORE ALL THE NATIONS

### CONCLUSION

# The Transfiguration of Our Lord

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## Isaiah 61:10-11 — “I Will Greatly Rejoice in the Lord”

Grace, mercy, and peace to you all from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.  
Amen.

Today is the Festival of the Transfiguration of Our Lord. The Old Testament reading appointed for this day is Isaiah, 61:10-11.

**I will greatly rejoice in the LORD, my soul shall be joyful in my God; for he hath clothed me with the garments of salvation, he hath covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decketh himself with ornaments, and as a bride adorneth herself with her jewels. For as the earth bringeth forth her bud, and as the garden causeth the things that are sown in it to spring forth; so the Lord GOD will cause righteousness and praise to spring forth before all the nations.**

In the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

### INTRODUCTION

Apart from Christ Crucified Christianity is a farce. Apart from Christ Crucified nothing has any meaning. The truth of these statements would seem to be universally understood. Yet this is the point of the Transfiguration of our Lord. This is the point of the appointed texts for this day. This is the point that seems to get lost most easily among those who count themselves as Christians. This is the foundation to which we must be turned back again and again. Thus in the words of our text from Isaiah we hear, **“I will greatly rejoice in the LORD, my soul shall be joyful in my God.”**

#### I. I WILL GREATLY REJOICE IN THE LORD

Isn't this what all Christians claim, that they rejoice in the LORD? Don't all of the churches claim that their joy is in the LORD their God?

If this is true, why are not the churches united? Why does division exist between the churches? Why do they worship differently rather than uniting in their worship? Why do they teach contrary doctrines regarding the Sacraments and the way by which a person is converted? Why do some churches teach that conversion is purely the work of the Holy Spirit through the means of grace while others teach that it is by deciding to follow Jesus or by praying the believer's prayer or even a mixture of these?

Consider the reaction of Peter, James, and John to the transfiguration of our Lord. For a very brief time it was as though the flesh of the Lord Jesus could not hold back the radiance of His glory. At the same time Moses and Elijah appeared with Jesus in the sight of the three disciples. Luke records what Moses and Elijah came to speak of with Jesus for the disciples to hear. They spoke together concerning His departure, which He was to accomplish at Jerusalem. But what was the response of the disciples? Peter said, **“Lord, it is well that we are here: if you wish, I will make three booths here, one for you and one for Moses and one for Elijah.”**

The very reason for which the transfiguration was given was completely ignored. Moses and Elijah both prefigured the coming of Jesus. They came to make known the glory of the fulfillment of the salvation of mankind that Jesus was about to accomplish. Yet the disciples could only focus on the glory of the moment. Their worship was not flowing from the preaching of the cross of Christ. Thus the Father spoke, calling them to the faith by which they would listen to Jesus and receive the true worship that the Father desires.

## II. FOR HE HAS CLOTHED ME WITH THE GARMENTS OF SALVATION

This is what Isaiah proclaims regarding those who are truly disciples of the Lord. **“I will greatly rejoice in the LORD, my soul shall be joyful in my God.”** But this is only half of the statement. He explains what this means, saying, **“for he hath clothed me with the garments of salvation, he hath covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decketh himself with ornaments, and as a bride adorneth herself with her jewels.”**

How many times in His earthly ministry did Jesus tell the disciples about how He would be treated by the religious leaders? How many times did He speak of His suffering and death and subsequent resurrection? Yet on the very occasion that Peter made his great confession he also rebuked Jesus for teaching them about the cross. Then Jesus called Peter Satan! Peter turned from the confession of Jesus and became identified with Satan rather than with the LORD.

The confession of Jesus Christ and Him crucified does not come from us. The robe of righteousness is not a robe that we willingly choose for ourselves. Our sinful nature will not allow it. Our sinful nature turns to our own worship and praise of God instead. No, the LORD our God has to clothe us with the garments of salvation and lead us into the true worship through the body and blood of Jesus. The LORD our God has to provide us with the ornaments and jewels of His kingdom so that we worship Him not by our own designs but according to the heavenly treasures.

Peter wanted to supply the Lord and the prophets with shelter. But this is exactly the wrong approach to true worship. The Lord and His prophets supply us with shelter. They supply us with the proclamation of the Lord’s death. This is the adornment of the true Church. This is what the Holy Spirit calls us together to receive from the Lord. Our congregating is not to offer to God ourselves and our frail attempts at worship. Our congregating is to receive from God the restoration to whom He regenerates us to be and to receive from Him the worship that He pours out to us with the Holy Spirit from heaven.

We are God’s little children who are called together to the safety of His house where He feeds us and refreshes us in the life that He gives to us. Our part is merely to say Amen to all that He says and does. He baptizes us and washes us to make us presentable and worthy to come to His Table. He preaches to us and catechizes us and renews us in His grace, mercy, and peace.

He prepares our Table for us in the presence of our enemies and calls us to eat the meal of forgiveness and life and salvation in the unity of His body.

### III. SO THE LORD GOD WILL CAUSE RIGHTEOUSNESS AND PRAISE TO SPRING FORTH BEFORE ALL THE NATIONS

Truly this is all the LORD's doing. By His working, the preaching of Christ Crucified does not stop at the Mount of Transfiguration, but goes forward in action as Jesus takes our sin and dies in our stead and then rises from the dead to empower His Church to go forth into all the earth.

**For as the earth bringeth forth her bud, and as the garden causeth the things that are sown in it to spring forth; so the Lord GOD will cause righteousness and praise to spring forth before all the nations.**

Here Isaiah proclaims how the evangelism that the LORD commands takes place. Wherever the LORD carries His Church on earth, wherever the saints go forth and then gather in little congregations throughout the world, His seed is scattered. The Church does not make the seed to grow. The good soil of the earth and of the garden warms the seed and provides the nutrients. That good soil is the heart that the Holy Spirit has worked and made ready for the seed.

So what is the Church's part? What part belongs to the congregations? The work of the congregation is that which the Lord commands. And what does He command of the congregation? He commands that the congregation congregate to Him and the things that He provides. He commands that the congregation not attempt to prepare their own food but that they receive from Him the pure food by which He gives life and strength to His children. His command is that they congregate to the pure administration of the Gospel and Sacraments of the Gospel. Then as they grow and show forth the life that their heavenly Father works in them, the nations see what God does. Through the works that God works in His Church the nations see the righteousness and praise of the Lord our God.

### CONCLUSION

It really is that marvelously simple! Sadly, like the disciples atop the Mount of Transfiguration, we tend not to listen. We tend to be too busy imagining what great things we will do for the LORD. Then we do not even notice what He is working in His Church. Then we invent ways that we imagine are better and we ignore the ways that God provides. Before long the congregations are endlessly producing the works of men rather than flourishing in the works of God. Before long the churches are decked out with worldly ornamentation and adorned with synthetic jewels that sparkle but are not genuine. All the while the robes of righteousness lie in a heap.

Thanks be to God that He calls us to repentance. He does this not once, but without end. He baptizes us once, and calls us to the humble repentance of that baptism all the days of our lives. Moreover, where we listen to the words of Jesus we receive the body and blood of God's Holy Communion and we receive the forgiveness and life and salvation that He provides freely and without limit. Then we find that even without trying we greatly rejoice in the LORD and our souls are joyful in our God. Rather than trying to trust and believe God, we discover that the

faith that we seek has already been provided. Rather than striving after righteousness we discover that God has already clothed us with the righteousness of Christ. Then our rejoicing comes freely and our joy knows no end. For then truly our rejoicing is in communion with the Lord and it is purely by His grace that we are filled with joy. In the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

The peace of God that surpasses all understanding will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus forever. Amen.