



Sermon, Sunday February 19, 2023 “The Transfiguration”

SCRIPTURE: Mark 9:2-13 ²Six days later, Jesus took with him Peter and James and John and led them up a high mountain apart, by themselves. And he was transfigured before them, ³and his clothes became dazzling bright, such as no one on earth could brighten them. ⁴And there appeared to them Elijah with Moses, who were talking with Jesus. ⁵Then Peter said to Jesus, “Rabbi, it is good for us to be here; let us set up three tents: one for you, one for Moses, and one for Elijah.” ⁶He did not know what to say, for they were terrified. ⁷Then a cloud overshadowed them, and from the cloud there came a voice, “This is my Son, the Beloved; listen to him!” ⁸Suddenly when they looked around, they saw no one with them any more, but only Jesus. ⁹As they were coming down the mountain, he ordered them to tell no one about what they had seen, until after the Son of Man had risen from the dead. ¹⁰So they kept the matter to themselves, questioning what this rising from the dead could mean. ¹¹Then they asked him, “Why do the scribes say that Elijah must come first?” ¹²He said to them, “Elijah is indeed coming first to restore all things. How then is it written about the Son of Man, that he is to go through many sufferings and be treated with contempt? ¹³But I tell you that Elijah has come, and they did to him whatever they pleased, as it is written about him.”

Introduction: The Lord who invited the disciples as witnesses to the fulfillment of the law and the fulfillment of the covenant

Today is Transfiguration Sunday, the Sunday before the beginning of Lent, a time to meditate on the suffering and death of the Lord. Before Jesus entered the dark valley of Passion, he climbed a mountain with his disciples and showed himself in glory. Transfiguration Sunday commemorates this.

For us to understand today's text, we need an understanding of Jesus' public life. If you look at the actions of Jesus recorded in the Synoptic Gospels, Jesus called his disciples together and set out with them to fulfill the will of God the Father for the world. On the journey with Jesus, the disciples experience numerous miracles performed by Jesus. He healed the sick, healed the broken hearted, proclaimed the Kingdom of God, and raised the dead. These amazing miracles made the disciples follow Jesus with hope for a new world that will come true through Him.

Then one day, Jesus asked the disciples; **“Who do people say I am?” (Mark 8:27)** In response to this question, the disciples tell the thoughts of the people they knew. They answer Jesus; **“Some say John the Baptist; others say Elijah; and still others, one of the prophets” (Mark 8:28)** Then He asked; **“But what about you? Who do you say I am?” (Mark 8:29)** One of the disciples, Peter, replied; **“You are the Christ.”** In response to Jesus' question, Peter confessed Jesus as the Messiah Israel had been waiting for. Peter's confession about Jesus was a very accurate answer.

But Jesus, when He heard the disciples' answer, rather than telling them about the glory of the Messiah, said that he would die and live again in three days. The disciples did not understand these words of Jesus, and even Peter protested that Jesus' thoughts were wrong.

In fact, the disciples seen in Mark 8, the previous chapter of today's text, can also be found in our life of faith. Although we have an intellectual answer to who Jesus is, there are cases in which the power of faith cannot be exercised due to a lack of faith and confidence (when we do not correctly recognize who Jesus is).



In today's text, Jesus clearly shows that the fulfillment of the law and the fulfillment of the covenant, testified in the Old Testament, were accomplished in Jesus Christ.

Body: An invitation to the deep world of faith

Today's text records the event when Jesus went up to a high mountain with Peter, James, and John and was transfigured there. It describes how Jesus' clothes became dazzling white, such as no one on earth could bleach them. Also, in the description of the text, there is a scene where Jesus talks with the Old Testament prophets Elijah and Moses. And above all, there is a word of confirmation about Jesus who was transfigured like that. **Mark 9:7 says, "This is my Son, the Beloved; listen to him!"**

In today's text, we can see that the three disciples who climbed the mountain with Jesus had a very amazing religious experience. In fact, in today's text, Jesus' transfiguration was not for Jesus Himself, but for the sake of his disciples. Even Peter confessed, **"It is good for us to be here"**, moved by the faith experience he experienced. (Mark 9:5)

Through this amazing experience, the Lord invited and encouraged his disciples into the world of deep faith. When Peter confessed Jesus as the Messiah but did not know the true meaning of Jesus' becoming the Messiah. Also, this deep experience of faith is not light, Jesus commanded the disciples not to tell anyone about their experiences until they saw Jesus resurrected. (Mark 9:9)

Ahead of the Passion week, we need a deep time with the Lord, just as the disciples needed the Lord's encouragement for their weak faith prior to Jesus' passion. Then, how can we take a step further into the deep world of faith? We can get inspiration from today's text.

1. We must experience the living God during the time of prayer.

To move on to a deep faith, we must have a time of deep and sincere prayer with the Lord. We must meet the living God at the time of prayer. However, we often find it difficult to pray. The reason is that our prayers today are too formalized, we pray without heart, and sometimes we pray in moderation. In fact, prayer is not to show anyone, nor is it to fill my needs through prayer. Prayer is necessary for an intimate conversation with the Lord. There is no special form or condition to prayer. However, I hope there is space and time to meet the Lord one-on-one, away from the busy daily life. If we have deep prayer with the Lord, we can experience peace and rest at the end of that prayer.

If we have the will, heart, mind, and passion to share fellowship with the Lord, anyone can have a time of prayer with the Lord. Prayer does not require flowery words. You just need to have a pure and honest heart to seek and talk with the Lord. You also need to have the earnestness to rely only on the Lord. This kind of prayer will lead us to experience the faith of a deep encounter with the Lord. Then, other than prayer, how can we experience a deep relationship with the Lord?

2. We must listen to the Word of God and put it into practice.

We can maintain a deep relationship with the Lord when we hear the Word of God, put the Word in our hearts, and live according to the Word. However, in many cases we superficially hear and accept God's Word. Also, there are many cases where we cannot accept God's Word because of our heart's desire, selfishness, stubbornness, and sin. However, in the second half of Mark 9:7 it says, **"This is my Son, the Beloved; listen to him!"**



Please remember. The Word of God is living and active and has the power to pierce and divide soul and spirit, joints, and marrow. So, we must be able to trust the power of these words of the Lord. However, rather than relying on God's Word, we try to follow our desires or rely on worldly abilities. That's why we can't hear the word of the Lord properly and obey it. If we live a life of faith like this, there is no possibility of the Lord's power appearing there.

I sincerely recommend it to you. I hope that when our faith is shaken, we can rely on the word of the Lord and live according to the word. Christianity encourages thinking through the intellect, but it does not remain only in the intellect. Please do not forget that Christians are those who believe in and follow the word of the Lord, the word of life. A Christian is a person of faith who is sure of the word of the Lord.

Conclusion: The mountain of Transfiguration to meet the Lord is not far away, but right next to us.

Now let's summarize today's message. Today is Transfiguration Sunday. And this Wednesday, Ash Wednesday, Lent begins. We hope to experience the Lord deeply and personally meet Him in our life of faith. Many people say it is difficult to meet the Lord in our lives. But it's not difficult. We must not forget that the Mount of Transfiguration is right next to us, not far away.

When we listen to the Lord and begin to live according to His will, our lives will be illuminated by the light of the Lord. The grace of the Lord will bring vitality into our lives. May we all experience the true joy of life through deep fellowship with the Lord.

