



Sermon, Sunday March 2, 2025 "The Transfiguration of Jesus"

SCRIPTURE: Luke 9:28-36 ²⁸ Now about eight days after these sayings Jesus took with him Peter and John and James and went up on the mountain to pray. ²⁹ And while he was praying, the appearance of his face changed, and his clothes became as bright as a flash of lightning. ³⁰ Suddenly they saw two men, Moses and Elijah, talking to him. ³¹ They appeared in glory and were speaking about his exodus, which he was about to fulfill in Jerusalem. ³² Now Peter and his companions were weighed down with sleep, but as they awoke they saw his glory and the two men who stood with him. ³³ Just as they were leaving him, Peter said to Jesus, "Master, it is good for us to be here; let us set up three tents: one for you, one for Moses, and one for Elijah," not realizing what he was saying. ³⁴ While he was saying this, a cloud came and overshadowed them, and they were terrified as they entered the cloud. ³⁵ Then from the cloud came a voice that said, "This is my Son, my Chosen; listen to him!" ³⁶ When the voice had spoken, Jesus was found alone. And they kept silent and in those days told no one any of the things they had seen.

Introduction: The Transfiguration Story of Jesus

Today is Transfiguration Sunday. Jesus went up the mountain with Peter, John, and James to pray with a solemn feeling that he must accept his own death. Then a strange phenomenon occurred. According to verse 29 of today's text, Jesus' face was changed, and his clothes became dazzling white.

And suddenly two figures appeared there. They are Moses and Elijah. Moses is the hero of the Israelites who liberated them from Egypt, the greatest empire at the time, and Elijah is a prophet who performed many miracles and signs that the Jews consider most important. Moses and Elijah talked about Jesus' death there.

Jesus' disciples woke up and witnessed this scene. However, Peter said to Jesus, **'let us make three dwellings, one for you, one for Moses, and one for Elijah.'** Jesus did not say anything about Peter's suggestion.

Then a cloud came and overshadowed them. The disciples were terrified as they entered the cloud. At that moment they heard from the cloud a voice that said, **"This is my Son, my Chosen; listen to him!"** (Luke 9:35). As soon as this voice ended, all phenomena disappeared and only Jesus' praying was visible to the disciples. The disciples were speechless and could not tell anyone what they had seen. This is the story of Jesus' transfiguration in today's text.

Body: The two transfigurations of Jesus

There are two unusual phenomena that appeared to Jesus in today's text. One is that the appearance of Jesus' face changed. However, there is no detailed description of how Jesus' face changed.

In today's text, the change in the appearance of Jesus' face points to the essence of resurrection. Resurrection is a change to a new life. Resurrection is our entrance into a greater and absolute life.

The transfiguration of Jesus is a hint that we too will be transfigured. We must believe and hope that we will be transfigured by the life of God and wait for that moment.



However, it can often not feel real that we are being transfigured into God's life. This is because we are often preoccupied with what is happening right now rather than our transfiguration through resurrection.

When I was young, I would often forget that I had to go home while playing with my friends. Similarly, if we are preoccupied with alcohol, drugs, and making money, it is difficult to care about the transfiguration through resurrection.

However, changes in our existence can be seen with just a little insight into our lives. I often look at photos of my children and think about how my daughter and son have grown up. In fact, my daughter and son were like sperm and eggs, like seeds. However, my daughter and son, who were like seeds, grew through a certain process and changed into what they are now.

The Bible says that the culmination of this change in our lives is resurrection. We confess our faith in the resurrection through faith, but because this cannot be objectively proven, many people do not have confidence and faith in the resurrection.

However, if we take a step back from our busy lives and meditate and examine the various processes of life change in our lives, we will be able to accept the Bible's claim that the peak of life change is resurrection.

Another unusual phenomenon that appeared to Jesus in today's text is that his clothes became dazzling white. This explains the peak life through the metaphor of light.

A phenomenon like what appeared to Jesus in today's text also appeared to Moses in the Old Testament. According to Exodus 34:29 and following, when Moses came down from Mount Sinai carrying the two stone tablets with the Ten Commandments engraved on them, radiance appeared on his face. A similar experience occurred with the Apostle Paul in the New Testament. The Acts of the Apostles records that when Paul experienced the resurrected Lord, his eyes were blinded by the light.

Light can create life in our daily lives, and through light we can discern what exists in the world. The reason why the New Testament writers say that Jesus is light is because the life experienced through Jesus is absolute.

The writer of the Gospel of John says this in John 1:4-5 as follows: **'In him was life, and that life was the light of men. The light shines in the darkness, but the darkness has not understood it.'**

As in this verse, not everyone recognizes Jesus as the light of life. Only a few people recognized Jesus as the **'light of life.'** The disciples expressed the **'life'** they experienced through Jesus as **'light.'** Today's text expresses this as **'Jesus' clothes became dazzling white.'**

We who live today are people who live with the same faith as the disciples who recognized Jesus as the light.

In today's text, the passage about Jesus' face changed and his clothes became dazzling white contains the answer to how Christians should perceive the world and live.

Jesus proclaimed that the kingdom of God has already come. Jesus told us not to worry about what we will eat, drink, or wear, but to seek the kingdom of God and His righteousness. The reason Jesus said this is because many people in the world are unable to experience the presence of God due to concerns about survival.

However, through Jesus Christ, we can experience the world as the presence of God, that is, as light. The climax is the resurrection of Jesus. Since Jesus is the first fruit of resurrection (1 Corinthians 15:20), the core of Christian faith is that those who believe in Jesus Christ will reach resurrection. That resurrection is expressed as light in today's text. That is, experiencing Jesus as light.

So what does it mean for us to experience the world as light? That is, we see the world as an event of God's creation. God created the world in the beginning, preserves that creation now, and will complete it at the end.



Conclusion: In front of the reality of the world

Now let's summarize today's sermon. As we live in this world, we cannot live only with the holy illusions in today's text. In today's text, the disciples returned to the reality of the world where only Jesus was visible before the transfiguration. The world we live in runs like mudslinging. In this world, we must live in fierce struggle with our whole body. This difficult reality of the world is something we all must bear. I believe that each of you will handle your share well. However, I hope that you can live with confidence and faith that one day you will be transfigured into the light, the body of resurrection, to survive the reality of the world well.

Amen!

