

Transformed in Christ's Glory  
Luke 9:28-36  
A Sermon preached at  
Plymouth Presbyterian Church  
St Helens, Oregon  
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March 2, 2025

### **Introduction: Glimpses of Another World**

Have you ever had the feeling that there's more to reality than what we see? That if we could just peel back the surface, we'd glimpse something greater?

Stories throughout history tap into this longing—the idea that there is a deeper truth just beyond the veil. Think of **The Looking Glass** in *Alice in Wonderland*, where Alice steps through the mirror into a strange and wonderful world. Or **The Chronicles of Narnia**, where a simple wardrobe becomes a doorway into Aslan's kingdom. Or even **Stargate**, where an ancient portal leads to a universe beyond our own.

And then there's **The Matrix**, where Neo is given a choice—to stay in his illusion of normal life or to wake up to the real world.

Each of these stories carries a deep truth: **the world we see is not all there is**. There is a greater reality waiting to be revealed.

This is what happened on the Mount of Transfiguration. Peter, James, and John followed Jesus up the mountain, expecting another quiet moment of prayer—but instead, the veil was pulled back, and they saw Christ as He truly is. They weren't stepping into a fictional world; they were stepping into the ultimate reality. And once they had seen that glory, they could never be the same.

### **The Mountaintop: Jesus' True Identity Shines Through**

Luke tells us that as Jesus prayed, His appearance changed—His face shone like the sun, His clothes became dazzling white.

It was as if, for a brief moment, time and space folded, and heaven broke through. The disciples had walked with Jesus for years, but now, they saw Him in His **true** form—radiant, glorious, divine.

This moment reminds me of when Neo in *The Matrix* finally sees the truth. All his life, he thought he understood reality—until his eyes were opened, and he realized there was something far greater at work.

Jesus had always been the Son of God. He didn't suddenly “become” glorious on the mountain—His glory had always been there, just hidden just out of sight. But in this moment, the disciples saw what had been true all along.

And this is where we must ask ourselves: **Do we see Jesus as He truly is?** Not just as a wise teacher, not just as a miracle worker, but as the radiant Son of God?

If we truly see Him, if we glimpse His glory, we cannot walk away unchanged.

### **Moses, Elijah, and the Blending of Past, Present, and Future**

But the vision didn't stop there. As the disciples tried to comprehend what they were seeing, two figures appeared—Moses and Elijah.

This moment reminds me of *The Chronicles of Narnia*, where time itself bends, and people from different eras are brought together for a greater purpose. Here, Moses and Elijah—figures from the distant past—stood in conversation with Jesus.

Why were they there? Because they represented the entire story of God's plan.

- **Moses** represented the Law, the foundation of Israel's covenant with God.
- **Elijah** represented the Prophets, who called people back to God's ways.
- **Jesus** stood between them as the fulfillment of both—the One to bring past, present, and future together in God's ultimate plan of salvation.

And what were they talking about? **Jesus' upcoming departure**—His exodus, His journey to the cross.

This was another moment where the disciples must have been shaken. Here was the glory of heaven, shining before them, yet the conversation was about suffering and sacrifice. They wanted to stay on the mountain of glory, but Jesus was preparing to walk into the valley of the cross.

Like Peter, we often want to hold onto the “mountaintop” moments—those times when we feel God's presence so powerfully. We want to build our own “tents” and stay in that spiritual high. But God's plan is not for us to stay on the mountain. His plan is for us to be transformed **by** the mountain, so we can carry His glory into the world.

### **The Voice of God: A Reminder That God Is Always Near**

Then came the cloud. In Scripture, clouds often represent God's presence—just as He appeared in a cloud to lead the Israelites through the wilderness, and as He descended in a cloud on Mount Sinai when He spoke to Moses.

And from this cloud came a voice:

*"This is my Son, whom I have chosen; listen to Him."*

This was no ordinary moment. This was the very voice of the Father confirming who Jesus was.

Think of how, in *The Matrix*, Morpheus tells Neo: **“There's a difference between knowing the path and walking the path.”**

The disciples knew Jesus, but now they were being told to truly **listen** to Him. Not just to hear His words, but to let them shape their lives.

And this is where it hits home for us.

We live in a world filled with noise. Social media, news, entertainment, and endless voices tell us who we should be and what we should believe. But God's words remind us: **there is only one voice that truly matters.**

*"Listen to Him."*

Are we listening? Are we tuning out the distractions and making room to hear Christ's voice?

### **Coming Down the Mountain: Living in Christ's Glory**

Then, as suddenly as it began, the vision ended. Moses and Elijah were gone. The cloud disappeared. The dazzling light faded. And they were left with Jesus alone.

The moment of glory was over—but the journey was just beginning.

This is the key lesson of the Transfiguration: we are not meant to stay on the mountain, but to be **transformed by it**.

In *The Looking Glass*, Alice steps back into the real world, forever changed. In *The Matrix*, Neo leaves the illusion behind and walks forward in the truth. In *Stargate*, those who go through the portal return with a new understanding of the universe.

And in the same way, when we encounter Christ's glory, we must come back down the mountain—but we must not come back the same.

Paul writes in **2 Corinthians 3:18** that we are being transformed into Christ's image **with ever-increasing glory**. When we truly see Jesus for who He is, our lives begin to reflect His light.

### **Conclusion: The Call to Transformation**

So here is the invitation:

- **How is Jesus revealing Himself to you in your daily life? Are you paying attention?**
- **What comforts or distractions might be keeping you from fully embracing God's truth?**
- **In the midst of all the noise around you, how often do you pause to seek Jesus' guidance?**
- **In what ways can you reflect Christ's love and truth to those around you this week?**

Peter, James, and John left that mountain forever changed. And so must we.

Because when we have truly seen Christ's glory, we cannot live as though we haven't. We must step forward, transformed, into the reality of His kingdom. **Amen.**