

SBC – May 1, 2022
Matt. 17:1-8 (NKJV)
“The Mount of Transfiguration”

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Prayer:

Slide # 1

Theme: *Christ the King*

Outline:

- Chps. 1-2 The Advent of the King. (Proving His LEGAL right to the throne by His genealogy.)
- Chp. 3 The Forerunner of the King and the King’s baptism.
- Chp. 4 The Test of the King. (Proving His MORAL right to the throne by not yielding to temptation; and exhibiting His kingdom resume.)
- Chps. 5-7 The Pronouncements of the King. (Proving His JUDICIAL right to the throne as seen in the wisdom of His kingdom teaching.)
- Chps. 8-10 The Power of the King. (Proving His PROPHETICAL right to the throne by fulfilling prophecy.)
- Chps. 11-12 The Rejection of the King.
- Chp. 13 The Parables of the King.
- Chps. 14-16 The Revelations of the King.
- Chps. 17-20 The Instructions of the King.**
- Chps. 21-23 Formal Rejection of the King.
- Chps. 24-25 The Predictions of the King.
- Chps. 26-27 The Passion of the King.
- Chp. 28 The Resurrection of the King.

The gospel of Matthew builds to a climactic point in chapter 16 where Jesus asks His disciples, “**Who do men say that I, the Son of Man, am?**” (Matt. 16:13). Properly understanding WHO Jesus is – is all important! This is crucial to the knowledge of the truth we must know in order to be saved.

The gospel of John builds to the climactic point of doubting Thomas coming to a NT saving faith when he expressed to the risen Christ, “**My Lord and my God!**” (Jn. 20:28). Jesus affirmed that he had seen and believed. This (according to Jesus) is what it means to believe in Him – to believe in Him as “**My Lord and my God**”. Jesus then went on to say, “**Thomas, because you have seen Me, you have believed. Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed.**” (v. 29). Those who believe in this same way as Thomas did without seeing are said to be blessed.

And then John gives his purpose statement in writing the entire book of John (the gospel of belief) saying,

Slide # 2

John 20:30–31 (NKJV)

30 And truly Jesus did many other signs in the presence of His disciples, which are not written in this book;

31 but these are written that you may believe that **Jesus is the Christ**, the **Son of God**, and that believing you may have life in His name.

To believe in Jesus as the Christ, the Son of God is to believe in Him PERSONALLY - exactly as stated by Thomas as the flow of the immediate context indicates, namely, as “***My Lord and my God***”.

And this is significant because this is the exact answer that Peter gave concerning WHO Christ is as seen in Matthew 16:16, namely the Christ, the Son of the living God.

Furthermore, Christ said He would build His Church on this ROCK truth (Mt. 16:18). Building on the truth of Who the Christ is as the divine Son, Jesus then foretells of His coming death and resurrection (Mt. 16:21). And finally, building on the PERSON of Christ (Who He is) and the WORK of Christ (His death and resurrection) Jesus then presents the cost of true discipleship.

Slide # 3

Matthew 16:24 (NKJV)

24 Then Jesus said to His disciples, “If anyone desires to come after Me, let him **deny himself**, and **take up his cross**, and **follow Me**.”

In view is a description of a saving faith commitment. It’s the demanded response to WHO Christ is as Lord. Knowing the PERSON of Christ and the WORK of Christ a person must come to the point where they say “NO” to self as Lord and “YES” to Jesus as Lord with the fruit (or evidence) being they then follow Him. That was the experience of Thomas, and it is the experience of all true believers as Jesus plainly said in John 10:27-28.

Those who thus commit to Christ will be rewarded in the kingdom. To become a follower of Christ will be worth it all. And to affirm this Jesus then said...

Slide # 4**Matthew 16:28 (NKJV)**

28 Assuredly, I say to you, there are some standing here who shall not taste death till they see the Son of Man coming in His kingdom."

The disciples had to really wonder what in the world this could mean. Jesus had just spoken of His upcoming death in Jerusalem (16:21), but now He says some among them would not die before they saw the Son of Man coming in His kingdom. How could that be?

The answer is seen in the next chapter of Matthew 17. The chapter division between Matthew 16 and 17 is unfortunate because the flow of what Jesus is saying continues on into chapter 17. Here we see what Jesus meant by saying that some of them would not taste death till they see the Son of Man coming in His kingdom is that they would see Him transfigured in kingdom glory as a kingdom preview. And that is what we have in Matt. 17:1-8.

The ultimate goal for God's people has always been the kingdom. The whole of Christ's ministry has been about the kingdom being at hand. Christ was the Messiah/King presenting the kingdom and the transfiguration was more evidence of it.

Since Israel rejected Him, the kingdom was put on hold and the cross now loomed large. However, on the other side of the cross is the promise of the kingdom. Jesus is still Messiah/Lord, and the kingdom is still coming - and the mount of transfiguration served to CONFIRM this. It confirmed all the claims of Christ and everything Christ was prophetically saying.

Matthew 17:1–8 (NKJV)

1 Now after six days Jesus took Peter, James, and John his brother, led them up on a high mountain by themselves;

Luke 9:28 says it was "about eight days". There is no contradiction because Jewish reckoning often counted part of a day as a whole day. Luke evidently took into consideration a partial part of the day on both sides of the interim.

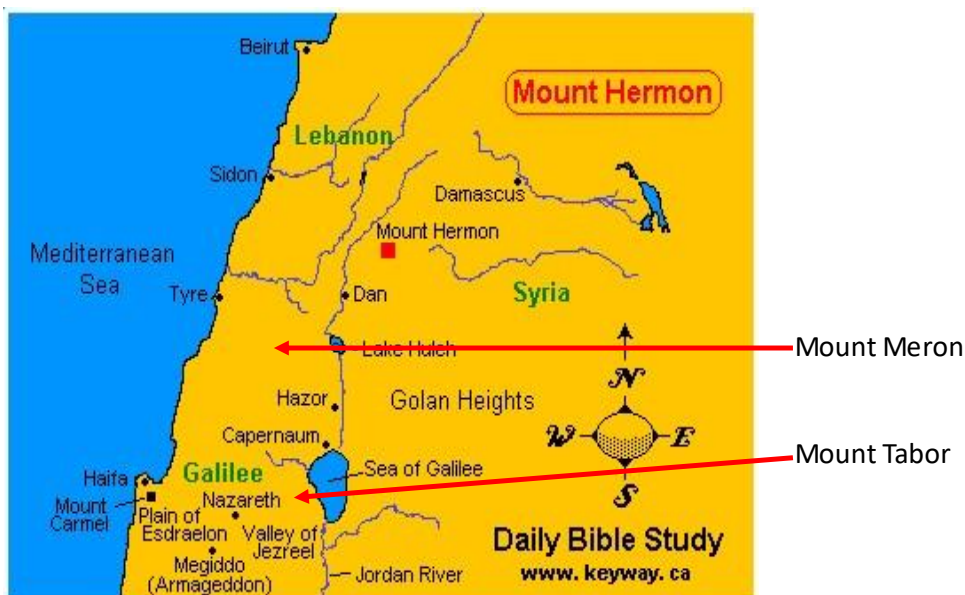
After about a week Jesus took Peter, James, and John who are often referred to as the inner circle of Jesus' disciples. These 3 uniquely were with Jesus on special occasions such as the raising of Jairus daughter and when Jesus was in agony in the Garden of Gethsemane (Lk. 8:51; Mt. 26:37).

Of the three John anonymously calls himself the disciple “**whom Jesus loved**” (Jn. 13:23; 19:26; 21:7). Evidently Jesus had a special closeness with John above all the others. But in view here in Matthew 17 is the inner circle of Peter, James, and John.

Jesus led them up on a high mountain by themselves. Traditionally, Mount Tabor has been called the site of the transfiguration, but most scholars doubt that. For one thing at 1900 feet, it is not very high. For another thing it is beyond Capernaum which is seemingly where they went next as seen in Matt. 17:24.

Another suggested possibility is Mount Meron which is about 3,926 feet in height – so it is higher. And it is on the way to Capernaum. But the most votes go for somewhere on Mount Hermon which is about 30 miles further north beyond Caesarea Phillipi and rises up to over 9,200 feet (cf. Mt. 16:13, 21; 17:24). It truly is a very high mountain.

Slide # 5



However, the precise location of this high mountain is unknown. Peter did hereafter refer to it as “**the holy mountain**” as seen in 2 Pet. 1:18.

2 and He was transfigured before them. His face shone like the sun, and His clothes became as white as the light.

The word “**transfigured**” is the Greek word from which we get our English word “metamorphosis”. It is the idea of an external change that comes from the inside. It means to be changed in form.

We use this word when speaking of a caterpillar changing into the form of a butterfly or a tadpole changing into the form of a frog. So, it denotes a change in form.

This same word is used to describe the gradual transformation that is currently taking place in the spiritual lives of believers as seen in Romans 12:2 and 2 Cor. 3:18 (cf. 1 Jn. 3:2).

Christ here appeared in kingdom glory – in glorified form as He will appear in the kingdom. His face shone brilliantly like looking at the sun and His clothes were white as the light. It was awesomely glorious! It is noteworthy that in the kingdom we will evidently still wear clothes – but they will evidently have a fashion of glory – certainly Christ’s clothes did in the kingdom preview.

Mark 9:3 adds, “**His clothes became shining, exceedingly white, like snow, such as no launderer on earth can whiten them.**” And Luke 9:29 says, “**His robe became white and glistening**” evidently in appearance like the flashing of lightning.

Indeed, this was “**seeing the Son of Man coming in His kingdom**” – in His kingdom glory! Matt. 24:30 says at the Second Coming Christ will come with “**power and great glory**” and Matt. 25:31 says the Son of Man “**comes in His glory**” and “**He will sit on the throne of His glory**”. If you want a further vision of the glorified Christ, you can find it in Rev. 1:13-16. It truly is awesome beyond comprehension (cf. Heb. 1:3).

The commentators point out that the mount of transfiguration experience is mentioned in all 3 synoptic gospels (that is Matthew, Mark, and Luke) but not in the gospel of John. That seems a little strange since John is the only one of the four gospel writers who was there – and yet he didn’t write about it.

Here is an explanation. John writes with a strong Deity theme in mind. That is his emphasis. The transfiguration serves to emphasize the ultimate outcome of Christ's humanity in glorified form.

This is the glorified Christ-Man in His kingdom glory. The unique glory of the Christ is that in Him humanity now shares in the full glory of deity and that will be on full display in His kingdom glory!

In Christ's glorification we see the hope of all humanity. We will never be what Christ is, but we will share in His likeness in the sense that we too will be in glorified form just like Jesus. We too will share in this kingdom glory.

Slide # 6

Philippians 3:21 (NKJV)

21 who will transform our lowly body that it may be conformed to His glorious body, according to the working by which He is able even to subdue all things to Himself.

1 John 3:2 (NKJV)

2 Beloved, now we are children of God; and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be, but we know that when He is revealed, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is.

As a footnote, Luke 9 mentions that as Jesus was praying the disciples had dozed off to sleep and then suddenly, they were startled to full alertness at the sight of Jesus being transfigured and talking to two men who stood with Him (Lk. 9:28-32).

3 And behold, Moses and Elijah appeared to them, talking with Him.

This is interesting because Moses and Elijah had been gone for a long time. Moses died about 1500 years before this and was buried by the Lord Himself in the land of Moab (Deut. 34:5-7). Enoch and Elijah are the only 2 people in the Bible that are recorded as being taken from this life without dying (Gen. 5:24; 2 Kings 2:11). My view is that neither died a normal death, but at the same time they did not go to heaven in glorified form either. And the reason for this theologically is because Jesus is clearly stated to be the first one to receive a glorified body – which is a body suited for heaven (cf. 1 Cor. 15:20).

Not only this but Elijah is going to come back to life in his regular body and have a special witnessing ministry during the Tribulation Period as seen in Mal. 4:5-6. I take it Elijah is probably one of the two special witnesses

spoken of in Rev. 11. So where is his natural body between the time he went up to heaven in a whirlwind and when he comes back in his natural body during the Tribulation Period? Good question.

That question aside, both the dead Moses and Elijah at this point appeared in bodily form at the event of the transfiguration and were talking with Jesus. They were certainly still very much alive in the after-life and here made a kingdom preview appearance.

We are not told how the disciples knew it was Moses and Elijah. There were no formal introductions as far as we know. Maybe, this is just a little sample of how it will be in heaven – we will just intuitively know everyone. We just don't know for sure how it will be.

But it is clear that both Moses and Elijah were still very much alive – even in the afterlife beyond this life. They knew what was going on and they had input into what was about to happen with Jesus.

Slide # 7

Luke 9:30–31 (NKJV)

30 And behold, two men talked with Him, who were **Moses and Elijah**,

31 who appeared in glory and **spoke of His decease** which He was about to **accomplish** at Jerusalem.

We would like to know a few more details. They spoke of Christ's coming decease which literally means "***exodus***" (cf. 2 Pet. 1:15). It literally means "the road out". Death is an exodus as we exit one place and go to another.

And they spoke of Christ's death as being an "***accomplishment***". It had specific purpose. It was to accomplish specific objectives – and as we know these were fulfilled in the gospel story.

Now the question arises WHY Moses and Elijah? There are a lot of notables to choose from in the OT. What about Abraham, the father of the faithful and the patriarch who was the start of what became the chosen people of Israel (cf. Rom. 4:16)? What about David – the man after God's own heart? What about the greatest of all the writing prophets named Isaiah?

We are not told specifically WHY Moses and Elijah were chosen but many think it is perhaps because between the two of them they perfectly represent the whole of the OT Scriptures called "***the law and the prophets***".

The law of Moses was given through Moses. The Christ was to be a Prophet in type similar to Moses as seen in Deut. 18:15-18.

Elijah was a premier prophet who is destined to be the forerunner in the Tribulation Period who restores all things in preparation for the Second Coming of Messiah (cf. Mal. 4:5-6; Mt. 17:10-11).

Between the two of them, Moses and Elijah represent the whole of the law and the prophets (the OT Scriptures) which uniformly pointed to the coming Messiah and what He was to accomplish. By the way, this is part of the argument for why these two are great candidates for being the two special witnesses in Revelation 11. Representing the law and the prophets their prophetic witness is strong.

Slide # 8

His forthcoming death would fulfill all the sacrifices of the law so closely linked with Moses, and all the sayings of the prophets, of whom Elijah was the supreme representative. – **John Phillips**

4 Then Peter answered and said to Jesus, “Lord, it is good for us to be here; if You wish, let us make here three tabernacles: one for You, one for Moses, and one for Elijah.”

In sales they say, “***silence is deadly***” and Peter seemed to feel this way. He was a talker and so often just seemed to think he needed to speak his mind. Commentators try to rationalize why he said what he did but that too is silly because Luke 9:33 says after suggesting they build 3 tabernacles for Jesus, Moses, and Elijah the text then says, “not knowing what he said.”

Perhaps Peter was just spontaneously reacting trying to keep them together as a group for a little while because in Luke 9:33 it says Peter blurted this out as Moses and Elijah were in the process of parting.

Peter was just talking. It wasn't well thought out logic. It seems he just wanted to prolong this experience with all three of these notable characters for a little longer. “Hey, lets camp out and prolong this special time.”

Tabernacles refers to temporary shelters or hut-like booths. The Jews commemorated their Exodus from slavery in Egypt by having the Feast of Tabernacles. For one week they lived in makeshift shelters symbolizing God's temporary provision for the Children of Israel in the wilderness. It was a memorial to God's preservation of His chosen people (Lev. 23:33-

44). This feast will continue to be celebrated in the kingdom as seen in Zech. 14:9, 16).

As so often happens Peter was caught up with his own idea thinking it was a good one. He does say, “Lord, if you wish...” probably assuming the Lord would approve. It’s easy to make our plans and assume God is good with it when in fact we may be completely off track.

The old evangelist (Sam Dalton) used to say, “**God’s not in the plan blessing business.**” God’s the planner. It’s not up to us to make the plans but rather to follow His plans. We often get way ahead of our skis with what we think are great ideas – only to fall flat on our face – which is where Peter was to find himself shortly.

Peter said nothing about building a tabernacle for the 3 disciples. Evidently, the idea was that these 3 tabernacles would be in special HONOR of the Lord, Moses, and Elijah while the disciples could just sleep on the ground.

But what Peter was suggesting put all three (the Lord, Moses, and Elijah) on the same level which in effect compromises the Lord’s supremacy. This brought about an immediate CORRECTION directly from the Father Himself Who demands that the Son ALONE be the priority as He is in an EXALTED category all His own. Even though both Moses and Elijah were prominent OT characters none can even compare to God’s Son.

5 While he was still speaking, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them; and suddenly a voice came out of the cloud, saying, “This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. Hear Him!”

This was a divine interruption! While Peter was still blabbering on, suddenly a bright cloud overshadowed them. This represented God the Father’s presence in what is called “the shekinah glory”. The word “shekinah” means “to dwell” and refers to God’s radiant presence which was manifest on occasion in the OT.

In their wilderness journeys God’s glory cloud denoting His presence rested above the tabernacle. When the cloud moved the children of Israel followed as it indicated God was leading them (cf. Ex. 13:21-22). In various situations God would make His presence known in the form of a glory cloud (cf. Ex. 16:10; 19:26). This was known as God’s shekinah glory. In essence this is what we see here in Matthew 17:5.

Suddenly out of the bright cloud overshadowing them came the VOICE of God. Rarely, in the Bible did anyone ever actually hear the audible voice of God, but when they did it was traumatic.

Slide # 9

Deuteronomy 5:25–26 (NKJV)

25 Now therefore, why should we die? For this great fire will consume us; **if we hear the voice of the LORD our God anymore**, then we shall die.

26 For who is there of all flesh who has **heard the voice of the living God speaking** from the midst of the fire, as we have, and lived?

This experience of hearing God's voice was so overwhelming they feared they would die and did not want to hear it anymore.

And God the Father on the mount of transfiguration had a very definite and clear message for Peter, James, and John, saying, ***"This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. Hear Him!"*** This is essentially what God the Father said at the baptism of Christ as seen in Matt. 3:17.

God the Father identified the Son as His beloved Son and based on that reality said, ***"Hear Him!"*** In this whole surrounding section, there is a tremendous emphasis on WHO Jesus is as God's Son. This was the essential point in Peter's inspired confession in Matthew 16:16 when he identified Jesus as ***"the Christ, the Son of the living God."*** Even though Peter and the disciples perhaps had some idea of what it meant that Jesus is God's Son, it seems they still needed to have a greater appreciation of it as emphasized here by God the Father.

This is KEY! Being the beloved Son with whom God is well pleased combines the emphasis in Ps. 2:7 and Isa. 42:1. It emphasizes Who the Son is in terms of His nature being that of very God, but at the same time it emphasizes His submission to the Father as God's servant with Whom God the Father is well pleased.

Sometimes people make the HUGE mistake of assuming that Jesus being the Son of God means that He is somehow less than God the Father. That is heresy! Yes, the members of the Triune Godhead have different roles, but the nature of each person in the Godhead is totally equal. They are all equally God, equally eternal, equally important.

To say that Jesus is God's Son means that Jesus shares in the very same nature and essence with God the Father. He is of the very order and nature of God being God of very God.

Slide # 10

John 1:18 (NKJV)

18 No one has seen God at any time. The **only begotten Son**, who is in the **bosom of the Father**, He has declared Him.

John 5:18 (NKJV)

18 Therefore the Jews sought all the more to kill Him, because He not only broke the Sabbath, but also **said that God was His Father, making Himself equal with God.**

The Jews clearly and correctly understood the claim of Jesus to be the Son of God – that God was His Father – to be that He was claiming equality with God the Father. Yes, that is what it means to be THE Son of God. It means He shares intimately as one with God the Father being the very same essence of God.

Hebrew 1:3 says Jesus is the “***exact representation of His nature***”. Col. 1:16 says Jesus is the visible “***image of the invisible God***”. In John 14:9 Jesus said, “***He who has seen Me has seen the Father***”. In John 5:23 we see that all are to honor the Son “***just as they honor the Father***”. Only one Who is fully God could possibly be honored in the same way as God the Father. In John 10:30 Jesus said, “***I and My Father are one***” meaning they share the same essence and nature as Deity.

As you compare Scripture with Scripture the claim of Jesus to be the Son of God clearly means that He is fully God sharing in the full deity of God. As Col. 2:9 says, “***in Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily***”.

So when God the Father says, “This is My beloved Son” He was making the most powerful statement possible in terms of the full Deity of Jesus. He is LORD over all and not merely one among equals! He is not merely some prophet or great leader – He is GOD Himself come in the flesh.

As God's children we too are called “sons of God” but we are sons only by adoption.

In contrast Jesus is THE Son of God Who is eternally the Son of God by His very nature and essence. Son is a relational term. God the Father and

God the Son along with the Holy Spirit have an eternal relationship – with each person in the Trinity being eternal. They share the same nature being co-equal, co-eternal, and co-substantial. And the relationship they share is characterized by perfect love. God the Father said, “This is My beloved Son”. Within the Godhead is the perfection of love.

As God’s Son Jesus speaks with absolute sovereign authority! Therefore, God the Father says, “**Hear Him!**”. Jesus speaks with the authority of being LORD-GOD! This places Him way ABOVE Moses or Elijah or anyone else. This by the way is the MAJOR point in the whole book of Hebrews.

Slide # 11

Deuteronomy 18:15 (NKJV)

15 “The LORD your God will raise up for you a Prophet like me from your midst, from your brethren. **Him you shall hear,**

Deuteronomy 18:18 (NKJV)

18 I will raise up for them a Prophet like you from among their brethren, and will **put My words in His mouth,** and He shall speak to them all that I command Him.

Just as Moses gave forth New Revelation that introduced a whole new era (the era of law) so the Messiah would as a prophet bring forth revelation that would introduce a whole new era (cf. Acts 3:22-23; 7:37).

John 1:17 (NKJV)

17 For the law was given through Moses, but grace and truth came through Jesus Christ.

All the doctrines that relate to the Church Age and what would follow are introduced by Christ in His ministry and then built upon in the NT epistles and then brought to a comprehensive climax in the book of Revelation.

Jesus as Lord-God speaks with total authority and His people HEAR Him. When Jesus speaks that ends the argument. We are to reverence His Lordship authority.

In the great commission Jesus said we are to make disciples, baptize them, and then teach them to observe all things that He has commanded. Christ is our Lord, and it is Him we follow. He is our authority on everything because He is Lord over all.

Compared with God's revelation through Jesus, all other revelations pale. Supporting, pointing, prophetic roles such revelation may enjoy; but Jesus as God's Son is primary. Therefore all must "listen to Him!"

– **D.A. Carson**

6 And when the disciples heard it, they fell on their faces and were greatly afraid.

Peter went from babbling nonsense about all 3 equally having a shelter built for them to being flat on his face before the Father's awesome voice from heaven. All the disciples immediately fell on their faces and were greatly afraid.

God is an awesome reality and terrifying in His awesomeness. Throughout the Bible people that had encounters with God where He revealed Himself very intimately were consistently terrified. In our humanness we stand before Him quivering in terror!

John MacArthur tells the story about a charismatic church leader in the LA area who asked to have lunch with him. He said to John, ***"Sometimes when I am shaving in the morning Jesus comes into the bathroom with me."*** He then said to John, "Do you believe that?" And John said, "No, but it troubles me that you believe it." And then John said, ***"I just have one question: Do you continue shaving, because if you do it is not the real Jesus."***

It is proper to reverence or fear God. It is the position of godliness (2 Cor. 7:1; Eph. 5:21; Phil. 2:12-13; 1 Pet. 1:17; also Dan. 10:7-9; Heb. 12:19). It is the wicked who in their blindness have no fear of God (cf. Rom. 3:18). However, God does not want His children to live in abject/tormenting fear.

God has made provision to alleviate the fears of His children! 1 Jn. 4:18 says perfect love casts out fear. But here is the point. God's basis and provision for the removal of craven fear is found only in Jesus! It's in His love that fear is cast out. And that is exactly where the text goes.

God spoke from heaven and the disciples fell flat on their faces in overwhelming terror and fear. BUT (but is a contrast word), but then Jesus came...

7 But Jesus came and touched them and said, "Arise, and do not be afraid."

What a beautiful statement! Time after time in the ministry of Jesus we see Him calming the fears of His disciples. Jesus is our mediator and we find all in Him to calm our fears in the face of the Almighty holy God!

The night before He was crucified Jesus in John 14:1 told His disciples, "Let not your heart be troubled; you believe in God, believe also in Me." This is the prescription for a troubled heart. A few verses later in John 14:27 He said, "Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid."

Upon seeing the risen Christ Jesus told the disciples in Matt. 28:10, "Do not be afraid." When John saw the risen Lord in Rev. 1 he fell at his feet as a dead man, but Christ immediately put His hand on Him saying, "Do not be afraid". Isn't that wonderful?

We have every reason to be fearful and terrified out of our minds – naturally speaking. Naturally speaking we are sinful, but God is perfectly holy. But in Jesus we have a Savior, we have a Redeemer, we have a mediator and that makes all the difference. He steps in to relieve our fears!

On their faces in overwhelming fear Jesus touched them and said, "Arise, and do not be afraid." The TOUCH and affirmation of Jesus made all the difference. Their peace was found in Him – the Prince of Peace.

8 When they had lifted up their eyes, they saw no one but Jesus only.

Thus, God the Father made His point. Looking up they saw Jesus only – which is the whole point! It's all about Jesus! It's not about making over Moses and Elijah – its all about Jesus!

Jesus ALONE is the Son having the very nature of God.
 Jesus ALONE is superior to all others.
 Jesus ALONE is the One Who speaks with absolute authority.
 Jesus ALONE is our mediator who conquers our fears.
 Jesus ALONE is to be our focus.

Jesus ALONE is the full and final revelation of God!

A great motto for life is "Jesus Only". As Colossians 3:11 says, "Christ is all and in all."

Note the 2 bookend emphases here concerning Jesus being the Son of God. This is the heart of Peter's great confession in Matt. 16:16. This is the all-authoritative statement from the shekinah glory as seen in Matt. 17:5. This is the MAJOR point being driven home in this whole surrounding context. Jesus is the Son of God. As such He has a claim on each of our lives.

As God He can say, "Say, NO to self as Lord and YES to me as Lord and follow Me." (Mt. 16:24). As the authoritative Son of God we are to LISTEN to Him. He ALONE speaks to us with absolute authority.

Peter never got over this experience of seeing Christ's kingdom glory. It perhaps explains why in his two epistles he has the Second Coming of Christ as a dominant theme.

The message of his two epistles might be summarized as: "Fellow believers, don't worry about your pain, your hardship, your testing, your persecution, your sacrifice. Jesus is coming. That's all that really matters." – *John MacArthur*

But we should also note one more thing. Peter in his last epistle referenced the mount of transfiguration experience. This became a climactic part of his testimony. But then he said this...

Slide # 12

2 Peter 1:19 (ESV – earlier translation)

19 And we have something more sure, the prophetic word, to which you will do well to pay attention as to a lamp shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts,

2 Peter 1:19 (ESV – later translation)

19 And we have the prophetic word more fully confirmed, to which you will do well to pay attention as to a lamp shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts,

There is a little "in house" debate on the nuance of how verse 19 should be understood. Should it be understood that the disciples' experience on the mount of transfiguration gave further proof of the prophetic Scriptures, or should it be understood that an even greater confirmation than the disciples' experience is the prophetic Word of God itself.

I would lean toward the view that in the prophetic Scriptures we have an even more sure testimony than that of apostolic experience. This view says that SCRIPTURE trumps EXPERIENCE – even the experience of an apostle. The apostolic experience is a single narrative of a single vision while the OT provides multiple prophecies that harmonize on this subject. The OT. is much fuller and more detailed in its treatment of Christ's coming glory than is Peter's experience.

In effect, the OT has more prophecies, more prophets involved, and a broader depth of treatment; and it is therefore an even MORE SURE prophetic word.

But both are true. We have the certainty of a multi-faceted prophetic witness in the OT and on top of that we have the apostolic experience that is in perfect accord with it.

For God's people the goal is the KINGDOM and the way we get there is through Jesus. He is the King of the KINGDOM! We have prophetic truth that aligns with this truth. We have apostolic testimony that also became Scripture that aligns with this truth. It all points to Jesus as the Son of God Who will one day rule supreme in the kingdom as King of kings and Lord of Lords!

In the whole of the NT – in all the instruction given to the Church there is no mention of the high praise word "Hallelujah". It is the climactic praise word reserved for the most special occasion of Christ's second coming.

In the 1700s after Handel completed the *Hallelujah* chorus in Handel's Messiah, it is claimed that he exclaimed, "*I did think I saw heaven open, and saw the very face of God.*" At the premiere of Handel's great work when they came to the "***Hallelujah Chorus***" King George II and all his attendants rose from their seats in honor of the King of kings!

When Jesus comes in His kingdom glory the whole world will in effect see "Jesus Only". All eyes will be upon Him and all of heaven will sing the Hallelujah Course (so to speak). Now will be the time...

Slide # 13

Revelation 19:6 (NKJV)

6 And I heard, as it were, the voice of a great multitude, as the sound of many waters and as the sound of mighty thunderings, saying, "**Alleluia! For the Lord God Omnipotent reigns!**"

Today as God's people we continue to pray, "Your kingdom come." Just as sure as Jesus gave Peter, James, and John a kingdom preview – just as sure His kingdom will one day come in answer to our prayers and in fulfillment of all the kingdom prophecies.

"Even so, come, Lord Jesus!" (Rev. 22:20).