

Theme: **Transfigured and Prefigured**

Text: Luke 9:28 – 36

Occasion: Transfiguration Sunday 2019

Date: March 3, 2019

Place: Shepherd of the Rockies LCMS, Bailey, CO

Grace and peace to you as you let God transfigure your life, from God, our Father, our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Transfiguration Sunday is the last Sunday of Epiphany and this Wednesday we begin the Lenten season as we continue our journey with Jesus, this time to the Cross as Christ our Passover Lamb. Today we continue to learn more about Jesus and how He is working in our lives by looking at 7 different people. The evangelist Luke tells us, **“Now about eight days after these sayings Jesus took with Him Peter and John and James and went up on the mountain to pray.”** (Lk. 9:28)

The eight day that the evangelist Luke is talking about are the eight days earlier when Jesus asked His disciples, **“Who do the crowds say that I am?” and they answered, “John the Baptist. But others say, Elijah and others, that one of the prophets of old has risen.”** Then He said to them, **“But who do you say that I am?”** And Peter answered, **“The Christ of God.”** And He strictly charged and commanded them to tell this to no one, saying, **“The Son of Man must suffer many things and be rejected by the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and on the third day be raised.”** (Lk 9:18 – 22)

Simon Peter is an interesting person, over the past 8 weeks of Epiphany we have seen Simon Peter with his brother being called to be disciples of Jesus and now here we see Simon Peter once again being the spokesperson for the Disciples. Was Simon Peter Transfigured and prefigured to be one of the leaders of the Disciples. Well we have learned from the past weeks that Simon Peter was a leader of one of the fishing boats on the Sea of Galilee and that he often spoke his mind before considering what he was saying, like when he said to Jesus on the top of the mount of Transfiguration, **“Master, it is good that we are here. Let us make three tents, one for you and one for Moses and one for Elijah” —not knowing what he said.’** (Lk. 9:33) As we continue to follow the Evangelist Luke account of Jesus live, we will learn that Simon Peter also says things that he is not able to back up but after making those mistakes he learns how to let God go to work in his life so that he can be the spokesman for God that God wants him to be. Yes, Simon Peter like all of Jesus’ Disciples was both transfigured from a sinner into saint as they let God go to work in their lives through His Words, actions and sacraments. Oh, Simon Peter

was prefigured to be a leader and spokesman and God came into his life to use His God given talents to share God's Word and love with others.

So, what about John, the younger sons of Zebedee, that we were introduced to when Jesus called Peter and his brother Andrew to be His disciples, He also called John and his brother James the sons of Zebedee. Was John transfigured and prefigured to be a disciple of Jesus? Though the Gospels and especially the gospel that John wrote, we learn that John becomes one of Jesus' closest friends and it is John who is standing with Mary, the mother of Jesus, near the cross when Jesus was crucified and there Jesus put His mother into John's care for the rest of her life. Oh, John was well respected by more than Jesus, for when Jesus was sent to the high priest house for his trial, John was able to get into the high priest house without any problems and would later bring Peter into the High priest house also. John would be the last of the Apostles to die even though he would have to suffer much for the truth of Jesus Christ and would be the one who would instruct many of the leaders of the church for the next generation. Yes, John was transfigured by the words, actions and sacraments that Jesus Christ gave to him, but God also had prefigured John as one of the Apostles by the family he was born into and the talents that God had given to him to use in the cause of sharing the Good News of all that God had done for us through Jesus Christ.

Then there is James, the elder son of Zebedee, who also traveled with Jesus and the other two to the top of the mountain to see the Transfiguration of Jesus, how was he transfigured and prefigured to be an apostle of Jesus Christ. James was the elder son of Zebedee and was probably expected to take over the ownership of the fleet of fishing boats later in his life. His life was very much transfigured during the time that he was around Jesus and was looked at as one of the leaders of the Disciples of Jesus even to the point of being the first of the apostles to give his life for the truth of God's love given to us by the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

Yes, all three of the men who went up the mount of Transfiguration were transfigured by Jesus words and actions and even more transfigured by the experience of seeing Jesus transfigured in all his glory as they prayed at the top of the mount. The Evangelist Luke tells us, **'And as Jesus was praying, the appearance of His face was altered, and his clothing became dazzling white.**<sup>30</sup> **And behold, two men were talking with Him, Moses and Elijah,**<sup>31</sup> **who**

**appeared in glory and spoke of His departure, which He was about to accomplish at Jerusalem.'**  
(LK. 9:29-31)

So, what about the other two men at the transfiguration of Jesus, how were they transfigured and prefigured in their lives? Moses in his life was transfigured more than once, for he was born a slave who should have been thrown into the Nile river and drowned but instead he was found by the daughter of Pharaoh and brought up to be a Pharaoh of Egypt for 40 year before trying to defend his fellow Israelites and having to escape to Midian. In Midian, he is again transfigured into a keeper of sheep and a father for another 40 years, until God calls him to go back to Egypt and bring His people out of slavery. Through God working in the life of Moses the people of Israel were brought out of slavery in Egypt to mount Saini, where God gave the people of Israel His Ten Commandment to show them how to be the people of God. Yes, through the transfiguring and prefiguring of God Moses became to bringer of the Law to God people and through the Law they came to know that there is a need for one greater than him to bring us all out of our slavery to sin and that is Jesus.

Elijah, now there was a lot of transfiguring and prefiguring going on in his live also. We are not told much about the life of Elijah, other than that he was faithful to God in many ways which is just the opposite of King Ahab in the northern tribes of Israel. There may have been a lot of transfiguring going on in Elijah's live while he was hiding from King Ahab during the three-year drought along the brook of Cherith and then with the widow of Zarephath. Elijah's transfiguring and prefiguring was tested and strengthened even more after God defeated the prophets of Baal through him and then he was threatened with death by Queen Jezebel. In bad times and in good times Elijah relied heavily on God and in the end, he was blessed to be one of the two people mentioned in the bible that didn't have to die, but rode to heaven in a fiery chariot. Yes, Moses and Elijah were certainly two of the men of the Old Testament that God did a lot of transfiguring and prefiguring in their lives for the benefit of all of us.

So, what about Jesus? Oh, on the mount of Transfiguration Jesus was transfigured in all His glory and from the beginning of time Jesus was prefigured to come into the world at just the right time to live the perfect life we cannot live and to give us His perfect righteousness in exchange for all our sins so that He could make the full and final payment for them on the cross of Calvary for us. Jesus' transfigured body showed His disciple who they had just confessed that

he was the anointed one of God and that gave them a certainty that only God's word can truly give to us, as the Evangelist Luke tells us, **'As Peter was saying these things, a cloud came and overshadowed them, and they were afraid as they entered the cloud. <sup>35</sup> And a voice came out of the cloud, saying, "This is my Son, my Chosen One; listen to him!" <sup>36</sup> And when the voice had spoken, Jesus was found alone. And they kept silent and told no one in those days anything of what they had seen.'** (Lk 9:34-36)

Jesus was prefigured to be the one who would be true God and true man so that by His life, death and resurrection we could be saved from the slavery we have with sin, death and the devil, to live forever in the love, peace and joy of God's presence. Jesus was prefigured through the prophets of the Old Testament and was transfigured from the throne of God to be a man just like each and every one of us so that He could bring us to salvation where we will see Jesus in all His glory like the five other men on the mount of Transfiguration saw.

That bring us to you and me. Each year on this last Sunday of Epiphany we revisit the mount of Transfiguration with Jesus and the other five men. How has your life and mine been transfigured and prefigured over the past years and throughout our lives? Hopefully each of us have been baptized in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, for in that baptism we are transfigured from being children of Satan, sin and death to being Children of God, with God's love and life in us. That transfiguration begins in us at our baptism as all our sins are wash away and we are given the Holy Spirit to work in our lives through God's Word and Sacraments. Oh, from the beginning of time we were prefigured to be God's Children, but sin from the moment of our conception was a part of our lives and that meant that we had to be transfigured by the love of God for us to be His children once again. That Transfiguration in our life has given to us the free gifts from God, but as with all gifts if you don't use them and make them a part of your life than it does you no good. Keep the transfiguration of your life going by listening to the Words of the Chosen One, Jesus Christ so that the new life given to you will remain in you forever and you will know true life in God's love, peace and joy that you were prefigured for from the beginning of time.

That's the good news of the Transfiguration of Jesus Christ that we need to share and encourage all people to come to know. Amen