

12 Therefore, since we have such a hope, we are very bold. 13 We are not like Moses, who would put a veil over his face to keep the Israelites from gazing at it while the radiance was fading away. 14 But their minds were made dull, for to this day the same veil remains when the old covenant is read. It has not been removed, because only in Christ is it taken away. 15 Even to this day when Moses is read, a veil covers their hearts. 16 But whenever anyone turns to the Lord, the veil is taken away. 17 Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom. 18 And we, who with unveiled faces all reflect the Lord's glory, are being transformed into his likeness with ever-increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit.

1 Therefore, since through God's mercy we have this ministry, we do not lose heart. 2 Rather, we have renounced secret and shameful ways; we do not use deception, nor do we distort the word of God. On the contrary, by setting forth the truth plainly we commend ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God. ^(NIV84)

Jesus is Revealed ... AS THE KING OF GLORY

Put yourself in the shoes of the Israelites, just for a few moments. Their leader Moses had gone up to the top of Mount Sinai, now for the second time. When he went up the last time, there was that sad incident with the Golden Calf. Moses came down and shattered the tablets in anger, there was a purging of the evil through the ranks. There was a plague that infected the people as a result of their idolatry. God had pretty clearly condemned the action and reinstalled the fear of God into the hearts of those who dared give his glory to an idol.

And now Moses went back up the mountain. He was up there for 40 days, just like last time, but this time the people were on their best behavior. You can still imagine the fear in their hearts. "The last time he talked with God, he came back, very angry." They wait and waited for Moses to return, and when he did, there was something different. Not just that the tablets made it all the way into the camp this time, there was something different about Moses. His face – it was glowing!! He was reflecting the glory of the Lord. He saw God face to face and the glory of the Lord had imprinted itself on the face of Moses.

God allowed this to happen so that the people would understand that Moses was his chosen one. He allowed it to happen as an encouragement to Moses and to God's people. He allowed it to happen to reinforce for them when Moses was speaking with God. It's interesting that it wasn't just the mountaintop experience when this happened. Whenever Moses would go in the Tent of Meeting – their church – he'd come back with his face newly glowing again! He had spoken with God again and there was no mistaking it!

On this Transfiguration Day, we meet Moses again and his fellow saint in the Lord Elijah. They come to earth, one final time to do what they spent their lives doing – pointing to the Messiah. They came to testify to the truth of the promises of God. They came to be a powerful witness of the glory of the Lord. Today in the events of Transfiguration, in the events of our lives and in our reading from 2 Corinthians, we see Jesus revealed once more. There on the top of the mountain we see **Jesus Revealed as the King of Glory.**

2 Corinthians 3:12 - 4:2

If you're a parent, you heard this complaint more times than you can count: "It's too dark!" Most kids don't like sleeping in pitch black, so you end up figuring out a way to let some light in. But it's a balancing act. You need to let enough light in to calm the fears but not so much light that they can't sleep. So you find yourself adjusting the door to let a little more light in.

Throughout this season of Epiphany, we've been looking at how God is revealing to us who exactly Jesus is. It's kind of the same way that it worked with the promises about him from the Old Testament. Slowly more and more is shared, more light is shed on the mystery that would be fulfilled in Jesus. It's like the door to the hallway letting more and more light into the room. We saw Jesus Revealed as Messiah, Miracle Worker, Prophet, as the epitome of Love. And now today the door gets thrown wide open. You could say that the light switch gets thrown on for a moment or two. Jesus allows his inner circle – Peter, James and John to see him for who he really is. The glory that shone from his face was a confirmation of all that the Scriptures had said, all that Jesus had promised. There Jesus reassured, comforted and confirmed for his people that he was in fact **The King of Glory.**

Moses would wear a veil when he wasn't delivering God's message to his people. He didn't want them to see God's glory fading from his face. He didn't want the lesson of the glory and goodness of God to be confused as if somehow God's goodness would fade from their sights as well, so God had Moses wear a veil so that the lesson would stand for his people.

And Paul picks up on that idea as he seeks to teach and encourage the Corinthians. He wants them to know the joy of having a clear vision of Jesus, so he contrasts that with the veil that covers the eyes of the unbelievers.

We are not like Moses, who would put a veil over his face to keep the Israelites from gazing at it while the radiance was fading away. ¹⁴ But their minds were made dull, for to this day the same veil remains when the old covenant is read. It has not been removed, because only in Christ is it taken away. ¹⁵ Even to this day when Moses is read, a veil covers their hearts.

Paul encountered many people who went around with veils on their faces. They didn't see the real glory of the Lord in his mercy and grace. They saw instead a need to work for salvation. Many would cover their eyes to Jesus and strive to live the covenant themselves. They'd continue to follow the Sabbath laws and dietary restrictions as if those things really made them believers. They'd ignore grace and cast their gaze on their own deeds.

But they aren't the only ones that are wearing the blindfolds. We do it too!! We've seen the glory of the love of Christ, yet how quickly we turn to worldly ways. We allow our hearts to swell with pride in our own faithfulness. We feel like we are better Christians than others, or at least we are Christians unlike those pagans out there. We start to feel deserving of God's favor. We work for God and then we think that in turn God should work for us! But that's not the way it works.

And thank God that's not the way it works. Because if it is, we are all in trouble. If God returns to us the measure of our faithfulness to him, then we are all lost forever. If God doles out his love on a merits based system, then we are all equally unworthy, equally lost. We deserve punishment, pain, hell for our blind and foolish ways. We deserve to be cast away from God's presence for the many times that we choose to follow other ways instead of his ways.

2 Corinthians 3:12 - 4:2

But Jesus stepped in and took the veil off of our hearts and eyes. He opens our blind eyes to the truth of his grace. ***But whenever anyone turns to the Lord, the veil is taken away. Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom.***

Jesus takes the veil off our eyes so that we can see his glory. He does it by taking us to the mountaintop with him. Only he doesn't take all of us, just the worst of us. Just the ugly part climbs. Our sinful nature, our defiant streaks, our self-absorbed and arrogance selves. He took the hater and the gossip and idolater in all of us with him to the top of a mountain and then he showed his glory. He revealed his love to us by becoming a sacrifice. He gave his life in your place and mine. He only took our sin with him. There is died, crucified with him, in him. There he paid the price for your redemption and mine. There as God covered the earth in darkness, at the same time he showered the world with the light of his glory.

And as his beams of glory shone from the empty tomb, our eyes see it again – his glory!! The glory of victory, the glory of sins forgiven, of redemption won, of heaven secured. There we see the glory of unconditional grace and full and free forgiveness. There we see the truth that his glory will one day be ours as we join him in heaven forever.

But we don't need to wait until then to bear his glory. ***And we, who with unveiled faces all reflect the Lord's glory, are being transformed into his likeness with ever-increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit.***

As Jesus was transformed, so is happening with us. As we grow in faith through Word and Sacrament, we are changing, growing maturing. As our faith grows, so does our willingness to serve the Lord. We are motivated to go out on a limb to worship him, to leave our comfort zone to praise him for his great love. We have so many opportunities to be little Christ's in the world. With his help, we can set selfishness aside and seek to show others what we've been shown – kindness, love, compassion!

We have seen the King of Glory. We see him on the pages of Scripture, we see through promise fulfilled in our lives, we see him at work in us and through us and now we can work with him. In sanctified living we can call on his strength to spread the Word of his saving love.

I remember in elementary school, learning something that was kind of mind blowing. In Science class I learned that the moon created no light of its own, all it does is reflect a far greater light – the sun! My friends, be a moon in your world. It's not about your own light, but you have a far greater job – Reflect the light of the Son!!! Use it to illumine those walking in darkness that they too might see the light of the glory of Christ!!

My friends, Jesus has taken off your veil, he's opened your eyes. You can see his glory. You know firsthand his love!! Now reflect that love, share that love that the light might shine in your loved ones' lives. Rejoice that the Spirit will use you to remove the veil from others eyes too. Then his glory will shine brighter and reach more. Then many more will join us to see his him here on earth and through faith they will join us to forever bask in the light of heavenly glory, where we will rejoice and sing the praises of him who Has Been Revealed and is forever **Our King of Glory!** Amen.