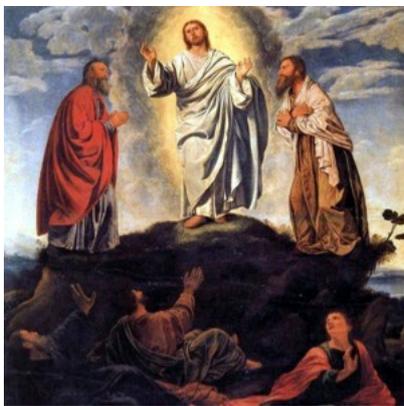


Transfiguration and Confirmation

Matthew 17:1-9

Often, people wear white on their Confirmation day; and we hear of Jesus today, too, transfigured. I think it's a good day for Confirmation, on Transfiguration. Jesus was transfigured before them, and his face shone like the sun, and his clothes became dazzling white. That's what we hear, and today the young adults being confirmed will be wearing white — and there are probably lots of reasons why we do that on Confirmation day.



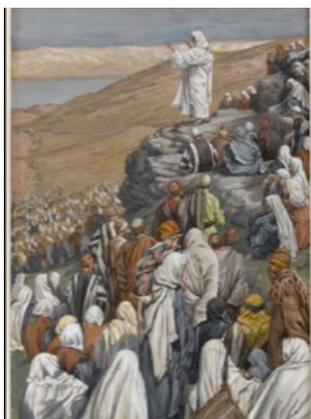
Jesus himself must have been such a sight, though, when he was transfigured before these three disciples that were with him on the mountain. They get a glimpse of what is the heavenly glory that awaits those people who put their hope, their trust, and their faith in this Jesus.

With Jesus are two others: Elijah and Moses — and of course Moses had this mountaintop experience, didn't he, when he was receiving the Ten Commandments; and any time that he went into the Lord's presence, *he too* was glowing! He comes down the mountain



absolutely glowing. The mountaintop experiences — and I pray that, as Christians, we might know something of those mountaintop experiences ourselves. Maybe they are small glimpses into what this heavenly promise is all about. I don't know about you; but in some of the recent Sundays leading up to our move from Station St to Riversdale Rd, some of the conversations and memories that I have heard people sharing have reminded me of mountaintop experiences, as people's *hearts* have been speaking as they've been sharing those memories; and I really encourage that for you as well.

Of course, Jesus' glory won't be shown yet — and that's why he says "Don't tell anyone about this until after I've been resurrected." *That's* where we'll find his glory. In John's gospel, John really makes a point of Jesus' being exalted *on the cross* — the cross really becomes this place of glory. And for others, the focus moves to the resurrection. I pray that you and I will know those experiences as well. And maybe you have some to share from your time here at Station St.



But we'll hear today that this isn't where Jesus stays. There are a very few short verses that talk about the Transfiguration in all the gospels that record them. Jesus doesn't stay on the mountain. Rather he comes down the mountain, down to where the people are — and I think that's an important part of the story. There were just three of them in that mountaintop experience, plus Moses and Elijah who were there. The

gospels are filled with the stories of Jesus, and they make clear that the place of Jesus is among us — not way up there, somewhere removed. Jesus comes down the mountain to journey with us in life, and perhaps we know that most particularly in times of struggle. We know it, perhaps, the longer we go on as Christians in this world, a world where people less and less want to even hear the story of Jesus. We are called to be who we are, more and more *amongst* people. You know, in this past week's news especially, we've had terribly highlighted for us the issues of family violence, domestic violence. In all of this, we are all called to be people of faith among other people — people in our families, those who are our neighbours first and foremost, and to people in our world — to be sensitive first and foremost that we bring Jesus in our lives to people in need.

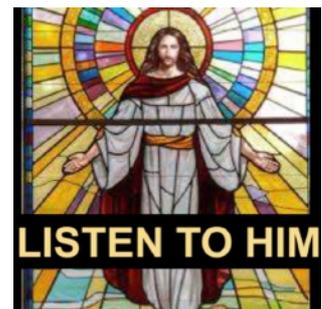
We pray, then, for those young people who confirm their faith this day; perhaps we've already gone down that path of confirmation ourselves, too. And we remember that Jesus is with us in the high places, and with us in the valleys below. It's interesting that the book of Revelation, too, has this beautiful picture of all the people gathered; and it's the picture that we share in Holy Communion always, isn't it — as we prepare for Holy Communion, we are there with the saints, with angels and archangels and all the company of heaven; and John in the book of Revelation sees this, and there are these people there dressed in white, their clothes now are dazzling. And the person he sees in the vision asks him, "Who are these people?" And he says, "Sir, *you* know." And he says, "They are the ones who have come through the great time of suffering, the great tribulation, the great journey of life." They picture those like you and me, but who have gone before us, who have walked the journey.



Matthew records two things which are of such importance that every confirmation class that's ever gone through the course and come here in their fine white robes needs to hear and take with them.

So dear friends, as we finish the course here at Station Street, as we prepare to walk down the mountain, down the road to Riversdale Road, as we thank God for the Confirmation services here over many years, for the class of 2020, and for the faith that we have as we walk the road, I'd like to leave you with just two things, because I think that there are two things in our Gospel text that every single Confirmation class that's ever been through the journey must take with them:

1. The first is that God says to you and me today, "This is my son." He brings us Jesus in the Word, and he says, "With him, I am well pleased. Listen to him." Listen to Jesus — whatever happens in life, in those high places, in the places of the deepest and darkest valleys, listen to Jesus. I don't know whether God spoke in a booming "voice of God" or if it was in a still, small voice: "Listen to him." Listen to him remind you of what he said at your baptism: "I am with you always, wherever you go on this walk of life." So come together, *keep* coming together, keep coming to receive Jesus in your ears and in your hearts, and take him to the people in the world around you.



2. And secondly, in Matthew Jesus says to those disciples who sometimes go through the deepest valleys, those who fear, he says to them, "Get up and do not be afraid." I know that as we leave Station St, it brings many emotions for many people. We thank God for life here with him in this place, and as we go on, he says, "It's OK, you can get up and you can go, because I am leading you onwards." Not only to Riversdale Road, but in all of life.



So, I want you to be encouraged, dear friends, as we remember Confirmation this day, and as we share those memories and as we go back out into life — Jesus goes with us. We are always on a journey with this same Jesus, from the mountaintop down into the plains below where the people gather. Jesus comes with us. He calls us to go with him; and he will never leave us. Listen to him, and do not be afraid. Amen.