

The Life of Christ – Part 8

Thank you for joining me once again for It's a Good Life. Today we continue our study in the life of Christ, and we want to look at lesson number 8, the transfiguration of Christ. And let me remind you that, if you would like a transcript of this program or other programs of It's a Good Life, you can look at our website, www.LRWM.org and you can actually download this broadcast once again, and you can also download a transcript of this program and other programs of It's a Good Life.

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Now today as we look into the life of Christ, we want to look at the transfiguration of Christ. The word "transfigured" or "transformed" is used four times in the New Testament and twice it's used of Christ.

In Matthew 17:2, it says, *And was transfigured before them...* This is speaking of Christ being transfigured... *and his face did shine as the sun, and his raiment was white as the light.*

Then in Mark 9:2, it says, *And after six days Jesus taketh with him Peter, and James, and John, and leadeth them up into an high mountain apart by themselves: and he was transfigured before them.*

Remember now, that's used twice of Christ. And then we see that it's also used in the great inner transformation which God brings about in the heart of the believer. In Romans 12:2, it says, *And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed...* This is the same word as "transfigured"; it means the same thing. *Be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind,*

that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.

In II Corinthians 3:18 about the believer, it says, *But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed [or transfigured or transformed] into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord.*

Let's look at some facts about the transfiguration. There was a disturbing revelation given by our Savior to the disciples, and this is the first time that He tells the disciples that He must die. In Matthew 16:21, it says, *From that time forth began Jesus to shew unto his disciples, how that he must go unto Jerusalem, and suffer many things of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised again the third day.*

And then once again in Matthew 17:22-23, it talks about His death. Matthew 20:17-19 also speaks of this. Something happened after Jesus made mention of this to the disciples. Peter rebuked the Lord. Can you imagine rebuking our Savior? Rebuking God? But Peter, once again, we would say he stuck his foot in his mouth and he rebuked the Lord for the revelation He gave to His disciples.

Listened to what happened in Matthew 16:22. It says, *Then Peter took him, and began to rebuke him, saying, Be it far from thee, Lord: this shall not be unto thee.*

Well, the Lord didn't let him get away with it, because the Lord's response to Peter's rebuke was this. In Matthew 16:23, it says, *But he turned, and said unto Peter, **Get thee behind me, Satan: thou art an offence unto me: for***

thou savourest not the things that be of God, but those that be of men.

There are many Scriptures given in the Word of God, prophecies about the Messiah. In the books of Isaiah, Jeremiah, Daniel, and Zephaniah, it talks about the Messiah coming. As we think about what Jesus told the disciples there that He was going to be killed, how could a dead person be the Messiah who would reign forever and ever? The verses that I mentioned here, these chapters in Jeremiah and Isaiah and Daniel talk about a King, a Messiah who would reign forever and ever. But if a person is dead as Jesus told His disciples that He was going to die, how could He reign forever and ever?

You probably already know the answer to this. It's found in Matthew 16:21. After His death, Christ would be raised from the dead. Matthew 16:21 says, *From that time forth began Jesus to shew unto his disciples, how that he must go unto Jerusalem, and suffer many things of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and... Notice... be raised again the third day.*

Then in Acts 2:22-24, it says,²² *Ye men of Israel, hear these words; Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you by miracles and wonders and signs, which God did by him in the midst of you, as ye yourselves also know: ²³Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain: ²⁴Whom God hath raised up, having loosed the pains of death: because it was not possible that he should be holden of it.*

How could a dead Messiah reign forever and ever? Well, the fact of the matter is He's not dead. He rose from the grave that He could reign and have a kingdom here forever and ever.

Notice the mysterious prediction that took place now. To come again, Christ must die first. Matthew 16:27 says, *For the Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father with his angels; and then he shall reward every man according to his works.*

The second coming is mentioned in Matthew 10:23, but it's doubtful that the disciples understood the significance of the statement that Christ made in that section of Scripture. When the Jews read the scriptures, they could only see one coming, and that's true today of the Jewish nation. Thank God there are Jewish people who are saved, who have received Jesus as Savior, but there are those of the nation who have not. Today we are living in the period between the two comings of Christ.

Now, Christ cannot come again until the Gospel of the kingdom has been preached throughout all the world, according to Matthew 24:13-14. It says, ¹³*But he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved.* He's not talking about holding out for salvation. He's talking about the tribulation period here. Verse 14 says, ¹⁴*And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come.*

The Gospel of the kingdom is the Gospel that Jesus Christ is coming to set up His kingdom. Matthew 24 is about the tribulation, and this section of Scripture speaks of the end of the tribulation just before Christ comes back to set up His earthly kingdom. Do not get confused thinking that Matthew 24 is speaking of the Rapture of the church. It's not. It's speaking of the Day of the Lord, the wrath of God; it's speaking of the tribulation and, then, as Christ comes back to set up His kingdom.

The Lord's first coming was necessary to set things right in man's heart. His second coming is necessary to set things right in man's world.

And my question today to you is, is He King of your life? Have you let Him take your life? One day He will be King of the world. He's coming again and He's going to set up His kingdom.

Notice on the Mount of Transfiguration now the glorious transformation that took place here and some of the things here that we need to look at. Three of Christ's disciples accompanied Him to a mountain. The mountain is not identified.

In Matthew 17:1, it says, *And after six days Jesus taketh Peter, James, and John his brother, and bringeth them up into an high mountain apart.* And, of course, I just mentioned the fact of these three disciples, their names were Peter, James, and John.

And then the Bible tells us that Jesus went to the mountain to pray, and while Jesus prayed, the disciples slept, according to Luke 9:32. It says, *But Peter and they that were with him were heavy with sleep.* And we're told as Christ prayed His appearance changed and His countenance or His face was altered. Luke 9:29 talks about that, and we are also told that His raiment was white and glistening. Luke 9:29 says, *[A]nd his raiment was white and glistening.*

And the Bible says Jesus was transfigured, or He was changed, in the presence of the disciples, according to Matthew 17:2. The word "transfigured" is from the Greek verb *metamorphoó*, which is made up of two parts: *meta* which means change and *morphoo* which means form. Hence, it means to be changed into another form, to be transformed. Our English word, "metamorphosis" comes from this Greek word, and that's what happened to Christ. He was changed. The disciples saw this happen.

John would later write of the transfiguration in John 1:14. It says, *And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, and we...* And I

believe this is speaking of the transfiguration here... *and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.* It could also mean that, as they walked with Him, they beheld Him every day; they saw Him; they beheld His glory, but I believe more specifically it's speaking of the transfiguration as they beheld His glory.

Notice an intriguing conversation that took place on this mount. Moses and Elijah speak with the Lord, according to Luke 9:30. Moses and Elijah spoke of the Lord's decease in Luke 9:31. Somebody says, "What did they speak about?" They spoke about Him dying, of Christ's death. It says, *Who appeared in glory, and spake of his decease which he should accomplish at Jerusalem.*

The word "decease" is the Greek word *exodus*, and you can find this also in Hebrews 11:22, talking about exodus which means going out, departure, and this word clearly refers to the Lord's coming death and departure from this world.

Why Moses and Elias or Elijah? Why did these two appear with Him? What did these two represent? Once again, we look at Moses and we see that Moses represented the law, according to John 1:17. It says, *For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ.*

The law was fulfilled in Christ, according to Galatians 3:11-13 and Romans 10:4. Romans 10:4 says, *For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth.* And I believe that Moses as he represented the law there, Christ is the end of the law.

And then we see Elijah. He represented the prophets. Hebrews 1:1 says, *God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets.*

Christ was God before the foundation of the world. He became a prophet in the flesh, according to Hebrews 7:1-3.

First Timothy 1:17 says, *Now unto the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, be honour and glory for ever and ever. Amen.*

Hebrews 1:1-2 says, *¹God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, ²Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds.*

Moses and Elijah, Peter, James, and John were witnesses to this transfiguration that took place, and there's a final witness. What does God the Father have to say about His Son?

In Matthew 17:5, He says, *[M]y beloved Son in whom I am well pleased; hear, [listen, pay attention to] him, God says on the Mount of Transfiguration.*

Have you listened to God? Have you paid attention to His Son. Have you received Him as your Savior? Be transformed by the renewing of your heart by receiving Jesus Christ as your Savior even today.

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Until next time, this is Doug Anderson reminding you it's a good life living for the Lord. May the Lord bless you richly is our prayer.