

**Sunday, February 14, 2021**  
**“What’s So Great About That?”**

- I. **2 Corinthians 4:5-6** – <sup>5</sup> For what we proclaim is not ourselves, but Jesus Christ as Lord, with ourselves as your servants for Jesus’ sake. <sup>6</sup> For God, who said, “Let light shine out of darkness,” has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.
- II. **How do we explain the Transfiguration?**
  - a. The Christian Church has celebrated the Transfiguration of our Lord for centuries
    - i. One theologian named Thomas Aquinas believed the Transfiguration was the greatest of Jesus’ miracles besides the resurrection
      1. All of the other miracles Jesus did were outward and for others, but this miracle was about Jesus Himself – glorified
    - ii. Yet, the average Christian might not see how this miracle applies to them.
    - iii. The average Christian might even ask, “What’s so great about that?”
  - b. The Bible says, “<sup>6</sup> All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, <sup>17</sup> that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work.” (2 Timothy 3:16-17)
    - i. These are good words for us because we can always apply Scripture to our lives... including the Transfiguration!
  - c. One of the big issues that comes up over and over again throughout all the Bible is the Messiah and failing to recognize Him.
  - d. The way Paul puts it in our reading today is that people have a “veil” over their eyes and cannot see or understand the Gospel.
- III. **Satan is hard at work putting a veil over people’s eyes.**
  - a. Although Paul is directing his words to those without faith in Jesus, his message applies to all Christians too
  - b. The truth and light of Jesus Christ is obscured, diluted, and confused by satan and his lies
  - c. Here are some ways that Jesus is veiled in the world today:
    - i. The “good guy” Jesus –
      1. Instead of being a Savior and God Himself, Jesus is a nice person that we all need to be like
      2. This Jesus never tells anyone they are wrong or they need to suffer as they follow Him, but they should just be nice
      3. Jesus would be especially accepting of sin and brokenness, and not “judge” anyone for any reason, but encourage them to keep doing whatever makes them happy
    - ii. Jesus as a good luck charm –
      1. Many people see Jesus as a way to better finances... or healing from some disease or trouble

2. As long as they go to church and maybe pray a little... or live a pretty good life, they might get what they want
- iii. Jesus the teacher or philosopher –
  1. All the things Jesus taught were life lessons that should be followed – but nothing more
  2. Again, Jesus is not a Savior, but simply a wonderful teacher who helps us live a good life
- iv. Jesus as a myth –
  1. For those who don't believe Jesus exists at all, they come up with any number of documentaries, historical studies, or claims about Scripture that cast doubt on the existence of Jesus
- v. The cultural or traditional Jesus –
  1. A vague reference to Jesus and being a Christian is just part of who we are as Americans... a good example is wearing a cross as jewelry but having no idea who Jesus is
  2. Others call themselves "Christians" but again, know nothing about the Bible or Christ – they are Christians because their family has always been that way
- vi. Jesus as one of many ways –
  1. Some people see Jesus as "a" way, but not the "only" way to salvation...
  2. They ask, what about all the other religions? How could God be so small as to make salvation connected to Jesus only?
- d. Yes, Satan is busy putting a veil over Jesus, but that is why God puts pastors and teachers in the world to proclaim the truth.

IV. **Our reading today refers to a pastor proclaiming the truth.**

- a. St. Paul is telling the Corinthian church that he would never preach a false Jesus or try to use Jesus for his own personal gain.
- b. In fact, he suffered immensely because he traveled on numerous missionary journeys going from cities and towns telling the truth about Jesus
  - i. On many occasions Paul was tortured, jailed, and feared for his life
  - ii. Through it all, he pressed on... because he knew the unveiled Christ
  - iii. He preached the truth to them as he says in his first letter - "And I, when I came to you, brothers, did not come proclaiming to you the testimony of God with lofty speech or wisdom. <sup>2</sup> For I decided to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ and Him crucified. <sup>3</sup> And I was with you in weakness and in fear and much trembling, <sup>4</sup> and my speech and my message were not in plausible words of wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power, <sup>5</sup> so that your faith might not rest in the wisdom of men but in the power of God." (1 Cor. 2:1-5)

V. **The true Jesus is not what we want Him to be**, but what He must be.

- a. As the world seeks a Jesus that fits in its neat little box, the true Jesus breaks the mold.

- i. He calls to repentance – to lead an upright life
  - ii. He calls to suffering and persecution (Mark 8:34)
  - iii. He calls to genuine commitment and giving up much to follow Him
  - iv. He calls to give up life that life might be gained (Mark 8:35)
- b. The true Jesus laid down His life to complete God's plan to save us all!
  - i. Just consider the story of the Transfiguration – who was there besides Peter, James and John?
  - ii. The representatives of Old Covenant – the Law and the Prophets
  - iii. It was as if they were saying, along with the Father in heaven, "Jesus is the fulfillment of the plan, so listen to Him!"
- c. Nowhere else will you find salvation – He is God's plan... He is God.
- d. If we aren't sure what is so great about the Transfiguration, just know that Jesus is God without a doubt.
  - i. Jesus is the Way, the Truth, and the Life... that no one gets to the Father in heaven without Him (John 14:6) and everything the Word says about Him is true.
  - ii. Jesus is not just a good guy, a myth, or a tradition – Jesus is God and Savior...
  - iii. In all the many ways we can try to fit Jesus into our mold (or have our eyes veiled), He changes our understanding through His Word.

VI. **Listen to Him!**

- a. These are good words for us today... and a call to action.
- b. These words do not mean simply listen... but do.
- c. In this case hearing is doing... but what does Jesus say?
  - i. If you aren't sure, or wonder what Jesus really said and did, I encourage you to begin the Lenten journey by reading the Gospels
  - ii. Pick a Gospel and read it as a time of reflection on the life and death of Jesus, but especially the call He gives to every Christian
  - iii. Remember the reading from 2 Timothy 3:16-17 that Scripture is for our benefit and equips us to hear and do.
- d. The very God of the universe spoke through Jesus Christ (even at creation!) to bring about all we know and see... (John 1:3; Colossians 1:16)
  - i. Now He speaks again to you... Listen to My Word
  - ii. Listen to Jesus. Walk with Jesus. Live for Jesus. Amen