

**Valuing the Glory of God in His Word**  
**February 19, 2023**

**Our Savior's Way Lutheran Church      Pastor Tyson Labuhn**

Grace, mercy, and peace to you from God our Father and the Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. Amen.

Today is the last Sunday in the season of Epiphany. Before we begin the season of Lent, our readings for today allow us to see the glory that was revealed to Jesus' closest disciples. Through their eyewitness account, we are able to see Jesus' transfiguration. And in this account, we also see the Glory of God in His Word—Many of us, having grown up in the church, have heard God's Word before. We have heard the stories and the accounts of Jesus. But do we really appreciate the value of God's Glory found in His Word?

In our Epistle reading for today, St. Peter writes to believers who were being challenged in their faith. They were experiencing different cultures, different teachings, and even different philosophies that focused on false gods. Peter wrote to encourage them in their faith, that their faith was true, and that Jesus is their only true God with the Father and the Spirit. Jesus is not someone who was made up or invented by men. Peter writes that he was an eyewitness to Jesus and at Jesus' transfiguration. He had been there. He had seen it and heard the voice himself.

Whenever someone gives an eyewitness account of an event, it is considered to be important evidence in discovering the truth. In his account of the transfiguration, Peter could have focused on himself and talked about what he felt or was thinking about at the time. Or he could have focused on how Jesus was

transfigured right before his eyes. But instead of describing what he saw that day, he emphasizes on the power and the purpose of God—St. Peter describes the voice, the words that were spoken at the time, which revealed Jesus as God’s Son.

Peter, James, and John had gone up the mountain with Jesus. And right before their very eyes, Jesus changed, revealing His glory as the Son of God. And as we heard in our Gospel reading, they also saw Moses and Elijah alive and well. It would have been a sight to behold. But in Peter’s eyewitness account of this mountaintop experience, he says, “we were eyewitnesses of His majesty. For when He received honor and glory from God the Father, and the voice was borne to Him by the Majestic Glory, ‘This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased,’ we ourselves heard this very voice borne from heaven, for we were with him on the holy mountain” (2 Peter 1:16b-18).

Those words must have made quite an impression on him because these words have been painstakingly preserved throughout the generations, just like the rest of the Word of God as testified by other apostles and witnesses. They have withstood the test of time. Because while men have tried to reject the truth of the word of God, their attempt at denial was not able to remove the Glory of God from His Word. Because God’s word is filled with truth for all our lives. And today, it seems more than ever before that we ought to value it even more. Because we also live at a time when we are surrounded by different cultures, different teachings, and different philosophies that are focused on false gods.

I do not know if you heard, but there once was a luxurious hotel that never lost a single Bible in the 15 years it placed them at the night side tables for their guests. Then, after putting dictionaries next to the bibles, 41 dictionaries disappeared

within a month. Whether you can draw a solid conclusion from that on its surface, it seems like people place a greater value on the words of man than they do on the Word of God. But, we know as Christians that the Bible is the Word above all other words.

And today, we need to value the Scripture as the very word of God. The words written down in the pages of the Bible are God's words just as much as the Lord Jesus revealed His divine glory so that by the power of His Spirit, it might be recorded by men. Words like love, mercy, and forgiveness are all words that help to express the spiritual truths of His glory that are revealed in His Word. And it's by His grace that we can see that the cross of Christ is a guarantee of our eternal salvation. And yet, people outside of Christianity see the cross as foolishness, and they struggle to understand it.

And so, our witness is that we have come to believe. It comes in that gentle whisper of the Lord that comes alive in us whenever we hear, read, or study the Word of God. It is on the pages of the Scripture that the Lord comes to us and through His Spirit speaks to us. And while we can climb a mountain and see that the glory of His creation is special, we do not have to climb a mountain to see or hear the glory of God. Because He brings His mountain to us through His Word.

It comes to us from the eyewitnesses of the past. And it shines into our hearts because we know that it is true. It has stood the test of time because it did not come from someone's own will or interpretation. Men simply spoke from God as they were carried along by the Spirit. And because of that, we too can see His Glory in His Word and allow His Voice to become our witness—a witness by the Grace of God that is getting larger as

we welcome 10 new members into our congregation and baptize little Bailey into the Christian faith.

You know, today is the last Sunday in the season of Epiphany. And in our readings, we were able to see some of the glory that was revealed to Jesus' closest disciples. Many of us have grown up appreciating God's Word in our lives. But over time, we might not always appreciate its value. But today, we are reminded of the prophetic eyewitness account of the Word of God given to us by St. Peter. And because of it, not only are we able to catch a glimpse of our Lord's glorious divinity, but we are also able to appreciate its value in our lives because we catch a glimpse of the power and purpose of God's plan, that by His Spirit, the Glory of His Word might continue to guide and direct our lives like a bright light shining in the darkness, that we might give Him glory in all that we do and say until our Lord comes again to take us all home to be with Him forever.

In Jesus' Name, Amen.