**A New Prophet**

Based on [Matthew 17:1-9](https://biblia.com/books/esv/Mt17.1-9)

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The Transfiguration of Our Lord

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Jesus said in John Chapter 8, “**If you abide in my word, you are truly my disciples, and you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free...Everyone who practices sin is a slave to sin. The slave does not remain in the house forever; the son remains forever. So if the son sets you free, you will be free indeed.”**

In today’s gospel of the Transfiguration of Our Lord, God the Father gives Peter, James, John and all disciples *permission* to listen to Jesus. It sounds like a *command*, “This is my beloved Son, ***listen to him***”...but it is such good news. It’s like telling a starving man to eat, or a blind man to see. It’s not a command if you’re wanting to do it anyway. **It is true that to worldly people, this is not good news. People who have their heart invested in this world like grey areas for decision-making.** They like to have options. They like to take advice and opinions from many different sources so they can decide for themselves what to do. They might hear what Jesus has to say, but they don’t want to have to listen to anyone. They don’t like to be boxed in or forced to obey a truth.

It’s like the Israelites, when they were being pursued by Pharoah and his army and chariots. They were his slaves until the plague of the firstborn. Then Pharoah let the Israelites leave. But he soon changed his mind and pursued them. So they found themselves at the Red Sea and heard Pharoah’s chariots coming upon them from behind. They were stuck between the proverbial “Rock and a hard place”...stuck between an opposing army and the sea. They complained and grumbled, but Moses said, “**Stand firm, and see the salvation that God will work for you today. He will fight for you, you only have to remain silent.**” They were stuck. And because they were stuck, they had no other choice than to turn to God for a way out. And God made a way. Moses parted the sea. They were out of options, and God gave them one option, cross the sea on dry ground. They went and were saved.

Today, in our “free society”, we are really slaves. People wonder “**did I marry the right person” and the doubt plagues their marriage until they divorce. “Did I choose the right job?”**  “Did I make the right move?” “Did I do the right thing?” We think that we are free when we have a lot of options to choose from. But did you ever notice that in a world of sin and evil, it is options and choices that make us slaves.

An illustration….When I go to my favourite restaurant, they always have a variety of things on the menu. Doesn’t matter to me. I know what I like and order the same thing every time. As far as I’m concerned, they might as well only have one thing on the menu. It’s confusing going to a new restaurant because I don’t know what’s good, I order on a guess or on someone else's recommendation, but I don’t know whether I’ll like it until it’s too late.

So this is the question...Who is truly happy? Who is truly free? ... someone who has a huge menu of choices, but doesn’t know which is right? Or is the free person someone who knows the right answer, regardless of how many choices he is given?

Eve was deceived by the serpent, and who persuaded her to think that knowing good and evil would be better than only knowing good. Likewise, peter seems to think he’s given several options. He thinks that God is blessing him because he now has Moses, Elijah and Jesus to listen to. Peter thinks, though he doesn’t know what he’s saying...he thinks he will build them each tents so he can go and consult with each of them about God’s will. Maybe Moses will remind him to keep the sabbath day. Maybe Jesus will tell him to pluck grains on the sabbath. Maybe Elijah has a third perspective to offer in discerning God’s will? Yes? No!

God comes in a cloud of glory, in the midst of these three holy men, Moses, Elijah and Jesus and he says plainly, “**This is my beloved Son, listen to him.**” Moses is not God’s son. Elijah is not God’s Son. Jesus is the Son of God almighty, and we are given a divine command to listen to him. There is to be no confusion, no menu of prophets to choose from. Of course Moses, Elijah, and Jesus agree, but some will twist their words to confuse you. **Some will twist their words to give grey area to worldly people who want to have an excuse to sin.** “Did Jesus really say…” “Did Jesus really say that if you refuse to forgive, he won’t forgive you.” “Did he really say “This is my body given for you”. Did he really say you must take up your cross and follow him? Satan is a tempter, but his bag of tricks all come from the same design...confuse and distract consciences so that they will turn away from the plain truth.

The transfiguration of Jesus Christ has many aspects and many glorious teachings. **What I have impressed upon you today is the plain teaching that God commands all of us to Listen to Jesus.** Jesus is not like Moses, who received glory from speaking to God, and then communicated that glory to the people. Jesus’ glory is from within, because he is the image of the invisible God. In him, the fullness of God dwells bodily. God did not come in a cloud in order to give Jesus glory. Jesus’ glory comes from himself, because he is God, and the Father bears witness to him.

There are decisions that God trusts us to make...what to wear, what restaurant to go to and what to choose on the menu. He let’s us decide who to marry, where to work, how best to serve our neighbor. And in these things we can make mistakes, but God gives us this freedom in choosing how best to serve him. But the problem with the world is that it offers no source of truth upon which you can rest your conscience. You can obey the laws of the land, but that doesn’t mean you’re a good person. You can seek out advice from therapists, counsellors, academics, professionals in the areas of mental health, hygene, law, medicine. You can follow this or that diet, or this or that philosophy...but none of it is grounded in anything certain. Today the food pyramid says one thing, tommorrow it will change and you will have lived your whole life on following the wrong advice.

We all want a prophet, someone who has a direct line to God to give us His answers. In the Transfiguration, God gives us a new prophet. God says to you “Listen to Jesus”. Listen to him, and you will be listening to God. Listen to him and your conscience will have peace. He won’t tell you whether to take this or that job, or what food to choose on the menu. But he is the Truth, and you can root everything you do in service to him, and you can have assurance and peace. You are a servant, either of God or the devil, either of Jesus or your belly. Listen to Jesus. In him is light, from him comes the forgiveness of sins. He is the way and the truth and the life. Listen to Him.