

Alêtheia Christian Fellowship

March 29, 2020

“Immanuel”

9:15 ~ Sermon Online

NEWS

See the Sermon Notes

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MATTHEW 17:1-8 ~ ¹NAS^B Six days later Jesus took with Him Peter and James and John his brother, and led them up on a high mountain by themselves. ²And He was transfigured before them; and His face shone like the sun, and His garments became as white as light. ³And behold, Moses and Elijah appeared to them, talking with Him. ⁴Peter said to Jesus, “Lord, it is good for us to be here; if You wish, I will make three tabernacles here, one for You, and one for Moses, and one for Elijah.” ⁵While he was still speaking, a bright cloud overshadowed them, and behold, a voice out of the cloud said, “This is My beloved Son, with whom I am well-pleased; listen to Him!” ⁶When the disciples heard this, they fell face down to the ground and were terrified. ⁷And Jesus came to them and touched them and said, “Get up, and do not be afraid.” ⁸And lifting up their eyes, they saw no one except Jesus Himself alone.

“Transfigured” is from the Latin, *trānsfigūrātus* (tṛāns-fē-gū-ṛä-tūs). We start with, “Six days later,” which creates an obvious _____ with, and distance from, what went before.

Starting with the Syrophoenician Woman, we saw Jesus’ ministry change and in chapter 16, another “Feeding Miracle,” and the interchange between Jesus and Peter.

1) the _____ of the ministry

2) Peter's _____ concerning Jesus

3) Jesus' revelation about His _____

4) Jesus' _____ of Peter

The event is told in the three Synoptic Gospels, alluded to in John (John 1:14, I John 1:1-3), and by Peter (II Peter 1:16–18).

Paul often talks about a principle feature of Christianity involving the change of rebirth - what Jesus called being “Born again.”

Everyone is God's child in the sense that He's the Father of everything and everyone, but _____, every person is either the child of Satan, or they have been transferred from his family, into God's family.

The Bible insists that people are accepted by God only on the basis of their identity in Christ Jesus (II Corinthians 5:17, etc.). If one has genuinely embraced Jesus as Lord and Savior and thereby been accepted by Almighty God forevermore, that status is confirmed by a _____ of the Holy Spirit (II Corinthians 1:22).

It is _____ to be a Christian and not be transformed by the indwelling Holy Spirit... No person is the same after genuine salvation (II Corinthians 3:18).

Biblically we are being “Transformed.” It is best seen in Romans 12:1&2. “Conformed,” is συσχηματίζω (sü-skā-mä-tē-dzō), meaning to _____ something so that it externally mimics something else.

It is a prohibition - Stop allowing the world to conform you to itself!

“Transformed,” is μεταμορφόω (mě-tä-möř-fö-ō). This word has to do with allowing your true self to come to the _____.

How are you going to do that? A realignment of your mind to think as a child of God rather than a product of this evil age.

Mind is νοῦς (nūs). Repentance, which is essential to salvation, is the word μετανοέω (mě-tä-nö-ě-ō). The verbal form of νοῦς coupled with the preposition μετά, it means to _____ in a completely different way.

Repentance gets us started, but we need to continually allow God to work on our thinking - make that your daily prayer.

Fill out the other side, detach this part of the page, and place it in the offering plate or the prayer/suggestion box in the lobby or with an Elder or Deacon of the church.

God Bless You!

This “Transformed,” word is the _____ word translated as “Transfigured.”
Jesus allowed His true self to rise to the surface.

Luke uses a hapax legomenon, ἐξαστράπτω (ěx-äs-třäp-tō), basically, an intense crackling bolt of _____ (Ezekiel 1:4).

As the solar irradiance is the effulgence of the sun, so the ____ is the effulgence of God.

From Luke’s account we know that Elijah and Moses were _____ with Jesus about, quote, “His departure which He was about to accomplish at Jerusalem.”

Peter proposed to build three σκηνή (skā-nā), temporary shelters, to prolong the visit.

While Peter was still blabbing, God Himself _____ him.

Father God thundered out of the spectacularly shiny cloud - essentially,
“You’re blown away by Moses and Elijah, when you’ve been got My One and Only Son? “Listen to Him!”

link, expansion, declaration, future, rebuke, relationally, deposit, impossible, change, surface, think, same, lightning, Son, talking, interrupted.

Check all that apply – detach and place in the offering or the prayer box

_____ I want to talk with the pastor about _____

_____ I want prayer for _____

_____ I want to volunteer to _____

_____ I want more information about _____

_____ Other _____

Name _____ Address _____

Phone _____ Email _____



ALÊTHEIA FELLOWSHIP

"TRUTH IN LOVE"



JANUARY 18,
2004

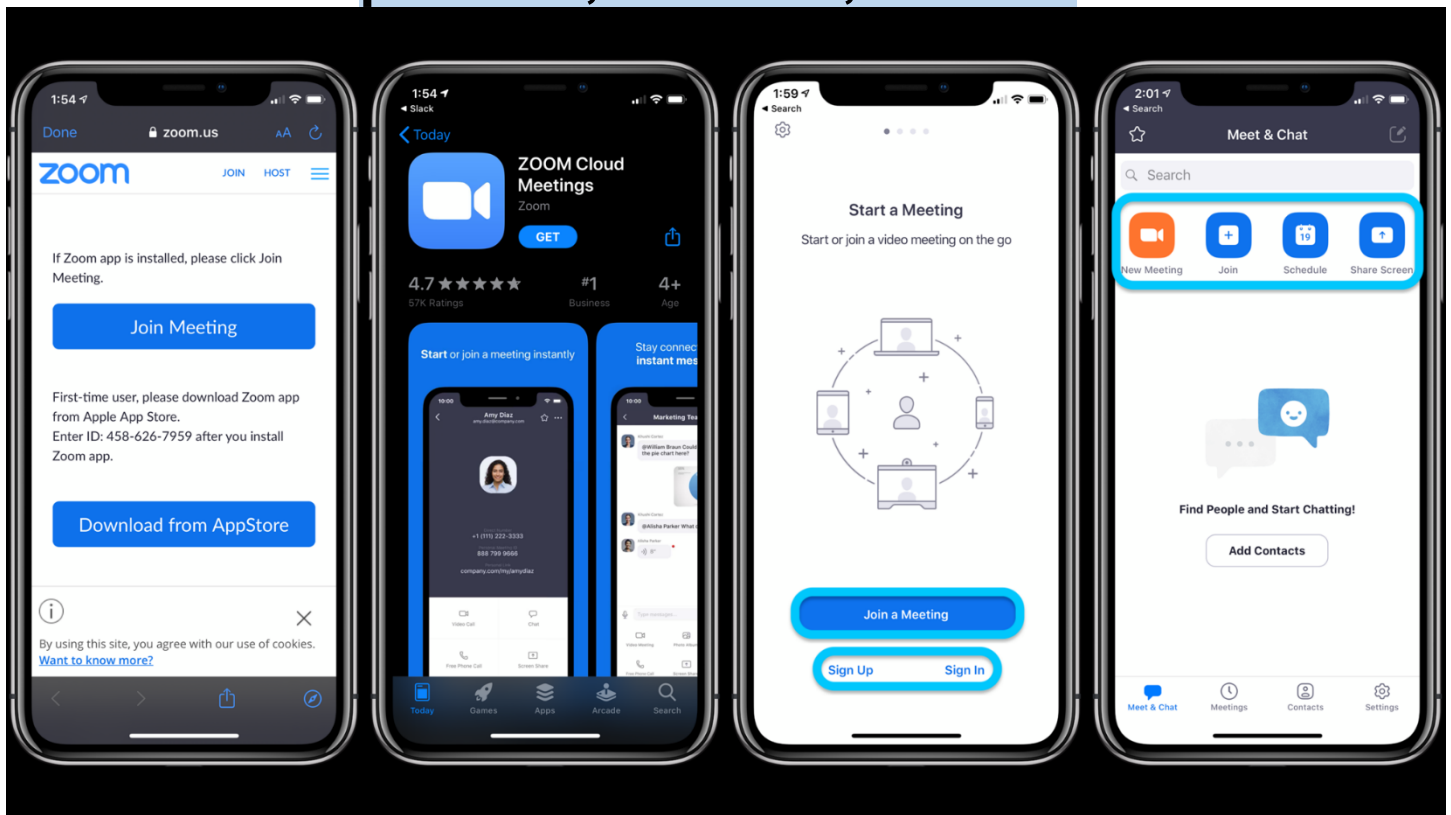
Alêtheia ~ Matthew 17a ~ 032920

"IMMANUEL"

PRAY



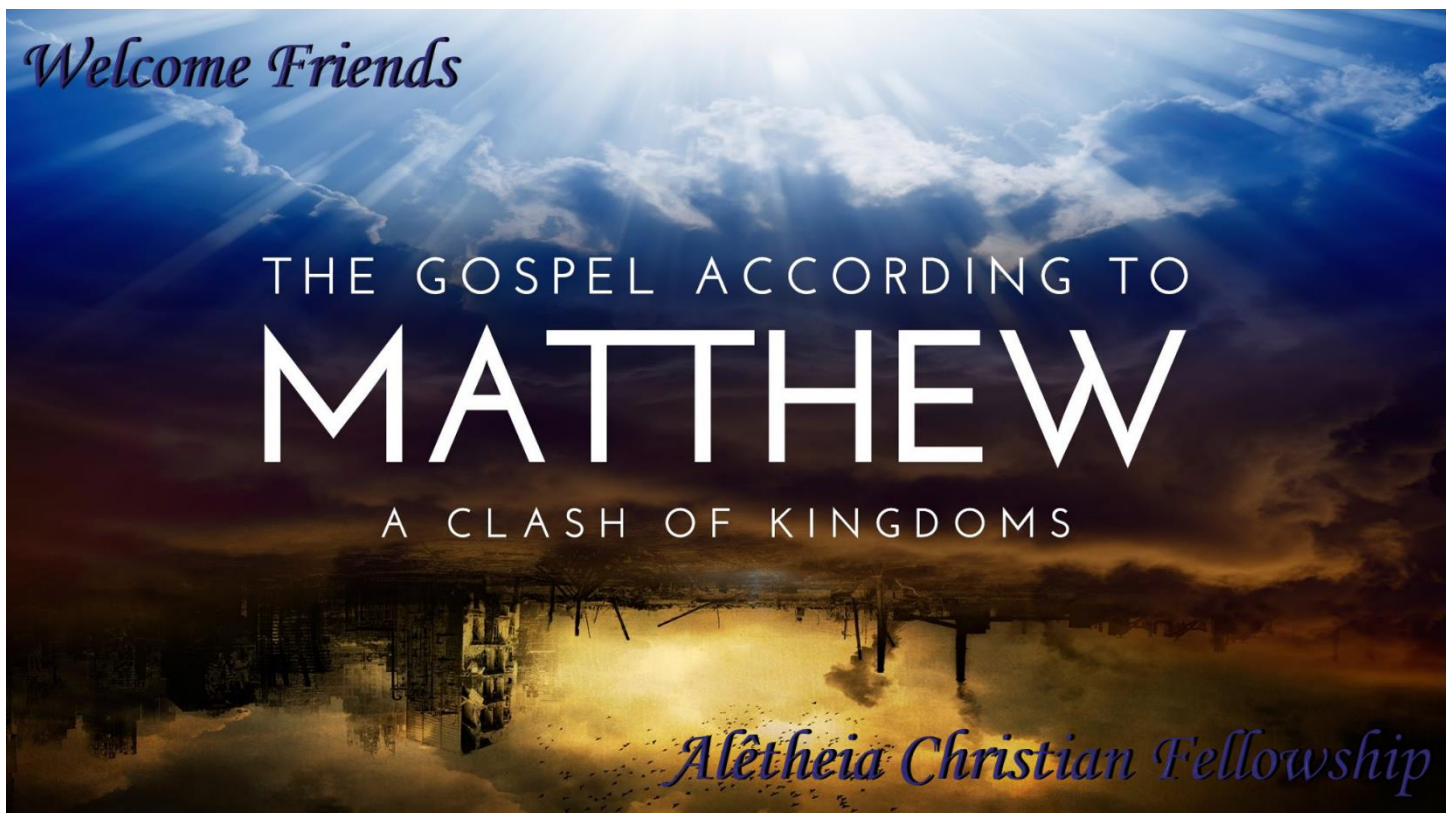
Zoom Sunday school next Sunday at 8:30 - Sermon at 9:15. Download Zoom **app** on phone, tablet, or laptop, **don't buy** anything. **Let me know** that you **want to be included** by texting (4062499419), or emailing me (pastor@myaletheia.com) with either your **phone #, or email, or both.**



Sunday morning at **8:30** you'll receive an invitation to join. We'll **work out the bugs** and I think it will be a lot of fun. Also starting later today I'm having the **Elders call folks**. we're just going to go down the **contact list** that I have from **Stacey**. If you're **on it** and **don't want a call**, let her know right away. On the other hand, if you don't mind being contacted and

you're **not sure if we have your number** - let Stacey know.

Next week is **Palm** Sunday and the week after is Easter or **Resurrection** Sunday, which falls on **April 12**. They say April **10 is the release** - For **planning** purposes, **if** that happens, we will have **a single service at 10:45 at the church**. Nothing else, just the **one main all-together service...** **If** we're released...
Stay tuned.



Today, we **begin** Matthew chapter **17**, with one of the **most amazing confirmations** of Christ's **divinity** in the Bible. Derived from the **Latin translation**,

trānsfigūrātus (tṛāns-fē-gū-ṛä-tūs), we call it the
“Transfiguration of Jesus.”



The Apse mosaic, St. Catherine's, Sinai ~

This **picture** is of the oldest known depiction of the Transfiguration. It is a **mosaic** - made of **thousands of tiny tiles**, which was **commissioned** by the Roman Emperor **Justinian 1,500** years ago. It **decorates the Apse** in Saint **Catherine's Monastery** in the **Sinai Peninsula**. Standing on the **left is Elijah**, on the **right Moses**, below Moses is **James**, laying in the **middle is Peter**, and kneeling on the **left is John**.



Here's **both a closeup of Jesus to see the tiles and a long shot to get perspective.**

Matthew **starts** us off with, **"Six days later."** That **phrase** is a **whole lot more specific** and **wordier** than Matthew **usually** gets, so we're **wise to question why** he **chose** to use it **here**.

If you **think** about it, the **phrase creates an obvious link, or connection,** to what has **just happened** in chapter **16**, but at the **same time shows some distance** from **those events**. The **two things are related, but different.**

Mark and Luke have the **same sequencing** and use very **similar language**. In all three accounts, we have a **major break** in the **story of Jesus** that is **launching from a connection** to what **just transpired**. That **emphasis on what went before**, while simultaneously **presenting something new**, will make **more sense as we go** through it. **For now**, what's important, is a **review of what brought us to this point**, so that it will be **fresh** in our minds. That's **always important when studying** your Bible and here, it's even **more important than normal**... As we **move forward**, we need **to remember where we've been**.

So, in our **last chapter** and a half, starting with the Syrophoenician Woman, we saw Jesus' **ministry move from a Jew only focus** to a **universal scope** where **Gentiles were included**. As we **recognized**, it was an **inclusion** that would **progress in stages** over the next **several decades**, but one that had its **genesis**, or **origin**, starting in Matthew **15:21**...

From there Jesus **essentially duplicated** His Manna from Heaven Miracle for a **much wider audience**. Then, in **Chapter 16**, we came to Peter's **great public confession** regarding **Jesus**, **"You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God"** (Matthew 16:16). Peter the

Rock, proclaimed **Jesus to be the Divine Messiah**, and Jesus declared that Peter's **faith** and his **boldness** would be the **rock, upon which, He would build** His church...

So, Jesus **opened up** to the Disciples, and **plainly told** them what **God had in store for His future**. At hearing such a **tragic and negative** view, Peter **indignantly chastised** Jesus for His **lack of Trust**.



1801 painting, Repin ~

Apparently, Jesus' future mission as a **sacrificial lamb**, didn't **resonate** with Peter... **After publicly rebuking** Peter with the **famous, "Get behind me, Satan!"** (Matthew 16:23) **line**, Jesus used the **rock play on**

words again. This time, implying that Peter the Rock, was acting more like the **“Stone of stumbling and the rock of offense”** (Isaiah 8:14) - the rock that causes one to stumble, instead of the rock to build the church upon.

From those elements, **1)** the expansion of the ministry to Gentiles, **2)** Peter's declaration concerning Jesus, **3)** Jesus' revelation about His future and then **4)** Jesus' rebuke of Peter, we get a foretaste of what's to come on the mountain in chapter 17...



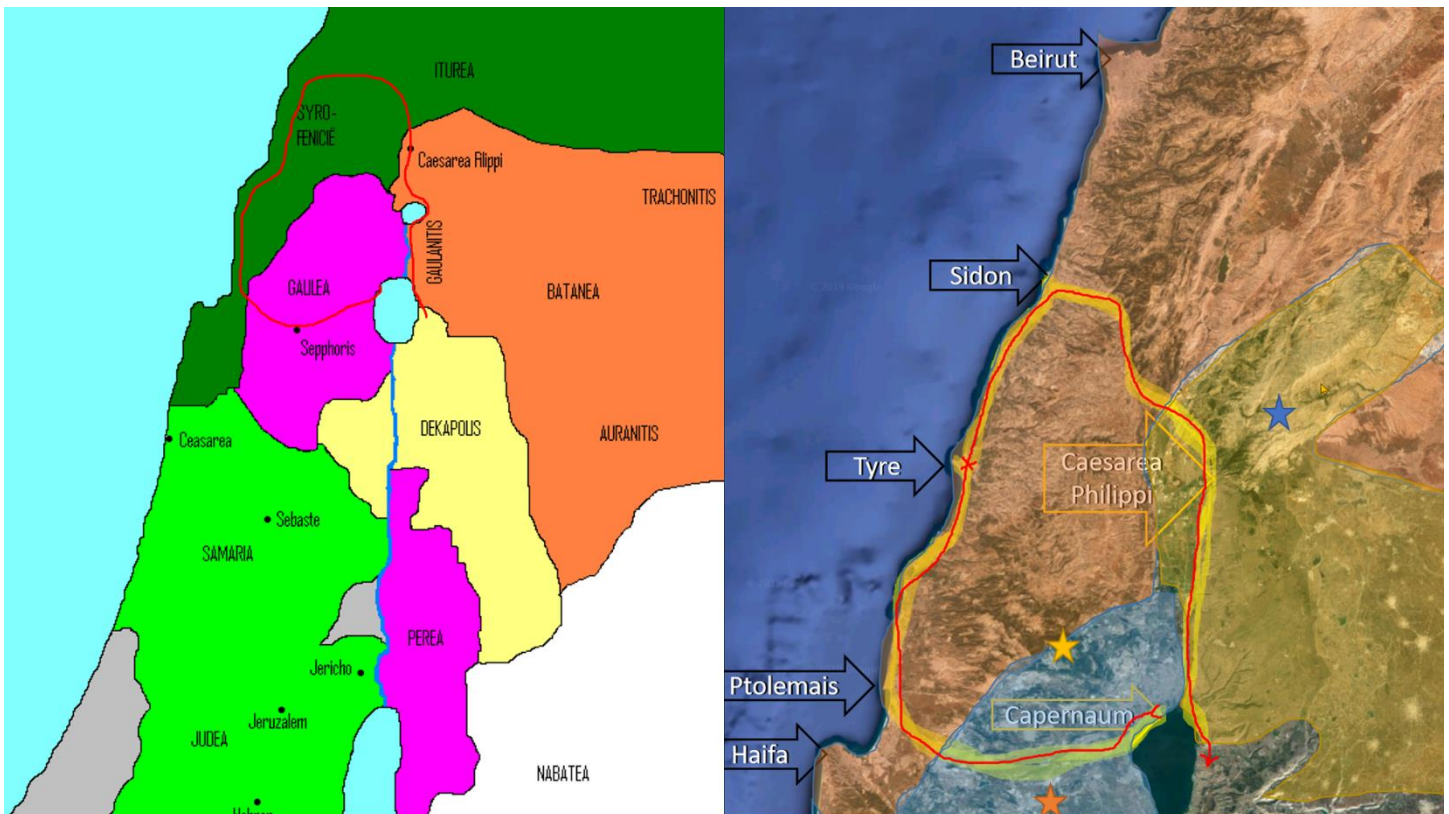
MATTHEW 17:1-8 ~ 1NASB Six days later Jesus took

with Him Peter and James and John his brother, and led them up on a high mountain by themselves. ²And He was transfigured before them; and His face shone like the sun, and His garments became as white as light. ³And behold, Moses and Elijah appeared to them, talking with Him. ⁴Peter said to Jesus, “Lord, it is good for us to be here; if You wish, I will make three tabernacles here, one for You, and one for Moses, and one for Elijah.” ⁵While he was still speaking, a bright cloud overshadowed them, and behold, a voice out of the cloud said, “This is My beloved Son, with whom I am well-pleased; listen to Him!” ⁶When the disciples heard this, they fell face down to the ground and were terrified. ⁷And Jesus came to them and touched them and said, “Get up, and do not be afraid.” ⁸And lifting up their eyes, they saw no one except Jesus Himself alone.

This is an **ancient wall painting** on the **right** and a **700-year-old Illuminated Bible** opened to this **passage in Mark**. Both **depict the Transfiguration**.

Peter along with the **Sons** of Thunder - the Zebedee **Brothers** - James and John, formed what is known as Jesus' **Inner Circle**. I strongly believe that the

brothers were Jesus' cousins by His mother's sister Salome and Peter was, of course, the leader of the Apostles.



Jesus led the guys up a mountain to be alone with them, and we discover from Luke's account, to pray.

Some think that Mt Tabor is the mountain (orange star), but that is almost impossible because, at the time, there was a community, complete with a military outpost, on top. Mt Hermon is another common idea (blue star), but that hummer is nearly 10,000 feet and typically covered in snow - they have a ski resort on it now. The best idea is Mt Meron at 4,000 feet (yellow

star), but we **can't be sure**, and it really **doesn't matter**.

That brings us **to the event**. It is **told in the three Synoptic Gospels**, but **not in John**. My guess is John **omitted** telling it **in detail because** he is always **reluctant to mention himself** in such a prominent role.



He **certainly alludes** to it in the **opening** of his Gospel - In **John 1:14**, he says, **^{14NIV}The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the one and only Son, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.**

In his **first epistle**, **John wrote**, ^{1NIV}That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked at and our hands have touched—this we proclaim concerning the Word of life. ²The life appeared; we have seen it and testify to it, and we proclaim to you the eternal life, which was with the Father and has appeared to us. ³We proclaim to you what we have seen and heard, so that you also may have fellowship with us. And our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son, Jesus Christ (I John 1:1-3).

Peter talked about it in his **second letter** where he wrote, ¹⁶For we did not follow cleverly devised stories when we told you about the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ in power, but we were eyewitnesses of his majesty. ¹⁷He received honor and glory from God the Father when the voice came to him from the Majestic Glory, saying, “This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased.” ¹⁸We ourselves heard this voice that came from heaven when we were with him on the sacred mountain (II Peter 1:16–18).

Paul often talks about a principle feature of Christianity involving the change of rebirth - what Jesus called being "Born again."



The basic idea is that a person who has been accepted by God, is from that moment, God's very own child relationally. Everyone is God's child in the sense that He's the Father of everything and everyone, but relationally every person is either the child of Satan or they have been transferred from his family into God's family.

That is a Biblical reality - every person either sports the Mark of the Beast, or they bear the Seal of God.

The **Judgment** to come will **simply reveal to whom each one belongs** for all eternity.

Further, Paul **insists** that **each** person **accepted by God is only accepted on the basis of their identity** in Christ Jesus. There is **no other way** to be accepted by God than to **accept the means of acceptance** that He has **provided in the substitutionary sacrifice** of the One and Only **Lamb** of God (II Corinthians 5:17).



If one has **genuinely embraced** Jesus as Lord and Savior and thereby **been accepted** by Almighty God forevermore, that **status is confirmed** by a **deposit** of the Holy Spirit (II Corinthians 1:22).

No Christian is without the Holy Spirit **indwelling** them and **no non-Christian has** the Holy Spirit **indwelling** them. Now, **down to the part we're most interested in today...** The **whole** New Testament **repeatedly proclaims** and **commands** that all Holy Spirit-filled Christian Followers of the Lord Jesus Christ **will be affected, altered, changed** by that reality.

It is **impossible** to be a Christian and **not be transformed** by the indwelling Holy **Spirit...** Impossible. The **change is profound**. Certainly, it is **completely obvious** who **is**, and who **is not**, a Christian **spiritually**. Here in our **physical world** it's much **tougher to discern**, but **not so difficult that we can't figure it out**.

The **Truth** is that from **a person's life**, their **attitudes, desires, demeanor, words, and actions**, we can **discern their family connection**. We are **told not to do that** - the position of **Judge is already filled**, thank you very much... But **we could**.

As **clear** as the Bible is about **not judging** other people, it's **just as clear** that **every** person does

produce evidence in keeping with their eternal familial status.



Born-again people are not the same people they were beforehand. Paul talks about our old self being dead and buried, while Christ raises us up as a new creation in Him, filled with the Holy Spirit and eager to follow Jesus. No person is the same after genuine salvation.

Paul wrote in, **II Corinthians 3:18**, ^{18NIV} And we all, who with unveiled faces (Exodus 34) contemplate the Lord's glory, are being transformed into his

image with ever-increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit.

We're not going to delve into all the amazing things that verse holds, except to say, that everyone who has experienced Jesus, is in the process of being transformed into His image. It is an active process that is done to us by God as we cooperate, yield, surrender to His sculpting efforts.

Biblically we are being "Transformed." It is an awesome concept and it is best seen in Romans 12:1&2, ¹NASB Therefore I urge you, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service of worship. ²And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect.

Again, there's way too much here to discuss today - no one packs more deep theological information into a few words than Paul.

The **main thing** I want us to **focus** on is the, **“Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed,”**
bit.

“Conformed,” is **συσχηματίζω** (sü-skā-mä-tē-dzō),
meaning to change something so that it **externally**
mimics something else. It is to **fashion**, or **mold**
something, or someone, so they **pass for** something
on the **outside** that is **foreign to them** previously and
unnatural to them internally.



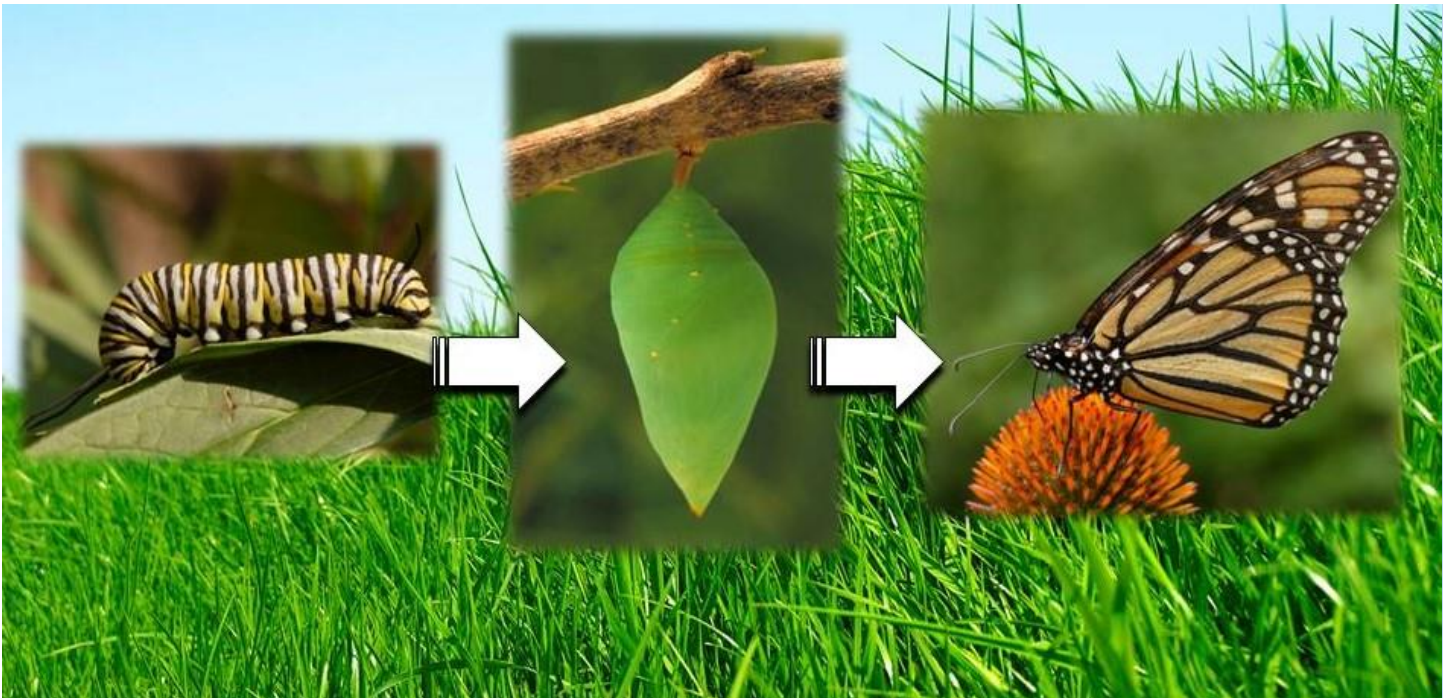
This **phrase cannot apply** to any **non-Christian**
person... A person **who hasn't died** and been **reborn**
cannot stop being **conformed** to what is alien to

them... because **not only** is it **not alien** to them; they are **already fully conformed** - you don't conform something that's already conformed. The world is **completely natural to the unsaved**. Only **to a Christian** is there a **dissonance** that the **world tries to bridge**.

That's **two interrelated points**... First, **conforming means** that there's **conforming that needs to be done**... It's **no longer who they are externally**, or you **wouldn't need** to conform them. The **second** point is that as the **conforming takes place**, the **external is changing** to be **at odds with, alien to**, what is **internal**. As the **outside begins matching the world**, **it no longer matches** the inside.

Here it is a **negative command, a prohibition** - **Stop allowing the world to conform you to itself!** The **implication?** That's **insane**, it's **not who you are anymore!**

Stop externally conforming to what is in **complete opposition** to **who you now are internally** as a Christian **filled** with the Holy Spirit.



Instead of that **ridiculous travesty**, allow the **Jesus in you** **burst forth** from your **inside to your outside**. Let who **you are internally**, be **manifested externally**...

That is what **“Transformed,”** means. It is **μεταμορφόω** (mě-tă-möř-fö-ō). This word **has to do with allowing** your **true self to come to the surface**.

Do not allow the **outside darkness to overtake** your **inner light**, but instead **allow your inner light to shine forth into the outside** darkness.



How are you going to do that? **“By the renewing of your mind”**

Renewing the mind is a Holy **Spirit change** of **perspective...** It is a **realignment of your mind** to **think as a child** of God **rather than a product** of this evil age.

Mind is **νοῦς** (nūs). It is the **mind, intellect, understanding, consciousness, or perception.** **Repentance**, which is **essential to salvation**, is the word **μετανοέω** (mě-tä-nō-ě-ō). **The verbal form of νοῦς** **coupled** with **the preposition μετά**, it means to

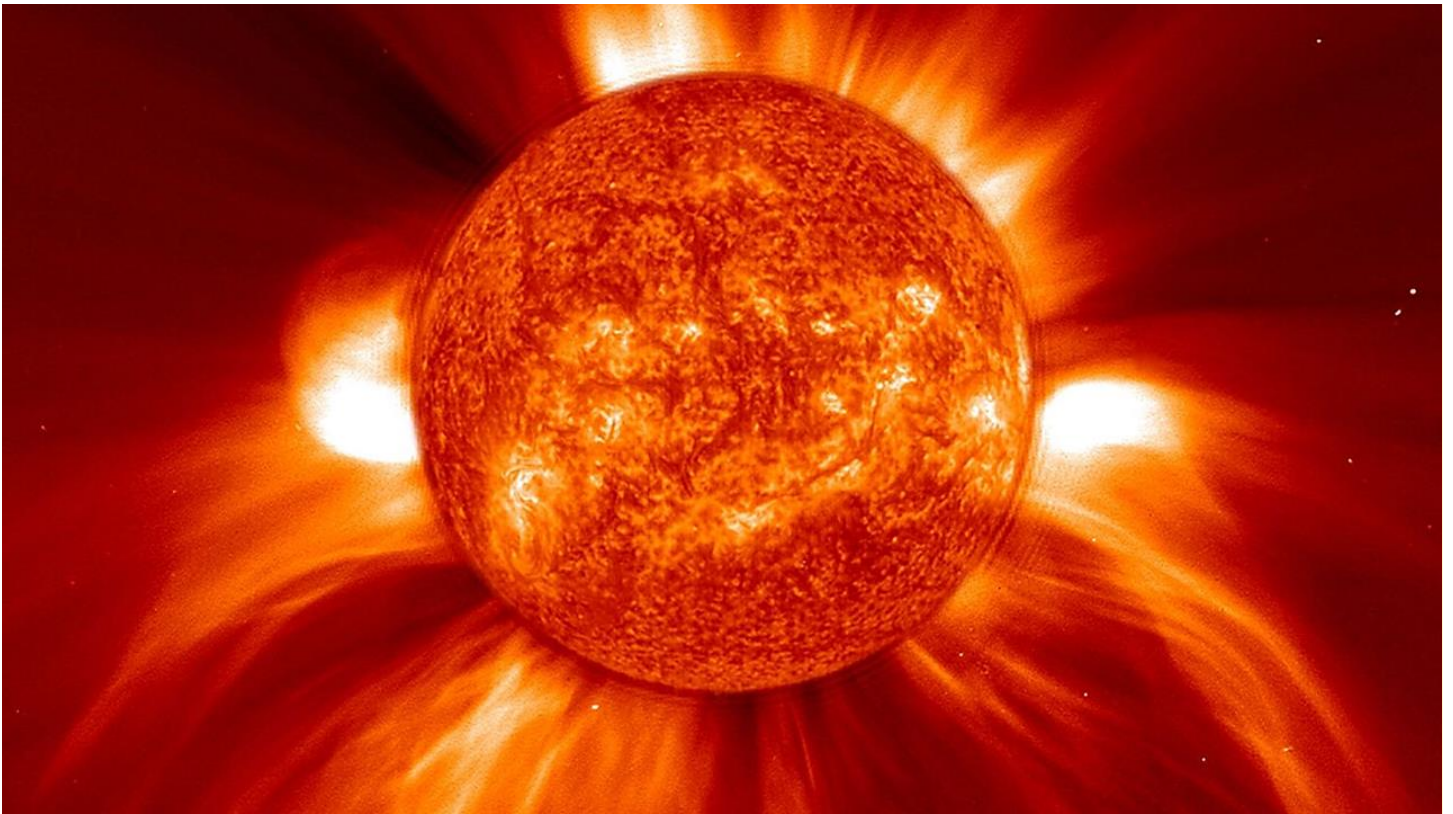
change one's mind - to think in a completely different way.

Repentance gets us started, but we need to continually allow God to work on our thinking, specifically because the world is all around us, tempting us to forget who we are... Every trip, I would pray on the bus from the airport parking lot to the terminal... Lord please, as I interact with the physical realm I'm trapped in, do not let me forget who I truly am in You. I encourage you to make that your daily prayer.

This **“Transformed,”** μεταμορφώω, word is the **exact same** word **translated in our Matthew passage** as **“Transfigured.”** Jesus **allowed His true self** to rise to the surface. Matthew **states** that Jesus’ “Face shone like the sun, and his clothes became as white as light.” **Mark records that,** “His clothes became dazzling white, far whiter than any earthly bleach could ever make them.” **Luke uses a hapax legomenon, a word found nowhere else** in the Bible to describe the **majesty of the moment.** It is **ἐξαστράπτω** (ěx-äs-träp-tō), basically, it **means an intense crackling bolt of lightning.**



The **closest thing** is the **Greek translation of Ezekiel 1:4, ^{4NASB}**As I looked, behold, a storm wind was coming from the north, a great cloud with fire flashing forth continually and a bright light around it, and in its midst something like glowing metal in the midst of the fire.”



As the solar irradiance is the effulgence of the sun, so the Son is the effulgence of God. Without its effulgence - all the stuff, the solar plasma, the light waves and the thermal radiation that emanate from it, the sun would be unseen and from earth unknowable.

The Word of God is the effulgence that makes God knowable. He became flesh and blood and lived among us as one of us showing us Who God is. For a moment on the mountain Jesus allowed that effulgence to peek through His physical earth suit.



Who should **appear with Him**? None other than **Elijah and Moses**. The three of them were **having a little confab**. From **Luke's account** we know that they were talking about, **quote, “His departure which He was about to accomplish at Jerusalem.”**

It's **somewhat cryptic** due to a **reluctance** to be **more direct** at this **stage in the Gospel**, but **every Christian** hearing these words, **then and now**, can quickly **deduce** that they were **talking about Jesus arrest, trial, torture and brutal murder** that was to come.

Once again, **using Luke's account** we find that **shortly after this event** Jesus **"Set His face"** towards Jerusalem and the **fate** that **awaited** Him **there**. He was **steadfast, resolved, resolute** in His **determination to sacrificially obey** in **accordance with the Father's plan**.

He asks us, who **are His** and are **filled** with the Holy Spirit to be **willing to do the same** - that's what we **talked about extensively** last week.

Peter, ever the **leap before you look** dude, **blurted** out one of his **very well-intentioned nonsense**.

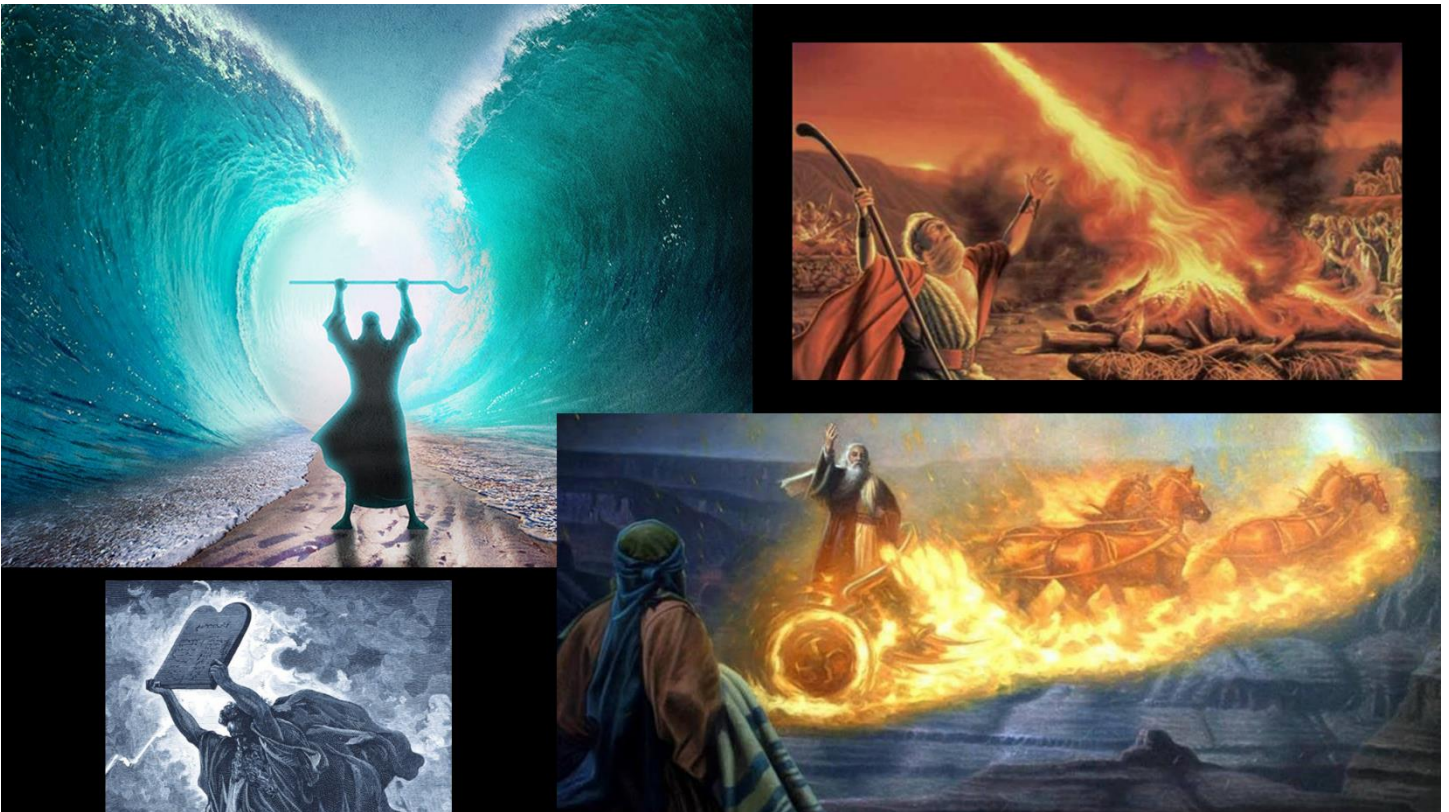
WAIT! DON'T GO!



From **Luke** we **realize** that **Moses** and **Elijah** were **leaving**, and Peter **didn't** understand what was **happening**. This was his **effort** to **get them to extend their stay**. Nothing more than that. Folks get **overly creative** trying to explain Peter's plan. It wasn't about the **Feast of Booths**, or any other **deep theological**, or **religious** symbolism.



The **three tabernacles, booths, memorials, tents, shelters, whatever** they're called that Peter **proposes** to build are Greek **σκηνή** (skā-nā), **just meaning a temporary shelter**, typically a **tent**. All Peter was doing was **trying to prolong the encounter**.



I'm sure he wanted to **chat with Moses** about **growing up in Pharaoh's** palace, the Ten **Plagues**, the Parting of the **Red Sea** and the Ten **Commandments** written on stones by God. I'm sure he wanted to **hear some of Elijah's stories** about the **fire falling from heaven** and consuming even the water, about King **Ahab** and **Jezebel**, about his **ride in a chariot of fire** drawn by **horses of fire**, carried by a **whirlwind into heaven**.

Always remember to put yourself in the scene. Wouldn't you try to prolong their visit? Hear their stories?

Now, while Peter was **still blabbing**, God Himself **interrupted** the man. That's **embarrassing**.



I say the **difference between a professional pilot** and a guy who **dropped out somewhere along** the line before getting to that stage is the **first guy scared himself** multiple times and **quickly put it behind** him and moved on. The second person **got scared one too many times and was unable** to get past it.

Peter and Judas are like that. Peter was **repeatedly put in his place**. He was **rebuked**, he was **countermanded**, he was **interrupted by God** and he was **never deterred** by it, he **never let being**

offended derail him from **keeping the faith**. Judas was **only rebuked once** that's recorded and that was **more of a group rebuke**, but it was **enough to offend him so deeply** that he **betrayed** Jesus.

Be a person who does **not offend easily** and who **gets past it quickly**. Don't be a **Judas** and **cut off your nose** to **spite** your face.



Anyway, a **brilliantly bright** cloud, **overshadows**? Well, not really. There is **no shadow** in the pure light of the Shekinah Glory - **enveloped** them with light is better.

And **Father God thunders out** of the **spectacularly shiny cloud** - Are you **kidding** right now? You're **blown away** by **mere men**, Moses and Elijah, when you've been **eating, drinking, walking** and **talking** with My One and Only Son? The **Word of the Living God** made flesh? **"Listen to Him!"**

Of course, Peter, James and John, **do the only thing that any mortal could do**, they fall face down on the **ground terrified**.

Merciful Jesus came to them and with a **touch reassured** them and the whole thing was over. You **cannot stay on the mountaintop my friends**. Try as we might, we can **never stay there**, the **work is in the valleys**. Let's roll up our sleeves, and like Jesus, **"Set our face"** toward the **task before us**.



Be **salt and light** in this world, **come what may**. As the **water turns to blood** and the **animals die**, as **boils and disease** run rampant, as **locusts** devour, and **fiery hail** falls and **darkness** covers the world, **never fear** for I AM with you, **says the Lord**.