Transfiguration 2 Peter 1:16-21
February 23, 2020 712*-97-95-331
*CW-S – "Jesus, Take Us to the Mountain"

"Come Up to Me on the Mountain"
I. Come and see God's glorious Son.
II. Come and hear His glorious Word.

Dear Christian friends,

Go back for a minute to the OT reading. **Moses** and the Israelites were camped at Mt. Sinai. Then Moses received that invitation – that COMMAND! – from God, ***"Come up to Me on the mountain."*** Just imagine – a PERSONAL – ONE-ON-ONE meeting with God!

Jump now to the gospel reading. We didn't hear Jesus EXACTLY SAY, "**Come up** with Me on the mountain." But we did read, ***"Jesus took with Him Peter, James and John and led them up a high mountain by themselves."*** WHAT A DAY that turned out to be for those three apostles! **I'm sure** they wouldn't have traded it for anything.

As we look at these verses we have God's **invitation**, "COME UP TO ME ON THE MOUNTAIN." 1)Come up and see God's **glorious Son**. 2)Come up and hear God's **glorious Word**.

I. Come up and see God's glorious Son.

Peter wrote this letter a **good** 30 plus years after the transfiguration but that day as STILL SO VIVID in his mind. **After all those years** Peter still hadn't GOTTEN OVER what he had seen and heard UP on that mountain.

Human words just AREN'T ADEQUATE to **describe** Jesus' transfiguration. Matthew wrote, ***"(Jesus') face shown like the sun, His clothes became as white as the light."*** Mark put it this way, ***"His clothes became dazzling white, whiter than anyone in the world could bleach them."*** Luke says, ***"the appearance of His face changed, and His clothes became as bright as a flash of lightning."*** It's NO WONDER that Peter calls this a ***"sacred mountain."***

COME UP this Mount of Transfiguration and see God's GLORIOUS SON. We need this sight before we SET OFF on our **Lenten journey** to Calvary. **As** we again make that trip we must BE SO CLEAR on exactly who Jesus is. So CLIMB UP this mountain and see for yourself that Jesus is **not just** some great guy – a **wonderful teacher** – a **great example**. CLIMB UP this mountain and see that Jesus is IN FACT the eternal – **glorious** – **almighty** Son of God Most High. We catch glimpses of Jesus' **divine power** and glory in His many miracles – but NONE CAN COMPARE to this sight on the Mount of Transfiguration.

What we see with our eyes is confirmed by what we hear with our ears. ***"(Jesus) received honor and glory from God the Father, when the voice came to Him from within the Majestic Glory, saying, 'This is My Son, whom I love; with Him I am well pleased.'"*** CLIMB UP this mountain - confidently believe and boldly confess that Jesus of Nazareth is ***the Son of the living God."***

As we CLIMB UP this ***"sacred mountain"*** Peter assures us, ***"we were not following cunningly devised fables when we made known to you the powerful appearance of our Lord Jesus Christ, but we were eyewitnesses of His majesty. We heard this voice, which came out of heaven."*** Our Christian faith is not built on PIOUS MYTHS or **fancy fairy tales** but on HISTORICAL FACTS – real people and real events that REALLY HAPPENED and were witnessed by **real witnesses**. COME UP this mountain with Peter and see what REALLY HAPPENED – Jesus shining in His **divine glory**.

SOON ENOUGH we will see Jesus ridiculed and **rejected**. We'll hear the shouts of ***"Crucify Him!"*** Still today SO MANY ridicule and **reject** Jesus. CLIMB UP this mountain and hear again what God the FATHER SAYS about Jesus – ***"MY Son who I LOVE, with Him I am WELL PLEASED."*** Let the world think what they want about Jesus. UP HERE on the mount we see the truth about Jesus.

Peter wanted to stay up on the mount. But Jesus didn't come here to just give us a GLIMPSE of His glory. Jesus came here so that **one day** we could LIVE FOREVER with Him in His glory. **So** Jesus came down from this mount and shortly after headed off to **Jerusalem** and the **cross**.

CLIMB UP this mount - see the glory – and the GRACE! – of our Lord Jesus. We hear God the Father's WHOLE-HEARTED APPROVAL of Jesus' **life**. Could God honestly stamp ***"well pleased"*** on your life? Is God ***"well pleased"*** with your priorities in life – WHERE HE FITS into your life? Would God say He's ***"well pleased"*** with the WAY YOU'VE TREATED your spouse – your **children** – your **parents** – your neighbors and **classmates**? Is God ***"well pleased"*** with the way you talk about other people – the shows you watch – the music you listen to? Is God' ***"well pleased"*** with your prayer life – your worship life and **offerings**? God looks over our lives and all He can say is "GUILTY! I should send them to hell forever."

But instead God invites us to CLIMB UP this mountain and then make our **Lenten journey** to the cross. This glorious Son of God is ALSO ***"the Lamb of God"*** who went to the cross to ***"take away the sin of the world."*** What glory we SEE UP on this mountain – what grace we SEE DOWN at Calvary. Jesus gives us **all the credit** for His **God-pleasing** perfect life. Jesus took the blame for the sins of the whole world and was punished in our place. THIS GLORIOUS, SINLESS Son of God went to the cross to personally pay for every one of our sins IN FULL by enduring the death and hell we had coming. THAT is not some ***"cleverly invented story"*** but the GOSPEL TRUTH! That shed blood of God's Son really does ***"cleanse us from all sin."***

II. Come and hear God's glorious Word.

Like Peter we can't stay UP on this mount. We can't hide from our REAL WORLD with all its **real problems**. But like Peter **we have** this glorious sight AND we have God's glorious Word. ***"We also have the completely reliable prophetic word. You do well to pay attention to it, as to a lamp shining in a dark place."***

We have ***"the prophetic Word"*** – the OT. We now also see that word FULFILLED in Jesus. **As** we hear again the Passion History listen to **how often** we have the words, ***"this happened in order to fulfill what was spoken by the prophets."*** That even covers things we might consider INSIGNIFICANT like the soldiers casting lots for Jesus' clothes. GOD HAD SAID it would happen that way and it happened EXACTLY that way. God doesn't keep His promises MORE or less – SOMEWHERE in the **ballpark**. God keeps His promises DOWN TO the **last little detail**.

That shouldn't surprise us. ***"We know this above all else: No prophecy of Scripture comes about from someone's own interpretation. In fact, no prophecy ever came by the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were being carried along by the Holy Spirit."***

The Bible is not a collection of **Moses' ideas** or Paul's opinions. The Bible is GOD'S holy – inspired – perfect Word. **In a miracle** we can't fully explain GOD SO GUIDED the writers so that they wrote GOD'S VERY WORDS **without making** any mistakes.

That FACT MEANS we can trust everything **God tells** us in the Bible. God really did create this world in six normal days. Jonah **really was swallowed** by a big fish. Mary really was the ***"virgin"*** Mary. Jesus really is the Son of God – He really did rise from the dead.

Because the Bible IS GOD'S Word we can confidently trust God's GLORIOUS PROMISES. We don't need to **knock** on some wood or **cross** our fingers. ***"This is what the LORD says. The Scripture cannot be broken. God is not a man that He should lie."***

Because the Bible IS GOD'S **glorious** Word we ***"do well to pay attention to it."*** These Christians were doing that and Peter encourages them to KEEP ON doing it. The devil will try whatever it takes to KNOCK God's Word out of our **hands** and **hearts**. He'll try to distract us **so we think** we're TOO BUSY to ***"pay attention"*** to God's Word. He'll try to convince us that the Bible is TOO HARD for us to **read** and **understand**.

God gave us His Word ***"as a lamp shining in a dark place."*** This world can be SO DARK and **depressing**. We see Jesus rejected – the gospel ridiculed – God's Word ignored. DAY AFTER we have to struggle with a DETERMINED devil – the WICKED world – our own STUBBORN sinful natures. We can easily become frustrated – **discouraged** – just plain WORN OUT.

Then God invites us, "COME UP to Me on the mountain." Through the Word we have a PERSONAL MEETING with our **glorious Savior** God. Through His Word God sheds light on our lives. WHERE is God? WHY doesn't He **do something**? "COME UP," God says, "and let Me show You how I MADE this world – how I TOOK CARE of **Abraham** and the **Israelites**. Let's look over the **lives** of DAVID and **Daniel** – JOB and **Jeremiah**. It may not always look like I CARE or I'm IN CONTROL – but look again!"

In this ***"dark world"*** we can easily wonder – does God REALLY LOVE me – has He REALLY FORGIVEN me – am I REALLY GOING straight to heaven when I die? "COME UP to Me on the mountain," God says. Through His Word **we have** a personal conversation with God and He sheds glorious light on our lives. He puts the spotlight on the MANGER – Jesus' **bloody** cross – His **empty** grave. We hear Jesus promise, ***"Because I live, you shall live also."*** We hear Jesus invite us, ***"Take eat, this is My body given for you; take drink, this is My blood shed for the forgiveness of your sins."*** THAT is how much God loves us. THAT is the proof of God's **forgiveness**. THAT is God's promise of **eternal life**.

God's Word gives us the GLORIOUS HOPE of a new day – Jesus' returning in glory – ***"the new heavens and new earth."*** We "COME UP" to God – He speaks to us **through** His Word – we can go down REFRESHED and **renewed**. With God's Word shining on our lives we can face life and **all it brings**. God's Word shows us **we have** a GLORIOUS SAVIOR who has made us GLORIOUS PROMISES.

"COME UP to Me on the mountain." That's GOD'S INVITATION to us every week in church and now also with our **special Lenten services**. "COME UP to Me," **God says** with Bible class and Sunday school – with our Christian schools and **daily devotions** at home. EVERY TIME we have an opportunity to **hear** or **read** God's Word that's God inviting us, "COME UP to Me. I want to talk with you. I have some things – some GLORIOUS things – I **want to show** you." Amen.

HYMN #95