

Transfiguration Sunday

Sermon Text:

Date preached: February 10, 2013

Note: Congregational Mtg. to follow.

Grace to you and peace from God—Father, Son and Holy Spirit. AMEN.

A whole life's work came to an end before he could see the goal first hand. He had answered the call of God despite several excuses as to why he could not serve. In spite of all those excuses, God equipped Moses, commissioned him and sent him on the task.

Moses' work included consistent pleas to Pharaoh to let God's people go. It included preparing the Israelite people for the Passover, where the angel of death would sweep through Egypt claiming the first born male of every family, including livestock. Only those who were prepared by eating an unblemished lamb and spreading its blood over the door would be spared. That preparation fell to Moses.

It was he who led the Israelites through the Red Sea as Pharaoh changed his mind and began to pursue them. It was Moses who heard every complaint throughout the 40 year journey.

Moses himself fell into sin and disobedience. As a consequence of that sin, God informed him that he would not see the end of the journey. He would not set foot into the Promised Land prepared for the people.

Like Moses, we don't always see the end result of our ministry. We may give a full effort to our jobs, we may set in motion specific programs to achieve our goals, and fail to enjoy the earthly fruit of that labor.

We can get so consumed by the daily or weekly tasks before us that we lose sight of our overall purpose. We become so consumed by our own desires, our own sense of what needs to get accomplished that we plunge ourselves into depression, an on-going feeling of failure. Such are the things that occur when we focus on our own little empires and what it is we will leave behind for our children.

In other words, if our focus is on what can be seen we will never arrive at our final goal. Nor is that the legacy we are called to leave behind.

The Promised Land for Moses was not a piece of ground. The Promised Land is the presence of God. It is to be with God's own Son as Jesus sets his eyes toward

Jerusalem and the cross. On the mountain, the disciples saw a glimpse of the Promised Land as Moses and Elijah stand with Jesus in glory.

That is the inheritance that awaits us. To be in the fullness of Christ is the goal. It is one we cannot achieve by our own doing or work. Rather, we are the undeserved recipients of God's great legacy.

It is undeserved because of our sin. We are not worthy to be on the mountain. Were it not for Christ our legacy would be death.

Yet it is because of Jesus that we have been made worthy. His death on the cross was the price paid that we may inherit the glory of God's kingdom. It was his blood. It was his body bearing the brutality of nails piercing his hands and feet, a crown of thorns pressed upon his skull that made for our inheritance of God's manifold grace.

The inheritance of God's grace not only awaits but is ours today. We inherit the grace of God each time we assemble around His Holy and life giving Word. For in that Word we hear God declare us forgiven of our sins.

The inheritance of God's grace is given and poured out for us through simple earthly elements of bread and wine. The inheritance of God's grace brings us together. His grace brings us through troubles; and His grace in Christ Jesus will bring us to the Promised Land before the Beautiful Savior. AMEN.