

Text: 2 Corinthians 3:12-18, 4:1-6

Theme: Lifting the Veil

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

My dear beloved flock, as well as those watching online, the text for our meditation this morning is the second letter of Saint Paul to the Church at Corinth, chapters three and four, verses twelve through eighteen and one through six.

Good morning boys and girls, how are you this morning? Good! I am glad to hear it. I have a question for you this morning, have you ever seen a veil? If you have ever gone to a wedding, I am sure that you have. Brides typically wear veils. Why? To hide their faces until they arrive at the altar and stand before the man they love. The veil is then lifted and loved ones see each other face to face as they begin their lives together as husband and wife. St. Paul states that Moses wore a veil, why? Was he a bride? No, so why and what does it have to do with us today? Let me know the answer at the end of service. You may go back to your seats and those who love you.

St. Paul here is referencing Exodus chapter thirty-four (34). When Moses got the rewritten commandments on tablets of stone, he went down to talk with the Israelites. As Moses talked with them, his face shone with the reflected glory of God. The people were afraid but approached and listened to Moses. From then on, Moses wore a veil after talking with the people concerning what the Lord had told him. Yet, he removed it when talking with the Lord. What does all of this mean? St. Paul explains why Moses did that: "to keep the Israelites from gazing at it while the radiance was fading." It was a symbolic way of demonstrating that the ministry of the old covenant, the law, as glorious as it was, was not as splendid as the ministry of the new covenant, the ministry of the gospel. Moses veiled his face to prevent the Israelites from sensing how fleeting, how transient the nature of that reflection was. It was still glory but a glory that did not last, that faded away. The glory of the old covenant was fleeting compared to Jesus. Is this us? Do we have veiled faces due to the hardness of our minds and hearts?

Saint Paul says no. This is not us. While yes, we are sinners, the glory of God is not hidden from us. For us the glory of God is not hidden but fully revealed to us in Jesus Christ. Today we celebrate the feast of the Transfiguration, when, before Peter, James, and John, Jesus shines brightly with the fully glory of God upon the mountain top. The three disciples see the glory of God face to face and do not die. They do not die because of the grace and mercy of Jesus. Mercy and grace shown to them, as well as to us, because of what Jesus sets His face to do afterwards. He goes to Jerusalem, to suffer, bleed, and die, bearing all of the sins of humanity upon the cross. Fully satisfying the full wrath of God on our behalf. Rising again from the dead, Jesus gives to us new life, now and forever. Because of Jesus, the veil is removed from our hearts and minds. We can see God in all of His glory, face to face without having to worry about

His wrath, anger, or punishment over our sins because they have been fully paid for because of Jesus' death, proven by His resurrection from the dead.

By virtue of being declared righteous by Jesus Christ, forgiven of all of our sins, we are being transformed. "We, with unveiled faces, beholding the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from one degree of glory to another. For this comes from the Lord who is the Spirit." The veil has been fully removed and we see God face to face. Through the working of Jesus. God unveils our faces by the sending of His Holy Spirit. He grants us faith in the waters of Holy Baptism. He strengthens our faith every week in the blessed Eucharistic Feast. Daily we are being transformed more and more like Jesus day by day. The holy Spirit empowers us and strengthens us to be rooted in the Word. He gives us His power, that we may be strengthened to resist the temptations of Satan and resist sin time and time again. Eventually, we will indeed see Jesus in all of His glory when He comes on the Last Day. Because of His working in us, we will behold Him always with unveiled faces.

May God keep us steadfast in this faith and assurance until that glorious day.

May the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, guard and keep your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus. Amen.