

WEEKLY MEDITATION

THE TRANSFIGURATION (August 6)

And Peter said to Jesus, "Lord, it is good that we are here (Matthew 17: 4)

The Lord took Peter, James and John with Him *up a high mountain apart by themselves*, and there He was revealed to them as the *beloved Son* of God the Father, the fulfillment of the prophets, His face *shining like the sun* and His raiment *exceeding white as snow*. When we hear this, and see it depicted in the icon of the feast, we are reminded that our Lord Jesus Christ, *clothed with light as with a garment* (Psalm 104), is the creative and creating Word of God in the flesh.

The disciples were profoundly moved by their experience of the transfigured Lord. Matthew tells us that they were *filled with awe*. Mark tells us that they were *sore afraid*. Nonetheless - or perhaps precisely because - of this holy dread, Peter said to the Lord: *Master, it is good that we are here* (Mark 9:5).

Brothers and sisters! The world is unevenly divided into two. There are those who love the Lord and are drawn to Him. Even full of awe and dread, in the presence of His fearful glory, those who love Him wish to be with Him. But there are also those who do not love Him and repudiate Him though He comes to them as teacher, healer, wonderworker, messiah and savior. Those who do not love Him wish He would go away. Think, for example, of the Gadarenes when the Lord cured one of them of demonic possession: *All the city came out to meet Jesus; and when they saw Him, they begged Him to leave their neighborhood* (Matthew 8:34). Think of those voices crying: *Crucify Him, crucify Him!* In this we are reminded of the words proclaimed as we celebrate His joyous Resurrection: *He came unto His own, and His own received Him not* (John 1:11).

Where and with whom do we stand? Do we stand with Peter, James and John? As we encounter the Lord, are our hearts touched, is our response joyful are we moved to draw closer to Him? This is such an important question because the answer reveals the character of our life and our eternal destiny. For truly *it is good to be near God* (Psalm 74); *it is good to follow the Lord* (Sirach 46:10); *it is good to give thanks to the Lord* (Psalm 92); *it is good that one should wait quietly for the salvation of the Lord* (Lamentation 3:26). In His presence do we, like Apostles, say: *Lord, it is good that we are here?*

Let us not allow a hard heart, selfishness, sin, distraction, idolatry - that is, the love of things not God ahead of our sincere and heartfelt love for Him) - let not these things keep us from drawing near to the One Who is goodness itself and receiving Him into our hearts. For *To all who received Him, who believed in His name, He gave power to become children of God* (John 1:11-12).

~Fr. Andrew

