

The Transfiguration of Our Lord

Middle School · Parent Edition

For the parent: Read each part aloud and work through the questions together. Your answers are printed in blue italics, so no preparation is needed. Your child uses the Student Edition.

Step 1 Understand the Collect

Most collects follow a five-part pattern: the **address** (the One to whom we pray), the **reason** (what God has done or promised), the **petition** (what we ask), the **purpose** (what we hope will result), and the **ending** (the closing that names the Trinity).

O God, in the glorious transfiguration of Your beloved Son You confirmed the mysteries of the faith by the testimony of Moses and Elijah. In the voice that came from the bright cloud You wonderfully foreshowed our adoption by grace. Mercifully make us co-heirs with the King in His glory and bring us to the fullness of our inheritance in heaven; through the same Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

1. Mark each part of the collect. What is unusual about it?

***Answer:** Address: "O God." Reason: "in the glorious transfiguration of Your beloved Son You confirmed the mysteries of the faith by the testimony of Moses and Elijah. In the voice that came from the bright cloud You wonderfully foreshowed our adoption by grace." Petition: "Mercifully make us co-heirs with the King in His glory and bring us to the fullness of our inheritance in heaven." Ending: "through the same Jesus Christ..." The reason is unusually long, two full sentences, and the purpose is folded into the petition.*

2. How did the voice from the cloud foreshow "our adoption by grace"?

***Answer:** The Father calls Jesus "my beloved Son." In Baptism we are joined to Him and adopted as God's children (Galatians 3:26-27), so what is said of Him becomes true of us.*

3. How do Moses and Elijah confirm "the mysteries of the faith"?

***Answer:** Moses stands for the Law and Elijah for the Prophets. The whole Old Testament bears witness to Jesus.*

Step 2 Understand the Gospel

Read the Gospel on your own.

Matthew 17:1-9

1 And after six days Jesus took with him Peter and James, and John his brother, and led them up a high mountain by themselves. **2** And he was transfigured before them, and his face shone like the sun, and his clothes became white as light. **3** And behold, there appeared to them Moses and Elijah, talking with him. **4** And Peter said to Jesus, "Lord, it is good that we are here. If you wish, I will make three tents here, one for you and one for Moses and one for Elijah."

5 He was still speaking when, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them, and a voice from the cloud said, "This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased; listen to him." **6** When the disciples heard this, they fell on their faces and were terrified. **7** But Jesus came and touched them, saying, "Rise, and have no fear." **8** And when they lifted up their eyes, they saw no one but Jesus only. **9** And as they were coming down the mountain, Jesus commanded them, "Tell no one the vision, until the Son of Man is raised from the dead."

1. Why did Peter want to build three tents (v. 4)?

***Answer:** He wanted to stay in the glory, and he treated Jesus as one great figure among three. He did not yet understand that Jesus had to go to the cross.*

2. The voice interrupts Peter (v. 5). What does it correct?

Answer: Jesus is not one of three. He is the beloved Son, and we are to listen to Him.

3. Why did Jesus tell them to tell no one until He was raised from the dead (v. 9)?

Answer: His glory cannot be understood apart from the cross and the resurrection. He had to suffer first.

4. The Church hears this Gospel just before Lent. Why?

Answer: It gives a glimpse of Jesus' glory before we walk with Him to the cross, and it strengthens faith for the Passion.

Step 3 Find the Collect in the Gospel

1. Find at least two places where the collect's words appear in the Gospel. Explain each one.

Answer: "Glorious transfiguration" matches His face shining like the sun (v. 2). "The testimony of Moses and Elijah" matches the two talking with Him (v. 3). "The voice that came from the bright cloud" matches verse 5. "Our adoption" matches "my beloved Son" (v. 5). Any two, well explained, are enough.

2. Today's Epistle says, "We ourselves heard this very voice borne from heaven, for we were with him on the holy mountain" (2 Peter 1:18). What does Peter's letter add to the Gospel?

Answer: Eyewitness testimony. Peter says this was not a myth; he was there and heard the Father's voice.

Step 4 The Small Catechism

The Third Commandment. Remember the Sabbath day by keeping it holy. **What does this mean?** We should fear and love God so that we do not despise preaching and His Word, but hold it sacred and gladly hear and learn it.

Cross-reference. "And we have the prophetic word more fully confirmed, to which you will do well to pay attention as to a lamp shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts." (2 Peter 1:19)

1. The Father says, "Listen to him." How does that sum up Luther's explanation of the Third Commandment?

Answer: We keep the day holy by gladly hearing and learning Christ's Word.

2. Peter saw Jesus' glory, yet he says we have "the prophetic word more fully confirmed." Why is Scripture enough for us?

Answer: It is God's sure Word, a lamp in the dark. We do not need a mountaintop vision to know Christ.

3. At the end they saw "Jesus only" (v. 8). How is that the purpose of worship?

Answer: Everything in the service points to Christ. The Law and the Prophets give way to Him.

Parent note: the question they may ask. "Why don't we see glory and miracles like this today?" Peter himself answers: we have Scripture "more fully confirmed" (2 Peter 1:19). Christ's glory is now hidden in Word and Sacrament, as it was hidden in His humble body before the mountain. We will see it openly when He returns (1 John 3:2).

Step 5 Wrap It All Up

1. Write a short collect of your own for this day. Use all five parts.

Answer: Answers will vary. Example: "O God, You showed Your Son's glory on the mountain and told us to listen to Him. Open our ears to His Word, that we may see Jesus only and share

His glory in heaven; through the same Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen."

Pray today's collect together. Then answer:

2. What does Jesus do for you when you are afraid of God?

Answer: *He comes to me with His Word and says, "Rise, and have no fear." For Jesus' sake, God calls me His child.*