

Brothers and sisters in Christ, **consider Jesus**.

On this day, Transfiguration, the culmination of Epiphany, our text allows us to consider Him in all His glory. All that we have heard up until this point, all we have heard Him doing to bring about the New Creation and teaching to souls yearning for His Gospel, is affirmed for us as we consider Him today. God the Father appears in the cloud of Glory and speaks to silence all doubts. What He proclaimed over Christ in His baptism is proclaimed that the hearer would believe it today. Everything that He has taught, everything He has done, is good and true, the Father proclaims—all Jesus is and does is well pleasing to the Father, so listen to Him. Consider Jesus.

Yet in our lives, because we remain sinners **curved in** on ourselves, we usually consider ourselves; our needs, our lives, our desires, our fears. As the days pass by, as our health changes and as our needs increase, as our taste varies and as our environment morphs around us, we are enveloped by our own lives. We consider ourselves because our lives are prevalent and prominent in our perspective; they are our pressing reality and so they occupy our time and our energy, our tireless energy.

But everything we feel we must strive for—our physical, emotional, and spiritual needs, even our wants of all sorts—all of these Christ cares for and will certainly ensure that we are cared for. He is the Word, after all, who was spoken, beginning, sustaining, and completing creation. He formed us cell by cell and has caused our life to endure all these days so far. He cares. So much so that we do not need to consider ourselves, how we will eat or dress or be

housed; He invites and urges us to steal our eyes away from our flesh and our days and instead **only consider Jesus.**

Today we consider Him in His glory, about 8 days after His prediction of His death and His invitation for the disciples to follow suit, on the 8th day He is glorified. Thus we are invited to consider Jesus, the one resurrected from the dead to live forever and to give such a resurrected life to those who hear His Gospel and take up their cross to follow Him.(even before His crucifixion He is seen in His resurrected glory—in this moment the glory that is always His is seen, and as He looks towards His departure, He prepares to make His glory ours). And His reality is ours, because we have been baptized with a death like His and so we know that we will be resurrected to a life like His. Though Peter, John, and James see this glory only momentarily, it is enough to prove what has occurred and prepare them for what would soon take place, even if they still only understand after the fact; He is not yet dead and raised yet even now that glory belongs to Him and He is readying them and us to be prepared to live in that glory for eternity. Brothers and Sisters, consider Christ, who is our resurrection from the dead, our gift of eternal life.

And from our Epistle lesson we are invited to consider Jesus, **the faithful Apostle.** From the beginning of creation He was faithful to be the Word that brought hope to Adam and Eve, to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, to the Israelites, to those in Exile and even those in the in-between time, after the prophets and before Christ, in the silence. And then He was faithful to bring His Gospel straight to the needy, to the sick who were in need of a physician, to the poor

in need of spare change, to the sinner in need of forgiveness. By His Words and deeds He was the Faithful Apostle, proclaiming the love of God without hesitation. And Christ remains faithful to proclaim this message, the message of forgiveness and resurrection, of the reconciliation we so need with our God. Even today He is bringing us the message of such good news, and preaching us to life time and time again in His Word and Sacrament. In your life He has been faithful to draw you near and speak His Word of life into your ear and your heart that you would hear and believe, and so live, even today. Brothers and sisters in Christ, consider Christ who is the herald of good news, the apostle to bring to you salvation from on high.

This is the message you have heard and believed, you've placed your trust in it, yet this day is not over, nor is it easy. He knows that and He has been faithful not to abandon us to our own devices. Consider Christ, our faithful **high priest**—He is the one who offered Himself as a perfect sacrifice that sin may not hold any sway on you. And He continues looking out for you, praying on your behalf and adamantly reminding you that His sacrifice was and remains *enough*. There is nothing you must add to it, there is nothing you can take away from it; your sins are dealt with and thus is your mortality and vulnerability to the evil in this world; in your forgiveness you were placed in the tender yet strong, perfectly loving hands of God that you may be cared for and carried all your days. Today, with whatever it brings and also every tomorrow, until that day when you and I finally get to see Him face to face like Moses and

Elijah on the mountain top, brothers and sisters in Christ, consider Jesus, who is ever holding you close, your great High Priest.

We hear this good news and we trust that He is sustaining our feeble faith, until we reach the blessed eternity. Yet even today, consider Christ, the **promised Land**. In our Old Testament lesson, we see Moses, looking over the land which was promised to God's people. He was faithful in bringing them to the border after the wonderful Exodus which God saved them by. By the blood of the Lamb on the doorposts, by the waterwalls which held back the torrents from washing the Israelites away but drowned hard hearted Pharaoh and his soldiers. By such and exodus God brought them to the land of freedom and , but because of Moses sins he would not be privileged to take them to it. But he saw it. He considered it. And in today's lesson, he at last has the chance to be in it. Certainly it is wonderful that he stands within the territory which he gazed upon, yet it is even better that he stands in the glory of the greater promised land, that of the presence of the Lord.

By a great Exodus God saved the Israelites and brought them by the guidance of Moses walking behind the glory and guidance of God in a pillar of cloud and fire. By an even greater Exodus, one which Christ was about to pave the way through, Moses had not died an eternal death, and Elijah was kept alive until this day through the rest of eternity. By the Exodus of Christ's crucifixion and death, His burial and resurrection, and at last by that great departure from His physical presence among us, He set forth the departure which all who cling to His

salvation would follow through. Brothers and sisters in Christ, consider Jesus, who has gone to prepare a place for you in His promised land, and is in fact the very way there.

Because we are united with Christ, because we have heard the news He proclaimed of His great sacrifice on the altar of the cross, because He prays for us and carries us through this life, we know that one day we will stand in the presence of God, resurrected and immortal, enjoying life everlasting in the promised land of His presence. There we will consider the greatness of Jesus Christ who has saved us all our days.

Yet we do not need to wait until then to consider Jesus alongside Moses and Elijah and all believers who have gone before us.

We consider Him when we hear of His goodness from every page in scripture. We consider Him as we hear Christ preached, as we receive His Word in the water which defeats our death and assures us of our life. We consider Him as we approach the table, knowing our need so much more than we would ever like to admit. We consider Him as we hear of His goodness in life and in death, as our eyes are turned from the terrors and the question marks of this world to the assuredness of Christ today and always.

To consider Christ is to hear His Words of forgiveness, His words of “I got this—it is finished” which He cries out from the cross. To consider Christ is to trust Him even as we journey through the tough days, walking with Him even when He is silent to our cries as the Father was silent to His. To consider Christ is to inwardly proclaim Alleluia in the midst of

outward tears and confusion and frustration; to know He is faithful even when it does not seem like it.

So when the days are long and hard and swallowed in darkness, His gospel is for every moment. He is the cure to our illness, the remedy to our death, the answers in our confusion, the peace in our fears. Just as His glory remains ever present even as He moves, step by step, towards the cross, so is His perfection ours already even in the midst of a chaotic and painful life. Everything He has is ours; He has considered us and all our needs, and so we need not look at what our hands can do and what this world threatens us with; He has already paid attention to that. Instead, brothers and sisters in Christ, Consider Jesus.

Amen.