

St. Luke tells us that Jesus' transfiguration takes place on the eighth day. What day of the week would that be? Sunday, today, is the first day of the week. Saturday is the seventh day of the week. Eight follows seven. But since Saturday is the last day of the week, we never get to the eighth day. After Saturday, we go back to Sunday, the first day of the week.

We might say, therefore, that there is no eighth day. And yet, here it is in our text, on the eighth day Jesus takes Peter, James, and John up the mountain. And what happens up there is so incredible that Peter, James, and John are struck dumb. They keep silent about everything they see and tell no one.

It is, thankfully, written down for us. And we have to agree that this transfiguration account is unlike all the other accounts of Jesus and His disciples. There are accounts where He does miracles. Accounts where He teaches; there are many parable accounts. But this is unlike all of them. Jesus' face is altered and His clothing become dazzling white. Moses and Elijah appear in glory and speak with Jesus. A bright cloud overshadows them, and the Father's voice comes out of the cloud.

This is not your everyday occurrence. It happens once, here on the mountain. And it takes place on the eighth day. And there does seem to be a reason for that. It seems like Jesus, in taking Peter, James, and John up the mountain, takes them into a different place. A place where there is no time. Where days are not numbered. On what day of the week would they see Moses and Elijah appearing in glory? No day of the week, and no place, no common place anywhere on earth. Moses and Elijah are in heaven. And yet we see them here on the mountain.

Do you understand what is happening up there? Jesus takes Peter, James, and John up to where heaven and earth meet. They see Jesus' glory. They see Moses and Elijah. They are overshadowed by the bright cloud and they hear the Father's voice. And this doesn't take place on a Monday, Tuesday, or Wednesday. It is the eighth day up there where the days are not numbered. For just a little while, Peter, James, and John step out of time and into eternity.

The eighth day. Some of you have loved ones who are there now. It's not a Monday, Tuesday, or Wednesday for them. It's the eighth day. They are there with Jesus. It's similar to how He took Peter, James, and John up the mountain. Jesus took your loved one up to heaven. Up to where Moses and Elijah, and all the saints, are gathered around Jesus.

What a beautiful day is the eighth day. No one gets to that day apart from Jesus. He took His three disciples there. He took your loved one there. And it is Jesus, and only Jesus, who will take you up to the eighth day.

Only Jesus can do this because Jesus is the One who came down from heaven to go up a different mountain. The mountain where a bloody cross awaited Him. Jesus hung there on the cross, suspended between heaven and earth, His blood being shed for every sinner here on earth. And this is why He, now, is the place, the only place, where heaven and earth meet.

Up on the mountain with Jesus, Peter, James, and John were given a foretaste of what was to come. They loved it up there. Peter wanted it to last. *“Lord, it’s good that we are here...let’s make some tents and stay.”* But it was a foretaste for them; only a glimpse of what was to come.

You are given the same glimpse, yet not by sight but by faith. When you come here and enter into the Divine Service, you have one foot on earth and one foot in heaven. Sunday is the first day of the week. But it is also the eighth day, the day that follows the seventh day. As you join in the Divine Service today, you are joined by Moses and Elijah, and by all the saints, and also by your loved ones who were carried up to heaven by Jesus. Jesus is here. His words of life. His body and blood. His real presence is here. And with Jesus are all His saints.

Today is the first day of the week for you because you still live here on earth. But today, for you, is also the eighth day. For just a little while you step, with one foot, out of time and into eternity.

And so, we also sing, *“Tis good, Lord, to be here.”* Yet we know that this is only a foretaste. We cannot remain here. We must carry on with our lives on Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday. And as we go through these seven days ahead, where we face the struggles of life, and deal with the temptations to sin, and the guilt that comes when we give in to our flesh, how vital and how good to remember what the voice of the Father spoke from the cloud: *“This is My Son...listen to Him!”*

It is to you that Jesus speaks. *“You are My beloved child,”* He tells you in your baptism. *“I suffered and died for you,”* is His word of comfort. *“I forgive you of all your sin.”* *“Take eat, take drink,”* He says to you, *“for the remission of your sins.”*

Your Heavenly Father wants you to listen to Jesus because Jesus speaks to you forgiveness, the words of life, the words of salvation.

When He carries you up to the eighth day, you will no longer need these words. But you need them now. One day you will have both feet in heaven. Until then, believe what Jesus says to you. The last word in the Divine Service He will give you is the word of peace. And so, depart in peace, my friends. And then come back again to this place where heaven and earth meet in Jesus on the eighth day. Amen.