

WEEK OF JULY 19, 2026

**5-Day Devotional
based on Sunday's message:**



Transformation: The Transfiguration
Matthew 17:1-13

Provided by



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Matthew 17:1-13 (NLT)

Six days later Jesus took Peter and the two brothers, James and John, and led them up a high mountain to be alone. As the men watched, Jesus' appearance was transformed so that his face shone like the sun, and his clothes became as white as light. Suddenly, Moses and Elijah appeared and began talking with Jesus. Peter exclaimed, "Lord, it's wonderful for us to be here! If you want, I'll make three shelters as memorials—one for you, one for Moses, and one for Elijah." But even as he spoke, a bright cloud overshadowed them, and a voice from the cloud said, "This is my dearly loved Son, who brings me great joy. Listen to him." The disciples were terrified and fell face down on the ground. Then Jesus came over and touched them. "Get up," he said. "Don't be afraid." And when they looked up, Moses and Elijah were gone, and they saw only Jesus. As they went back down the mountain, Jesus commanded them, "Don't tell anyone what you have seen until the Son of Man has been raised from the dead." Then his disciples asked him, "Why do the teachers of religious law insist that Elijah must return before the Messiah comes?" Jesus replied, "Elijah is indeed coming first to get everything ready. But I tell you, Elijah has already come, but he wasn't recognized, and they chose to abuse him. And in the same way they will also make the Son of Man suffer." Then the disciples realized he was talking about John the Baptist.

Day 1: A Glimpse of Glory

Devotional

The Christian life always begins with Jesus. Sometimes we think spiritual growth starts by trying harder, obeying better, or becoming a more faithful disciple. However, Matthew reminds us that before Jesus asked His disciples to walk the difficult road ahead, He first revealed Himself to them. Just six days earlier, Peter had boldly confessed that Jesus was "the Messiah, the Son of the living God." Yet, neither Peter nor the other disciples fully understood what kind of Messiah He had come to be. Jesus had begun telling them that suffering, rejection, and the cross were ahead. Those words were difficult to accept because they expected a conquering king, not a suffering Savior. So Jesus took Peter, James, and John up a high mountain. There, for a brief moment, the veil was pulled back. Matthew tells us that Jesus' face shone like the sun and His clothes became dazzling white. The glory that had always belonged to the eternal Son of God became visible before their eyes. This wasn't a new glory that Jesus received, but was His glory all along. The Transfiguration wasn't given merely to amaze the disciples. It was given to prepare them. Before they would see Jesus arrested, beaten, and crucified, they first needed to see who He truly was. The memory of His glory would sustain them when the cross seemed to contradict everything they believed. God often works in much the same way in our lives. He doesn't always explain every step of the journey before asking us to trust Him. Instead, He continually reveals more of Himself. As we come to know Christ more deeply, we discover that our confidence rests not in understanding every circumstance, but in knowing the One who walks with us through them. Before God changes our circumstances, He often changes our vision. Before He calls us to greater faith, He reminds us who Jesus is. The Christian life doesn't begin by looking at ourselves. It begins by looking at Christ.

Going Deeper

John later reflected on Jesus' earthly ministry with these remarkable words. He had seen Jesus' miracles, heard His teaching, and stood on that mountain where Christ's glory was revealed. Looking back, John understood that Jesus was far more than a great teacher or prophet. He was God dwelling among His people.

"So the Word became human and made his home among us. He was full of unfailing love and faithfulness. And we have seen his glory, the glory of the Father's one and only Son." - John 1:14

The writer of Hebrews adds another beautiful description of Jesus. He reminds us that Christ is not merely someone who reflects God's glory. He is the very radiance of God's glory and the exact representation of His nature.

"The Son radiates God's own glory and expresses the very character of God, and he sustains everything by the mighty power of his command. When he had cleansed us from our sins, he sat down in the place of honor at the right hand of the majestic God in heaven." - Hebrews 1:3

The more clearly we see Jesus, the more confidently we can trust Him. Our faith grows, not because life becomes easier, but because Christ becomes greater in our eyes.

Bible Verse

"Six days later Jesus took Peter and the two brothers, James and John, and led them up a high mountain to be alone. As the men watched, Jesus' appearance was transformed so that his face shone like the sun, and his clothes became as white as light. Suddenly, Moses and Elijah appeared and began talking with Jesus." — Matthew 17:1-3 (NLT)

Day 1: A Glimpse of Glory (continued...)

Refection Question

What does the Transfiguration teach you about who Jesus truly is? Is there an area of your life where God is asking you to trust Him more deeply because of who Jesus is, even though you don't yet understand His plan?

Today's Practice

Spend five uninterrupted minutes today simply praising Jesus for who He is before asking Him for anything. Thank Him for His holiness, His power, His mercy, His faithfulness, and His love. Let your worship focus on His character rather than your circumstances.

Prayer

Father, thank You for revealing Your Son to us. Open my eyes to see Jesus more clearly each day. When I face uncertainty or difficulty, remind me that my confidence rests not in understanding every circumstance but in knowing the One who is Lord over them all. Help me keep my eyes fixed on Christ, trusting that as I behold His glory, You are shaping me into His likeness. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Day 2: Everything Points to Jesus

Devotional

Imagine standing on that mountain and suddenly seeing two of the greatest figures in Israel's history appear beside Jesus. Moses, the great lawgiver. Elijah, the mighty prophet. For every Jewish believer, these two men represented the foundation of God's revelation to His people. It is no wonder Peter was overwhelmed. Trying to preserve the moment, he suggested building three shelters, one for Jesus, one for Moses, and one for Elijah. Peter's response was sincere, but it revealed that he still had more to learn. Although he recognized Jesus' greatness, he unintentionally placed Him alongside Moses and Elijah rather than above them. God was about to correct that misunderstanding. Matthew doesn't tell us that Moses and Elijah came to receive honor. They came to give it. Their presence testified that everything God had been doing throughout Israel's history was leading to this moment. The Law pointed to Jesus. The Prophets pointed to Jesus. God's promises pointed to Jesus. The Bible is not a collection of disconnected stories or moral lessons. From Genesis to Revelation, it tells one grand story of God's redemption through His Son. Sometimes we approach Scripture looking only for practical advice about our lives. While God's Word certainly teaches us how to live, its primary purpose is to reveal Christ. The more we see Jesus woven throughout the pages of Scripture, the more we understand God's heart and His plan of salvation. Every page ultimately invites us to know Him better.

Going Deeper

After His resurrection, Jesus walked with two discouraged disciples on the road to Emmaus. Rather than immediately revealing His identity, He opened the Scriptures and showed them how the entire Old Testament pointed to Him.

“Then Jesus took them through the writings of Moses and all the prophets, explaining from all the Scriptures the things concerning himself.”- Luke 24:27

The writer of Hebrews begins his letter by reminding believers that while God spoke through many prophets over many generations, His fullest and final revelation has come through His Son.

“Long ago God spoke many times and in many ways to our ancestors through the prophets. And now in these final days, he has spoken to us through his Son. God promised everything to the Son as an inheritance, and through the Son he created the universe” - Hebrews 1:1-2

The more we understand that the whole Bible points to Jesus, the richer our study of God's Word becomes. Every passage helps us appreciate His character, His mission, and His saving work more deeply.

Bible Verse

“Suddenly, Moses and Elijah appeared and began talking with Jesus. Peter exclaimed, “Lord, it’s wonderful for us to be here! If you want, I’ll make three shelters as memorials—one for you, one for Moses, and one for Elijah.”” — Matthew 17:3-4 (NLT)

Reflection Question

Why do you think God chose Moses and Elijah to appear with Jesus on the mountain? How would your daily Bible reading change if your first goal was to know Christ more deeply rather than simply gain more information?

Today's Practice

As you read Scripture today, ask one simple question before you finish: "What does this passage teach me about Jesus?" Write down one new truth you discover about His character or His work.

Day 2: Everything Points to Jesus (continued...)

Today's Practice

As you read Scripture today, ask one simple question before you finish: "What does this passage teach me about Jesus?" Write down one new truth you discover about His character or His work.

Prayer

Father, thank You for giving us Your Word and for revealing Your Son throughout its pages. Teach me to read the Scriptures with eyes that are always looking for Jesus. Help me see how every promise, every prophecy, and every act of Your faithfulness points to Him. As I grow in my understanding of Christ, deepen my love for Him and strengthen my trust in Him each day. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Day 3: Listen to Him

Devotional

Peter was still speaking when everything changed. As he suggested building three shelters, a bright cloud overshadowed the mountain, and the voice of the Father broke into the conversation. "This is my dearly loved Son, who brings me great joy. Listen to Him." It is significant that God interrupted Peter. Peter wasn't trying to oppose Jesus. He was trying to honor Him. Yet in doing so, he unintentionally placed Jesus alongside Moses and Elijah instead of recognizing His supreme authority. The Father lovingly corrected that misunderstanding with one simple command, "Listen to Him." Those three words remain just as important today. Our world is filled with voices competing for our attention. News headlines tell us what to fear. Social media tells us what to value. Advertisers tell us what will satisfy us. Even well-meaning people can shape our thinking more than we realize. Yet above every other voice stands Jesus. Listening to Jesus means more than hearing His words. It means allowing His truth to shape our thinking, direct our decisions, and transform our lives. The more we listen to Him, the more our priorities begin to reflect His heart. After the Father's voice ceased, the disciples looked up. Matthew records one of the simplest yet most profound statements in the Gospel, "They saw only Jesus." That is where God was leading them all along. Everything else faded into the background because Christ alone was to remain at the center of their faith. The same is true for us. When our eyes are fixed on Jesus, the competing voices around us begin to lose their power.

Going Deeper

John the Baptist understood what it meant for Christ to become the center of everything. Speaking about Jesus, he said:

"He must become greater and greater, and I must become less and less." - John 3:30

Paul expands that truth even further by reminding us who Jesus truly is. He is not simply one teacher among many. He is the image of the invisible God, the Creator, the Sustainer, and the One who is supreme over all things.

"Christ is the visible image of the invisible God. He existed before anything was created and is supreme over all creation, for through him God created everything in the heavenly realms and on earth. He made the things we can see and the things we can't see— such as thrones, kingdoms, rulers, and authorities in the unseen world. Everything was created through him and for him. He existed before anything else, and he holds all creation together. Christ is also the head of the church, which is his body. He is the beginning, supreme over all who rise from the dead. So he is first in everything. For God in all his fullness was pleased to live in Christ, and through him God reconciled everything to himself. He made peace with everything in heaven and on earth by means of Christ's blood on the cross." - Colossians 1:15–20

The more clearly we understand Christ's greatness, the more naturally every other voice finds its proper place beneath His authority.

Bible Verse

"But even as he spoke, a bright cloud overshadowed them, and a voice from the cloud said, 'This is my dearly loved Son, who brings me great joy. Listen to him.' The disciples were terrified and fell face down on the ground. Then Jesus came over and touched them. 'Get up,' he said. 'Don't be afraid.' And when they looked up, Moses and Elijah were gone, and they saw only Jesus." — Matthew 17:5-8 (NLT)

Day 3: Listen to Him (continued...)

Refection Question

What voices compete most often for your attention and influence? What practical step can you take this week to become more intentional about listening to Jesus through His Word?

Today's Practice

Set aside ten minutes today without your phone, television, or other distractions. Read a portion of one of the Gospels and simply ask, "Lord, what are You saying to me today?" Write down one truth you sense God impressing upon your heart through His Word.

Prayer

Father, thank You for speaking so clearly through Your Son. Forgive me for the times I allow other voices to shape my thinking more than Yours. Help me to listen carefully to Jesus, to trust His Word, and to follow Him faithfully. As I keep my eyes fixed on Christ, quiet the distractions around me and make His voice the one that guides every part of my life. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Day 4: Down the Mountain

Devotional

If you had experienced the Transfiguration, would you ever want to leave? Peter certainly didn't. He wanted to stay on the mountain, preserving the moment as long as possible. But that was never Jesus' plan. The disciples were not called to build shelters on the mountaintop. They were called to follow Jesus back down into the valley. As they descended the mountain, Jesus immediately turned their attention toward what lay ahead. He instructed them not to tell anyone what they had seen until after His resurrection. Then the conversation shifted to John the Baptist and the suffering that both John and Jesus would endure. The contrast is striking. Moments earlier, the disciples had witnessed the unveiled glory of Christ. Now Jesus was preparing them for rejection, suffering, and ultimately the cross. That pattern still shapes the Christian life today. God graciously gives us moments when His presence seems especially near. A worship service, a retreat, a quiet morning in His Word, or an answered prayer may strengthen our faith in remarkable ways. Those moments are precious gifts from the Lord. But they are never meant to become permanent destinations. God prepares us on the mountaintop so we can faithfully serve Him in the valleys of everyday life. Most of our Christian growth doesn't happen during extraordinary moments. It happens as we trust Christ in ordinary routines, difficult conversations, unexpected disappointments, and daily acts of obedience. The disciples could never remain on the mountain. Neither can we. Jesus always leads His followers back into the world, not because He is leaving them behind, but because He is walking with them every step of the way.

Going Deeper

Following His resurrection, Jesus reminded His disciples that everything written about Him had to be fulfilled. The glory they witnessed on the mountain could only be fully understood after the cross and the empty tomb.

“Then he said, “When I was with you before, I told you that everything written about me in the law of Moses and the prophets and in the Psalms must be fulfilled.” Then he opened their minds to understand the Scriptures. And he said, “Yes, it was written long ago that the Messiah would suffer and die and rise from the dead on the third day. It was also written that this message would be proclaimed in the authority of his name to all the nations, beginning in Jerusalem: ‘There is forgiveness of sins for all who repent.’ You are witnesses of all these things.” - Luke 24:44–48

James reminds believers that hearing God's Word is only the beginning. Genuine faith responds with obedient action.

“But don’t just listen to God’s word. You must do what it says. Otherwise, you are only fooling yourselves. For if you listen to the word and don’t obey, it is like glancing at your face in a mirror. You see yourself, walk away, and forget what you look like. But if you look carefully into the perfect law that sets you free, and if you do what it says and don’t forget what you heard, then God will bless you for doing it.” - James 1:22–25

God doesn't reveal truth merely to inspire us for a moment. He reveals truth so that we will faithfully live it every day.

Day 4: Down the Mountain (continued...)

Bible Verse

“As they went back down the mountain, Jesus commanded them, “Don’t tell anyone what you have seen until the Son of Man has been raised from the dead.” Then his disciples asked him, “Why do the teachers of religious law insist that Elijah must return before the Messiah comes?” Jesus replied, “Elijah is indeed coming first to get everything ready. But I tell you, Elijah has already come, but he wasn’t recognized, and they chose to abuse him. And in the same way they will also make the Son of Man suffer.” Then the disciples realized he was talking about John the Baptist.” — Matthew 17:9-13 (NLT)

Reflection Question

Why do you think Jesus led the disciples back down the mountain instead of allowing them to remain there? How can past experiences of God's faithfulness strengthen you as you walk through ordinary—or even difficult—days today?

Today's Practice

Think about a time when God met you in a powerful way. For example, a worship service, a Bible study, an answered prayer, or another moment that strengthened your faith. Then ask yourself, How is God calling me to live differently today because of what He showed me then? Choose one practical step of obedience and act on it before the day ends.

Prayer

Father, thank You for the moments when You graciously remind me of who You are. Help me never to cling to the experience more than I cling to Christ Himself. Give me the faith to follow Jesus not only on the mountaintop but also in the ordinary moments of everyday life. May the truth You have revealed continue to shape my words, my choices, and my witness wherever You lead me. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Day 5: Until We See Only Jesus

Devotional

The mountain is now behind us. Peter, James, and John have witnessed Jesus in His glory. They have heard the Father's voice. They have walked back down the mountain and continued following Christ through the ordinary moments of life, eventually witnessing His suffering, death, resurrection, and ascension. Yet perhaps the most remarkable part of the story is not what happened on the mountain. It is what happened afterward. The fearful disciples gradually became courageous witnesses. The men who often misunderstood Jesus became faithful shepherds of His Church. Their transformation did not happen overnight. It unfolded over years of walking with Christ, listening to His voice, depending on His Spirit, and faithfully following wherever He led. That is how God works in every believer. We often wish spiritual growth happened instantly. We pray one prayer, read one book, attend one retreat, or hear one sermon and hope everything changes at once. However, God's work is usually much quieter and much deeper. Day by day, conversation by conversation, act of obedience by act of obedience, the Holy Spirit patiently shapes us into the image of Christ. Bruce compared this lifelong process to a caterpillar becoming a butterfly. The illustration reminds us that transformation is not about becoming a better version of ourselves. God is making us into something entirely new. The disciples did not leave the mountain transformed because of the experience itself. They were transformed because they continued walking with the One they had seen. The same is true for us. Our greatest need is not another emotional experience. Our greatest need is to keep looking to Jesus. The more clearly we see Him, the more faithfully we follow Him. The more faithfully we follow Him, the more we become like Him.

Going Deeper

Paul describes the Christian life as an ongoing work of God's Spirit. As we behold the glory of Christ, He gradually changes us to reflect His character more and more.

“So all of us who have had that veil removed can see and reflect the glory of the Lord. And the Lord—who is the Spirit—makes us more and more like him as we are changed into his glorious image.” - 2 Corinthians 3:18

The writer of Hebrews tells us where our focus must remain throughout the journey.

“Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a huge crowd of witnesses to the life of faith, let us strip off every weight that slows us down, especially the sin that so easily trips us up. And let us run with endurance the race God has set before us. We do this by keeping our eyes on Jesus, the champion who initiates and perfects our faith. Because of the joy awaiting him, he endured the cross, disregarding its shame. Now he is seated in the place of honor beside God's throne. Think of all the hostility he endured from sinful people; then you won't become weary and give up.” - Hebrews 12:1-3

Paul summarizes the goal of every believer's life with these familiar words.

“My old self has been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me. So I live in this earthly body by trusting in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.” - Galatians 2:20

Transformation is not something we accomplish for Christ. It is something Christ accomplishes in us as we continue walking with Him.

Day 5: Until We See Only Jesus (continued...)

Bible Verse

“So all of us who have had that veil removed can see and reflect the glory of the Lord. And the Lord—who is the Spirit—makes us more and more like him as we are changed into his glorious image.” — 2 Corinthians 3:18 (NLT)

Reflection Question

Looking back over your life, where have you seen the greatest evidence of Christ's transforming work? What is one area where Jesus is inviting you to trust Him more fully as He continues shaping you into His likeness?

Today's Practice

Spend a few quiet moments reflecting on the past year. Where have you seen Christ patiently shaping your heart, your attitudes, or your priorities? Thank Him for His faithfulness, and then ask Him to reveal the next step of growth He is inviting you to take. Commit that step to Him today, trusting that He will continue the good work He has begun in you.

Prayer

Father, thank You for Your patient work in my life. Thank You that You have not left me where I was, but are faithfully making me more like Your Son. Help me to keep my eyes fixed on Jesus each day. Teach me to listen to His voice, trust His leading, and follow Him wherever He goes. Continue transforming me until the day my faith becomes sight and I stand in Your presence forever. In Jesus' name, Amen.