

Text: John 1:29-42a

Theme: How God Reveals His Glory to Us

Epiphany is the season of the church year when we think of times when Jesus showed His glory. It begins with the star that led the Wise Men to Bethlehem and ends with the time when Jesus shone in His glory on the Mount of Transfiguration. It is a season in which we think of many of Jesus' miracles.

This story doesn't seem to fit. In fact, it takes us back to the desert where we were in Advent before Christmas. There is no voice from heaven and no miracle, just a few people who talk about Jesus. But that is exactly how God revealed His glory that day, and how He still reveals His glory to us today. He reveals His glory through the message of Jesus Christ.

I. There are three messages about Christ that we have in this text.

John the Baptist declared that He is the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world. John was very direct with the people about their sins. He called them a brood of vipers. He warned the soldiers and even the priests to flee from the coming wrath of God. He called the people to repent and confess their sins, but he also preached a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins.

Then one day Jesus stood in that line of sinners, and He was baptized. John listened as the Father spoke His Word of approval of Jesus, and He saw the Spirit of God descend on Jesus in the form of a dove. He knew that Jesus is the One who would take away our sins. John called Him the "Lamb of God." He is the Servant in Isaiah 53 of whom it says, *"We all, like sheep, have gone astray, each of us have turned to his own way' and the LORD has laid on Him, the iniquity of us all."*

Christ is the Lamb of God who takes away our sins. We look at our own lives, and we can all see a lot of things that we should be ashamed of. We see sin. We see weakness, but God calls us to behold Jesus. He is the Lamb of God who takes all of our sins away. He bore them on the cross of Calvary, and He washes us clean in Holy Baptism. It doesn't matter what we have done or how often we have wandered. When we trust in Him as our Savior, not a spot of our sins remains. Jesus has taken it all away.

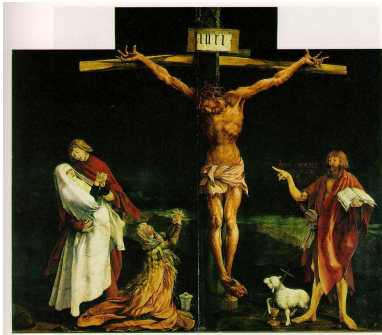
The second thing that John declared was that Jesus is the Son of God. At the end of that discourse John said, *"I have seen and I testify that this is the Son of God."* He heard the voice boom from heaven, "This is My beloved Son." We cannot go up to heaven, but God has come down to us. He gave us His dearest treasure in the gift of His own Son. Jesus is not just a prophet like John. He is God in the flesh. As John writes earlier in his Gospel, when we behold Jesus, we have seen the glory of God.

The final declaration about Jesus is what Andrews says. He told his brother Peter, *"We have found the Messiah."* John the Baptist saw a vision from God at Jesus' Baptism, which convinced him that Jesus is the promised Savior. Andrews realization came in a simpler way. He spent the day listening to Jesus. By the end of that day, He was convinced that Jesus was the Christ. The word "Messiah" in the Hebrew or "Christ" in the Greek both mean, the Anointed One.

In the Old Testament Prophets, priests, and kings were chosen by God and anointed with oil through which the Holy Spirit came upon them to complete their tasks. Through the words of Jesus, Andrew became convinced that Jesus was the One whom God has chosen to bring salvation to the world.

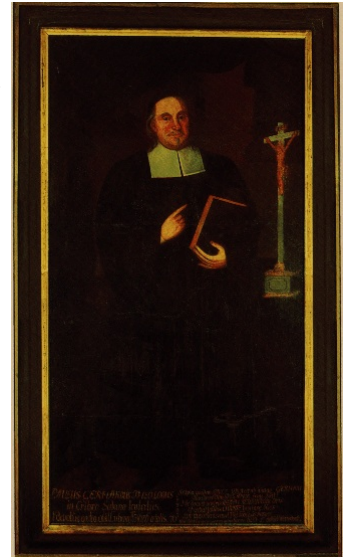
These two men declared that Jesus is the Son of God and the promised Messiah. It's interesting that in Acts 9, which is our Bible Study today that after Paul's conversion, he declared the very same things about Jesus in Damascus, that He is the Son of God (v 20) and the Christ. (v 22)

II. That message is how God still reveals His glory today.



He reveals Jesus as our Savior through preachers of the Gospel. There is a famous painting of John the Baptist by Matthias Grünewald, which I have in post card size in my office. In this painting Jesus is suffering on the cross and John is holding a Bible in one hand and pointing to Jesus on the cross with the other hand as the Lamb of God who takes away our

sins. There is also a painting in the last church which Paul Gerhardt served in which he points to Jesus on the cross. In the city Church in Wittenburg, a picture on the altar has Luther pointing the people to Christ on the cross. In 1 Corinthians Paul writes that we preach Christ crucified.



The message that we as Christians long to hear from our pastors and teachers is that Jesus died and rose to take away our sins. That is the hearts of our preaching and teaching as Christians. If a sermon does not focus us on Christ and the salvation that He came to bring, it

is not a Christian message. All Christian preaching point us to our forgiveness through the shed blood of Jesus Christ.

That is also the message that each individual Christian shares. Andrew wasn't called to be an apostle yet, but he still ran to tell his brother Peter that he had found the Christ. Think of the person who was the greatest influence in your faith. It probably wasn't a pastor. It might have been your parents, your grandparents, a friend or another relative. Someone told you the good news of Jesus Christ. They told you of the forgiveness and peace that He brought into their lives. You could see their joy and hope in Christ. Like Andrew brought his brother Peter to Jesus, they brought you to see Jesus as your Savior.

Christ can use your message in the same way. Through faith in Him, you have found the Messiah. Whom do you know who needs to hear the good news of Jesus? Whom do you know who needs to know that all of their sins are forgiven? Whom do you know who need words of peace and hope for

a future. This Sunday our churches celebrate Life Sunday because this Sunday is closest to the day that the supreme court legalized abortion in our country almost 40 years ago. Since that time there have been millions of women in our country who live in guilt for abortions that they have had. They also need to know that the Lord forgives that sin in full. Sometimes the older we get, the more we live in guilt and regret for certain things that we have done. The Lord calls on us to tell those who live in the guilt of any sin that Jesus is the Lamb of God who has taken away their sin too.

In God's time people come to rejoice in that message. It's interesting that the first day that John pointed the crowd to Jesus, it seems that no one followed Jesus. John told the whole crowd that Jesus is the One that He had been telling them about the whole time, but no one seemed to care. But the next day Andrew and another of John's disciples took notice. They followed Jesus and came to faith in Him as their Savior.

There will be times when we share the Gospel with someone and it seems that we get no response. Sometimes people will even be hostile. But in His time God's Word does bear fruit. I have spoken the Gospel to people, and a long time later they tell me how much it meant at the time. I never knew it. When I was in college, a professor was trying to get me to understand an important point, which is that the Gospel must always predominate in our preaching. It took 10 years until the light went on, and I understood what he meant. When you share the Gospel, it is not always met with instant shouts of joy, but God is at work. His word never returns empty.

God doesn't reveal His glory with a big bang. He does so with words, words that point people to Jesus Christ as their Savior. May that message of Christ crucified for us bring our hearts to believe that He is our Savior, and may the Holy Spirit also give our confession of Christ power, that it will also point others to Him as the Lamb of God who takes away their sins too. In His name.

Amen.