

In the Name of the Father, and of the ✠ Son, and of the Holy Ghost.

When the Tabernacle was complete, God's Glory filled it. The Glory of God is more than an ethereal attribute – it is the physical manifestation of God. It was the Glory of God that appeared in the cloud in the wilderness. Where the Glory of God is, there God is. Where God is, there is His Glory.

God's Glory settled upon Mount Sinai, and Moses spoke to God there. Moses was placed in the cleft of the rock, and God's Glory passed by him. But Moses was not allowed to see, for to see God's Glory is to see His face. And for a sinful man to see God's face is to die.

St. Paul writes that God has shown in the heart of the Christian that he might have the knowledge of the Glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. The same Glory that filled the Temple, the same Glory that covered Sinai, the same Glory that passed before Moses in the cleft of the rock, the Glory of God, took on Flesh. To see the face of Jesus is to behold the Glory of God.

But we have this treasure in earthen vessels. We are earthly, God is heavenly. He is sinless, just and true, we daily prove ourselves to be sinful, unjust, and liars. Like earthen vessels, we have flaws. All of our works, even our best works, are tainted by sin. Like earthen vessels, we wear out and we break. We are, as St. Paul describes, hard pressed, perplexed, persecuted, and struck down. And like earthen vessels, we are rightly returned to the dust from which we were made.

But in His great mercy it pleased Almighty God to make Himself known to us. His great Glory was manifest to the Prophets. His terrible presence went before Israel and filled the Tabernacle and the Temple. But that you might be saved from your sin, the same glorious God became Man.

It is in the face of Jesus that you know God's Glory. The omnipotent God made Himself gentle and lowly and weak. The omniscient God humbled Himself, and knew not even the time of the end. The omnipresent God took on Flesh and by the Mystery of the Personal Union was made Man. The God upon whom Moses could not look received sinners and ate with them.

And that glorious Face was smitten by sinful men. He was reviled and scorned. For that He took on Flesh. And the God that dwelt between the two cherubim over the mercy seat of the Ark was hung between two thieves upon the altar of the cross. The Light that shined out of the darkness was overcome by darkness. He died, covered in your sin.

By His holy, perfect life, and His precious suffering and death, He fulfilled God's Law for you. Like a broken earthen vessel, He who said "Let there be" and there was, was laid to rest in the dust He created.

But the Light shined out of the darkness. He overcame death. He rose to new life. He rose again that you might know that He is God, and believing, might have life in His Name. Believing, through faith in Jesus Christ, all your sins are forgiven, and His death and resurrection are made yours.

He takes away your sins. So you are not crushed, you are not in despair, you are not forsaken, and you are not destroyed – for you, O Baptized of Christ, carry about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life of Jesus also may be manifest in your body. You received His dying and rising in your Baptism. There He gave you His Spirit. There He redeemed you unto life, and that life everlasting.

He redeemed you by the shedding of His Blood for the forgiveness of your sins. When Moses entered the cloud of the Glory of the Lord on Sinai, he ate and drank with God. So does God invite you to eat and drink Him this day, as the Body of Christ is made your food, and His precious Blood is made your drink. He covers His Glory not with His Hand, but with Bread and Wine. And He does more than just pass before you. He enters you. He places Himself in your mouth, that you be filled with His holiness and righteousness. Moses ate with God, you eat God. Christ is present here, for you.

So forgiven, so strengthened in faith, when your earthen vessel is returned to the dust, that the excellence of the power may be of God, you will not die. Your soul will return to its Maker, there enjoy eternity with God in heaven. And the Glory of God that Moses could not see, you will see, when you rise to new life, for you are one to whom the Son wills to reveal the Father.

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