

Declaration of the Grandeur of Christ

Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus:

Who, existing in the form of God, did not consider equality with God something to be grasped, but emptied Himself, taking the form of a servant, being made in human likeness.

And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to death — even death on a cross.

Therefore God exalted Him to the highest place and gave Him the name above all names, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that **Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.**

Call to worship, to hear, to learn

The heavens declare the glory of God; the skies proclaim the work of His hands.

Day after day they pour forth speech; night after night, they reveal knowledge.

Without speech or language, without a sound to be heard, their voice has gone out into all the earth, their words to the ends of the world. Psalm 19

Prayer of Supplication:

Heavenly Father, your creation overflows with messages of your splendour and goodness. Thank you for attuning our ears, let us hear like we never have before. Take away the static of the world and our sin, we pray.

Ever since the world was created, people have seen the earth and sky. Through everything God made, they can clearly see his invisible qualities—his eternal power and divine nature. So they have no excuse for not knowing God. Romans 1.20

Prayer of Repentance:

Heavenly Father, you have displayed as much of yourself as to have us awed by what we should see with the eyes of faith. Please forgive us for our dullness, our willingness to be hoodwinked by the lies of evolutionary theory that rejects your instruction. And set us on the path of proclaiming your glory rightly and eagerly in Jesus ' Name.

I still have much to tell you, but you cannot yet bear to hear it. However, when the Spirit of truth comes, He will guide you into all truth. For He will not speak on His own, but He will speak what He hears, and He will declare to you what is to come. He will glorify Me by taking from what is Mine and disclosing it to you. Everything that belongs to the Father is Mine. That is why I said that the Spirit will take from what is Mine and disclose it to you. John 16:12-15

Prayer of joyful Gratitude:

Dear Father, when I think that on Mount Transfiguration you commanded us to listen to Jesus, and now you give us the greatest gift of heaven that the wonders of Jesus should be further spoken to us by your blessed Holy Spirit, we are amazed and

deeply grateful. Take us on and let nothing stop us from hearing and obeying and worshipping according to all you are teaching us. In Jesus ' holy Name, Amen

Hymn: Join all the glorious names, Isaac Watts

1. Join all the glorious names of wisdom, love, and power,
That mortals ever knew, that angels ever bore;
All are too mean to speak His worth,
Too mean to set my Savior forth.
2. Great Prophet of my God, my tongue would bless Thy name;
By Thee the joyful news of our salvation came;
The joyful news of sins forgiven,
Of death annulled, and Thy life given.
3. Jesus, my great High Priest, offered His blood, and died;
My guilty conscience seeks no sacrifice beside:
His powerful blood did me redeem,
'Tis worthy of my heart's esteem.
4. I love my Shepherd's voice: His watchful eye shall keep
My wandering soul among the thousands of His sheep:
He feeds His flock, He calls their names,
His bosom bears the tender lambs.
5. My Saviour and my Lord, my Conqueror and King,
Thy sceptre and Thy sword, Thy reigning grace I sing:
Thine is the power; behold I sit
In willing bonds beneath Thy feet.

Holy Scripture (theme is the voice of God to each one of us)

- Psalm 29.
- Matthew 17.1-9. Alongside of this, read 21.33-44 to understand the resistance of the flesh to hearing the words of the Son.
- Hebrews 1.1-4 (notice that "in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son")

Hymn; Geoffrey Bingham, (New Creation Hymn Book)

1. By the breath of His mouth He made all the heavens,
By the breath of His mouth He formed the whole earth,
By the breath of His mouth He breathed into Adam
And caused the whole race to come to its birth.
2. By the breath of His mouth He raised up the prophets,
By the breath of His mouth He gave forth His law,
The glory, the sonship, the promised Messiah,
The worship by which all His people adore.
3. By the breath of His mouth Christ gave up His spirit—
The life that He gave for the sins of the race—
By the love of the Father He rose all triumphant,

And poured forth in torrents His rivers of grace.

4. By the breath of His mouth, He gave the disciples
The gift of the Spirit—the Gift of His love.
By the breath of His mouth He sent forth the Gospel,
As Noah sent forth the encircling dove.
5. By the breath of His mouth—the power of the Spirit—
He brought His true life to the lost and the dead.
He renewed the old bones that lay in the desert,
Gave flesh and new life as the Spirit was shed.
6. By the breath of His mouth the coming Lord Jesus
Will destroy what is wicked, and cleanse what is true;
This sword of His mouth will smite every nation
And make all the heavens and earth to be new.
7. Oh Breath of the Father, Oh Breath of the Saviour,
Come breathe into us as we praise and adore,
Thus help us to bring all Your grace to the nations
And turn them to live in Your love, evermore.

Teaching message: This is my beloved Son-listen to him! Hear Him

*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.**"*

This is an ancient exhortation. It travels all the way from the Garden to Golgotha to Glory. Peter was so impressed by his Mount Tabor Transfiguration of Jesus experience that he wrote it up some 35 years later in his letter known as Second Peter.

For we did not follow cleverly devised fables when we made known to you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but we were eyewitnesses of His majesty. For He received honour and glory from God the Father when the voice came to Him from the Majestic Glory, saying, "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." And we ourselves heard this voice from heaven when we were with Him on the holy mountain.

Peter supplied the data for Mark's Gospel, and he made sure to include the command of the Father, "listen to him," and both Matthew and Luke record likewise. Listen to Jesus! And faithful ones have copied, translated and ensured at great cost that their and future generations shall have the gospel records of Christ's words.

Today it is as urgent as ever. In Australia, we are questioning at the governmental level whether we should listen to Muhammed's words about God or those of the only true Mediator, the Lord Jesus Christ. Please ask yourself, 'Do I hold the words of Jesus in my mind with reverence? Do I treasure them, seek to understand them and like the disciples, ask the Lord questions where I need clarification and help to understand the written word of Jesus?'

Christ's words bring life. John declared; *these are written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in His name.* Indeed, Jesus spoke about our future like no one else ever could or did. *Truly, truly, I say to you, if*

anyone keeps my word, he will never see death."Has anything been said so simply and more profoundly to supply hope to a human being than that?

Our heavenly Father has made a highway of life for those made in his image. He sent his Son to lead many sons to glory by heeding his words. But the parable of the tenants shows the strange truth that the Son's voice is not sought. The voice that heals all curses and freely gives wisdom is pushed away by the flesh. Our nature doesn't want to hear and neither does the world.

Listening to words; instructions, directions, a judge's court orders, a lover's promises; every day our lives are directed by words to hear and respond to. But these words of Jesus are above all. They are the ones the God of all creation says, "Listen to him, my beloved Son." The primary reason you have been given a brain is to hear the voice of the Son. All creation is pouring forth speech of God.

The voice of God commands, and the firmament, earth and sky form. Another word, life appears on earth. Alive because Yahweh has spoken. The Word – the One whose breath sources, sustains and integrates all things. Listen to Him. Is there any instruction more significant?

How many today listen intently for the voice of the Son of God?

Our nation is wrestling with this very matter right now. Who is it who speaks words from God? The Bondi murder of Jews was by men following the stated ideas of a man called Muhummad, whose words prescribe the subjugation of non-Muslims, even by killing them. Not wanting to offend Muslims who form a large portion of voters in certain electorates, political leaders shy away from confronting this evil. Against such cowardice we must heed the words of Jesus who warned; *The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I have come that they may have life, and have it in all its fullness.*

So significant is this matter and so great a Father's desire to have us hear his Son's voice, that he surrounded and imbued us with the whole created order of beauty and power, so that we could not miss hearing his voice. His power and glory resonate through everything. The Psalmist inspired by the spirit affirmed this: *The heavens declare the glory of God; the skies proclaim the work of His hands. Day after day, they pour forth speech; night after night they reveal knowledge. Without speech or language, without a sound to be heard, their voice has gone out into all the earth, their words to the ends of the world.*

And Apostle Paul stated the truth of this for all humanity, whatever gender, ethnicity, or age; *For what may be known about God is plain to them, because God has made it plain to them. For since the creation of the world God's invisible qualities, His eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly seen, being understood from His workmanship, so that men are without excuse.*

The word of God flows from heaven in a multitude of ways yet pre-eminently in the One who came to reveal the Father beyond question. So that without doubt all may know the God of truth. No wonder, for Jesus is not only the speaker of the word but is himself the very Word of God. And the written Scriptures about him, the very breath of God.

There are two sources of spiritual communication happening throughout the world and they are ultimately totally opposite and in fundamental conflict. That is why scripture

speaks of the spirit of our minds. The first and blessed source is Jesus, the other source is our enemy, Satan. Any good thought, word and deed, traced right back, will be seen to originate in God no matter who or how it is carried and expressed. Words which dehumanise and distract from God and counter his Kingdom come ultimately from Satan. God warns; listen to my beloved Son!

You who believe and read this have heard the voice of Jesus through the Spirit gift in all manner of ways. And you might be surprised to know just how much good the Lord has communicated to you, and you have heard and obeyed. Perhaps often without even stopping to work it all out. All that is good that benefits you and others in the smallest of ways ultimately originates from our Lord. Did Abraham understand that his tent dwelling wandering in Canaan and his unwillingness to build a permanent city was because *he was looking forward to the city with foundations, whose architect and builder is God*, in other words, the heavenly Jerusalem? As the writer says further on about Abraham and all those who simply trusted God centuries before Christ and before the book of Revelation was written, *they were longing for a better country, a heavenly one. Therefore, God is not ashamed to be called their God, for He has prepared a city for them.*

They were absorbing the words of Christ as they lived, trusting themselves to God, as they understood. But the ramifications of what they understood was so much greater.

We are also living witnesses among our families and before the eyes of this generation. Hearing his voice and being aware of his presence become almost one and the same thing. And if that encourages you, keep company with Jesus, letting him forgive your erring, and as He puts better longings in your heart, to be bold and useful in His kingdom, ere he calls you home .

Prayer:

Father in Heaven. Thank you for giving me new and ready ears to hear the voice of the One who is eternally beloved to you, the One who has redeemed me and placed me in his body, the Church. I wish to say from my heart, yes, I love belonging to you. I want to know your ways and wake up each morning with fresh possibilities of obeying your voice in my conscience and heart. This is your kingdom way and I long to go as far as possible in its ways. Thank you. In Jesus Name. Amen.

Further thought about heaven:

In the opening chapters of Ezekiel, we are presented with what appears as an insight into heaven. Jesus wants us to know about heaven. Six of the Beatitudes in Matthew chapter seven are all on what heaven is like. But in Ezekiel there is the stunning appearance of the throne of heaven, with the brilliant light all around Him, like *a rainbow in a cloud on a rainy day. This was the appearance of the likeness of the glory of the LORD. And when I saw it, I fell facedown and heard a voice speaking* . And in this vision Ezekiel sees living beings who move ahead without turning and wherever the Spirit would go, they go. It is a picture of the glory and thrill of obedience. Hearing the Spirit's voice and following in all the actions and experiences of heavenly life. We are invited into this on earth where it is possible, practical, privileged and glorious. **This is the operation, the morality,**

the safety, the joy of Heaven and the New Earth. This is the way of heaven. You will always hear this voice, through death into the new world of pain-free beauty, unmolested by the fallenness of creation.

Hymn; Charles Wesley

1. Let earth and heaven combine, angels and men agree,
to praise in songs divine the incarnate Deity;
Our God contracted to a span, incomprehensibly made man.
2. He laid His glory by, He wrapped Him in our clay;
unmarked by human eye, the latent Godhead lay;
Infant of days He here became, and bore the mild Immanuel's name.
3. Unsearchable the love that hath the Savior brought;
the grace is far above all man or angel thought;
Suffice for us that God, we know, our God is manifest below.
4. He deigns in flesh to appear, widest extremes to join;
to bring our vileness near, and make us all divine;
And we the life of God shall know, for God is manifest below.
5. Made perfect first in love, and sanctified by grace;
we shall from earth remove, and see His glorious face;
Then shall His love be fully shown, and man shall then be lost in God.

Benediction;

Now to Him who is able to strengthen you by this gospel and by the proclamation of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery concealed for ages past but now revealed and made known through the writings of the prophets by the command of the eternal God, in order to lead all nations to the obedience that comes from faith — to the only wise God be glory forever through Jesus Christ! Amen

This service was prepared by Rev Ian Clarkson for HopeNet SA