

# ONLY JESUS

(A Slightly Different Christmas Message)

December 15-16, 2018 ser3794 Sat Sun E Sun L

## I. LIGHT MOMENTS

**A. How about we start with a few Christmas “light moments?” LOL!**

**1. Are you up for a “Knock Knock” joke? (Whether you are or not, here goes ... )**

Who's there?

*Donut*

Donut who?

*Donut open your gifts till Christmas!*

**2. How about a reindeer joke?**

What do reindeer say before telling you a joke?

*This one will sleigh you!*

**3. How about a few snowmen jokes?**

What happened after the *snow girl* fell out of love with the *snow boy*?

*She gave him the cold shoulder!*

What do snowmen eat for breakfast?

*Frosted flakes*

**4. How about one more? (Whoa!)**

What is the favorite Christmas Carol of parents with a newborn?

*Silent Night*

**SPEAKING OF “SILENT NIGHT”** – This year our Christmas Carol and Candlelight services will feature a String Ensemble as we light candles and sing “Silent Night.” My homily, which I’m excited about, is entitled, “The Lost Character of Christmas.” What is meant by “character?” Is it a person? Is it a quality? Is it both? Smile!

**B. Today, I’d like us to approach Christmas from a slightly different perspective.** Please say with me “A different perspective.”

**C. Let us pray.**

## **II. A SLIGHTLY DIFFERENT CHRISTMAS HOMILY**

**A. This comes from one of my favorite passages of Scripture, because it proclaims the supremacy of Christ.** It says, He, Jesus, has no equal. Say with me, “Jesus has no equal.”

Those of us who traveled with the WIAMRadio Holy Land tour, had the privilege of walking on the very spot where this moment in history took place.

**I CAN’T SPEAK FOR YOU, BUT THERE ARE MOMENTS IN MY LIFE’S HISTORY I WISH DIDN’T**

**EXIST.** Can you recall any in your life, thus far? Please—don't call them out. LOL! This was not one of them. I'm thankful for this moment.

**B. So, let's go  
m o u n t a i n  
climbing. (show  
photo)** Well, it's  
not quite that  
d e m a n d i n g .  
LOL!



In fact, we traveled by bus. However, Jesus, Peter, James and John climbed this mountain to the spot where our sermon finds its setting. **(show photo of Mt Tabor)**



Today a church stands on the very spot where most historians believe Jesus and his three inner-circle disciples prayed. **(show 3**

**photos—The Church of the Transfiguration, p 4).**

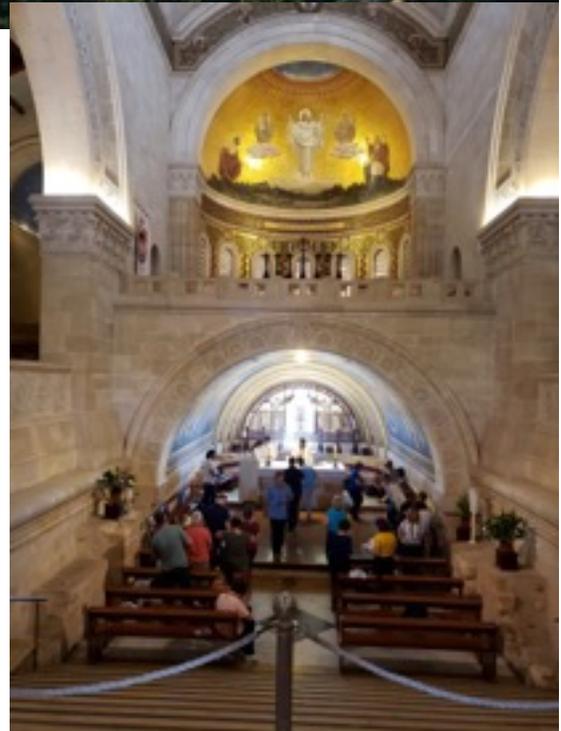
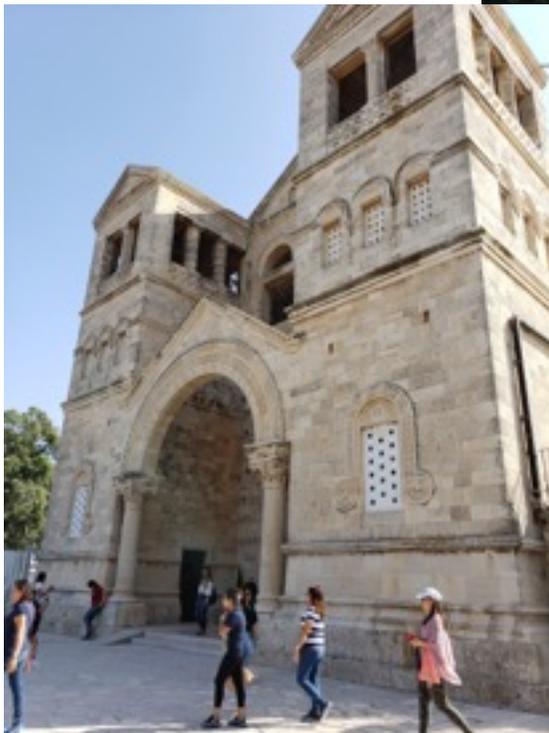
**Matthew 17: 1-13 PME p1114; LAB p1569  
(Mark 9:1-13; Luke 9:28-36; 2 Peter 1:16-21)**

**1** After \*six days Jesus took with Him Peter, James, and John the brother of James, and led them up a high mountain by themselves.

### **AFTER SIX DAYS**

references Jesus telling his disciples of His death, Peter's rebuke and the Lord's reply.

Let me explain!



1) In *Matthew 16* Jesus has asked Peter, “Who do men say that I am?”

2) Peter answers, “You are the Christ the Son of the living God.”

**THINK ABOUT THIS!** If someone were to ask you—school, work, leisure, wherever—that same question: “*Who do you believe Jesus was?*” how would you answer?

3) Jesus commends Peter telling him that flesh and blood did not reveal this to him, but God the Father in Heaven.

**(Now stay with me!)**

4) Immediately following, in fact, in the next few verses, Matthew tells us of Jesus’ rebuke of Peter calling him “Satan.” Now, we know that Peter wasn’t Satan, but just as Peter was commended for getting it right a few verses before, Peter, here, is rebuked for getting it wrong.

**WOW!** What a lesson for all of us. When we’re yielding to the Spirit we get it right, and when we’re seeing through eyes of flesh we get it wrong...EVERY time. What’s really scary about that is this: Sometimes I just don’t feel like yielding to the Spirit and being all Christian-ese like. You know what I mean? I want to be human and yield to the flesh, which is typically self-serving and selfish. I want someone to feel my frustration or disappointment or pain or whatever.

That’s where Peter was here! He, the fisherman, (no offense to those of you who fish) was telling Jesus, God in the flesh, that Jesus didn’t know what he was talking about because it didn’t fit with his (Peter’s) fleshly thinking.

**ILLUSTRATION:** I remember losing a Chow Chow that I thought was going to be the instrument God use to win the entire Canine world to Christ. **(show photo)** I was going

to be the Billy Graham of the Canine world. And when God took Dusky Boaz home—I just knew He had blown it. **(Back to our text.)**



All that happened \*six days prior to this moment of transfiguration on Mt Tabor. **(Do you have it?)** Ok, on to verse 2.

**2** There He was transfigured before them. His face shone like the sun, and His clothes became as white as the light.

**3** Suddenly Moses and Elijah appeared before them, talking with Jesus. **4** Peter said to Jesus, “Lord, it is good for us to be here. If You wish, I will put up three shelters: one for You, one for Moses, and one for Elijah.”

**5** While Peter was still speaking, a bright cloud enveloped them, and a voice from the cloud said, “This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. Listen to Him!” **6** When the disciples heard this, they fell face down in terror.

**7** Then Jesus came over and touched them. “Get up,” He said. “Do not be afraid.” **8** And when they looked up, they saw no one except Jesus.

**PETER REFERENCES THIS MOMENT IN HIS SECOND EPISTLE WHEN HE SAYS,**

**16** 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. **17** For He received honor and glory from God the Father when the voice from the Majestic Glory came to Him, saying, “This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.” **18** And we ourselves heard this voice from heaven when we were with Him on the holy mountain. *2 Peter 1:16-18*

## II. THE MESSAGE OF THE ALMIGHTY FROM THE TOP OF THE MOUNTAIN

**A. The message is crystal clear: Jesus is greater than the “Law” and greater than the “prophets.” Why?**

1. Jesus was the One of whom the prophets spoke.
2. Jesus was the ONLY person that the Law did not condemn.

**B. The Law reveals our need for a savior while at the same time passing judgment on us.**

1. *Psalm 14:3* tells us,  
“There is none righteous not even one.”

*Romans 2:10-12* repeats the same truth.

There is ONE exception. Who is it? You guessed it, “Jesus.” He is the only exception.

2. *2 Corinthians 5:21* tells us, “God made Him (Jesus) who knew no sin to become sin on our behalf,

so that in Him we might become the righteousness of God.”

3. Recall the words the angel spoke to Joseph?

“She will give birth to a Son, and you are to give Him the name Jesus, because He will save His people from their sins.”

**Are you hanging in there with me? Good.  
One more verse and we’ll connect the dots.**

4. *Acts 4:12* says, “Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven [not Allah, not Buddha, not Mary, not St Paul or St Peter, not the Church, not anyone or anything] given to mankind by which we must be saved.

**C. That is why ONLY Jesus is left standing in ALL THE GLORY of God.**

1. He is the fulfillment of the Law.
2. He is the final Pascal lamb.
3. He is the only way to the Father—there is no other way.

### **III. LET’S MAKE THIS PRACTICAL**

**A. Where is it you’re telling God this is how He’s to do it ... whatever it is ... and it’s not in His will.** It’s yielding to the flesh and not the Spirit. Is it a ...

1. Relationship?

2. An area of service?
3. Giving God your time, talent and tithes?
4. Job?
5. Schooling?
6. Forgiveness?
7. Habit—that needs to be a part of your life, or is it a habit that needs to be gone from your life?
8. A situation where what God is asking of you just doesn't make sense?

**REMEMBER GOD'S WAYS ARE NOT OUR WAYS NOR HIS THOUGHTS OUR THOUGHTS.**

The other day—that's when what I'm about to tell you took place—I was to officiate a funeral service (the fourth for this family in 30 years). It was at a diner where fond memories were made.

When I got to the diner I was directed to the bar. Yes, you heard correctly! I'm thinking, "How am I going to officiate a service in the barroom?" There were people at the bar, at tables around the bar, and "us" – the people gathered for the funeral.

We were to start at 12 noon, it was already 12:50 and ... to be honest it wasn't looking good. Where do we find a place to gather people—the room is huge and there's really no place to "huddle" so to speak.

I was actually thinking about saying to the wife of the deceased, "I really don't think this is going to work, and I have to be at church to Feed God's Starving Children. How

about I read a Psalm and say a prayer?—I think that will work.”

Then I looked at the young bride, two members of GCCC, and determined to do what God called me to do—honor the deceased and bring glory to God.

To make a relatively long story short, in a strange sense, the bar became a pulpit. When the Invitation was given, 21 people raised their hands to receive Christ. (Give the LORD a round of applause.)

**B. Back to the original question: *Where is it you're telling God this is how He's to do it ... whatever it is ... and you're not so sure that's His plan?***

Are you willing to yield your will to His? If so, then right where you are, stand and give way. Say, “*Not my will but Yours be done.*”

### **III. INVITATION**

**Could it be that the first place you need to yield is by giving your life to Christ? Here's how:**

**Admit**— your sins have separated you from God. (*Psa 14:1-3; Rom 3: 23*); **Believe** – that God did something about your sins through Jesus Christ. (The final Pascal Lamb/Messiah.) (*Lev 17:10; Heb 9: 19-22*); **Commit** – yourself to His righteous by confessing Jesus as Lord and Savior. (*Isa 53:5; Col 1:22*); **Do it today!** (*Isa 49:8; 2 Cor 6:2*).

Father in Heaven, I'm sorry for the things I've done that are wrong: I am a sinner; forgive me. Thank You for loving me and sending your Son, Jesus, to pay the penalty for my sin. Holy Spirit, come into my heart; Jesus be my Lord and Savior. I give You my life. Amen!

**ser3794, Only Jesus (A Christmas Homily) 1838 words with Invitation**