2 Corinthians 4:1-10 (NIV)

1 Therefore, since through God’s mercy we have this ministry, we do not lose heart. 2 Rather, we have renounced secret and shameful ways; we do not use deception, nor do we distort the word of God. On the contrary, by setting forth the truth plainly we commend ourselves to every man’s conscience in the sight of God. 3 And even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing. 4 The god of this age has blinded the minds of unbelievers, so that they cannot see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God. 5 For we do not preach ourselves, but Jesus Christ as Lord, and ourselves as your servants for Jesus’ sake.

6 For God, who said, “Let light shine out of darkness,” made his light shine in our hearts to give us the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ. 7 But we have this treasure in jars of clay to show that this all-surpassing power is from God and not from us. 8 We are hard pressed on every side, but not crushed; perplexed, but not in despair; 9 persecuted, but not abandoned; struck down, but not destroyed. 10 We always carry around in our body the death of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus may also be revealed in our body.

INTRODUCTION: (Text as the Scripture reading)

– Today’s text reveals God’s plan for the ultimate epiphany. I used to think Christ’s Transfiguration was an epiphany [manifestation] of His divinity. I now believe it was an incarnational preview of the human transformation God wants to produce in us. HOM.idea.

– Jesus was an epiphany of the Father through His human life. By the Holy Spirit, God wants to produce an epiphany of Jesus in us.

– Jesus said, “I am the light of the world.” But He also said the same of us. That’s a tall order and discouraging, if we fail at it. But, v.1 says, “since through God’s mercy we have this ministry, we do not lose heart.” (ministry?)

– v.2 shows this ministry’s objective: “setting forth the truth plainly we commend ourselves to every man’s conscience in the sight of God.” Truth alone has power to transform, starting with the inner “conscience.” But there’s an obstacle—v.3-4, “if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing. The god of this age has blinded the minds of unbelievers, so that they cannot see the light of the gospel of Christ, who is the image of God.” These 4 verses introduce God’s strategy to meet this obstacle, which is His...

I. Goal by Transformation—Mat 5:14-16. “You are the light of the world...” “...let your light shine before men, that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven.”

A. In John 9:5 Jesus said, “As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world.” (So, when He left, does that mean it depends on us now to be the light? Yes and No, or rather, No and Yes:

1. No, because, in ourselves, it’s obvious: we can’t be the light, but
2. Yes, because Jesus, although He left physically, came back to us spiritually, and if He lives in us, He is still “the light of the world.”—v.5. For we do not preach ourselves, but Jesus Christ as Lord, and ourselves as your servants for Jesus’ sake.

B. The very way we received salvation is the same way we are to reach those lost in darkness—v.6. For God, who said, “Let light shine out of darkness,” made his light shine in our hearts to give us the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ.
Humans were created—“spirit, soul and body”—to be transparent to the glory of the One and Only, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.” Jesus didn’t finish with that manifestation, that epiphany of His Father’s glory, because He still reveals it in us. But that revelation requires our...