



Lectionary Bible Study Our Savior Lutheran, Vero Beach

Transfiguration of Our Lord – Feb 14, 2021

Readings:

2 Kings 2:1-12, Psalm 50:1-6
2 Corinthians 4:3-6, Mark 9:2-9

Live Bible Studies Hosted on Zoom

Wednesdays @ 10:00 AM

More Info & Link at

www.OurSaviorELCA.com/BibleStudy

Mark 9:2-9 (NRSV)

Six days later, Jesus took with him Peter and James and John, and led them up a high mountain apart, by themselves. And he was transfigured before them, and his clothes became dazzling white, such as no one on earth could bleach them. And there appeared to them Elijah and Moses, who were talking with Jesus. Then Peter said to Jesus, “Rabbi, it is good for us to be here; let us make three dwellings, one for you, one for Moses, and one for Elijah.” He did not know what to say, for they were terrified. Then a cloud overshadowed them, and from the cloud there came a voice, “This is my Son, the Beloved; listen to him!” Suddenly when they looked around, they saw no one with them anymore, but only Jesus. As they were coming down the mountain, he ordered them to tell no one about what they had seen, until after the Son of Man had risen from the dead.

Mountaintop experiences – if you’re lucky, you’ve had one or two. I’ve had a few transformational experiences on actual mountaintops. The first one was as an 8th grader at Camp Lutheridge in the NC mountains. We hiked a mountain – which was a big experience for this flatland Florida girl! I was overcome to watch the clouds float by – seemingly inches away, and to notice the ridge of the mountain as it peaked beneath my feet. Wow, God! The other mountaintop experience happened in Jerusalem’s Old City, and is discussed in this week’s video Bible Study (found at www.OurSaviorELCA.com/BibleStudy).

1. *Have you ever had a “mountaintop” experience? Was it on an actual mountain?*
2. *Why do you think Jesus took these disciples up a mountain for this particular moment in ministry? Why not by the Sea or in the desert?*
3. *What other Bible Stories take place on mountains?*

Jesus brings his closest friends up this mountain for a life-changing experience. Jesus was transfigured before them! We don't know exactly what happened here, except that his clothes were a dazzling white. If the word "transfigured" seems to trip you up – just know that it is the Greek word *metamorpho* (the same word as transformed and the root of our word metamorphosis). But the distinction of transfiguration is important – it is the outward form that is changed. Jesus' being is not altered.

4. *How do you envision this transfiguration?*

Jesus is joined by Moses and Elijah. I love that the disciples instinctively knew who it was – the leaders of the stories of their faith, on the mountain! Their character was revealed through scripture and through their very being.

5. *Have you ever known someone in this way?*

Perhaps Peter was drawn to the stories of his faith and extraordinary moments – like Moses with the burning bush (Ex 3) or the fire Elijah prayed for on an altar drenched with water (1 Kings 18). This event is simultaneously exciting and terrifying for the disciples. Peter realizes the extraordinary holiness of this moment and seeks to build 3 dwelling places for the 3 holy faith leaders.

6. *Why is our human inclination to protect? How does that serve us well? How does it not serve us well?*

7. *What is Jesus' response to Peter's Idea? Why?*

Mark's gospel gives to us a slow revealing of Jesus' identity. It begins with Jesus' baptism at the Jordan River, in which we see the heavens torn in two and a voice from heaven proclaim: "*You are my Son, the Beloved; with you I am well pleased.*" This heavenly identity is not heard by the crowd nor by John the Baptizer – it is directed to Jesus himself. In today's lesson we see Jesus' identity transfigured on a mountain, and this time we hear the words "*This is my Son, the Beloved, listen to him!*" This time the words are heard by the disciples gathered.

8. *What is different in these two proclamations? What is the same?*

This transfiguration moment is important for Peter, James, and John. The natural question to ask is "what does this mean for us?" Notice that this passage ends with the words "risen from the dead." Jesus has embraced an identity that includes his own death. Jesus' transfiguration with Moses and Elijah is important for us to identify as Christ's Church in the world. Just as Moses and Elijah (and Jesus!) brought good news into the world, so too should we. In light of the transfiguration, we are called to follow Jesus to the cross and to die to live!

9. *As we come down the mountain to do this work, who do you notice accompanying the disciples? How are we accompanied?*