

“Be Transfigured”

03-02-14

It was there all along. On the mountaintop, Peter, James and John saw the Truth. Shining through the seams of Jesus’ humanity, and bursting into view was a glory that couldn’t be contained. It was the divine Light. Jesus was man, and He was God. Being on the Mountain that day must have been a truly exciting time!

Open to Matthew 17. What we have in this Mountaintop experience is a true eyewitness account of what happened. Look at verses 1-3, *“And after six days Jesus took with him Peter and James, and John his brother, and led them up a high mountain by themselves. And he was transfigured before them, and his face shone like the sun, and his clothes became white as light. And behold, there appeared to them Moses and Elijah, talking with him.”*

The disciples had not really understood some of Jesus’ teachings the week before, primarily about His upcoming death. In Matthew 16:22, it’s Peter who says, *“Far be it from you, Lord! This shall never happen to you.”* This was a confusing and troubling lesson Jesus was trying to teach them, but they just weren’t getting it. So Jesus took Peter, James, and John up to the top of Mt. Hermon.

Now they see His divine nature revealed as the Son of God in all His glory. And as they talk about what happened, they also add to their own credibility. The disciples are saying to us: *“This happened to me, I was there, I saw it and I heard it! When they looked at Jesus, He was different.*

These disciples got to see Jesus in all His power and glory. Look at what Peter proclaimed on why they said what they did as they spoke about Jesus in verses 16-18, *“For we did not follow cleverly devised myths when we made known to you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but we were eyewitnesses of his majesty. For when he received honor and glory from God the Father, and the voice was borne to him by the Majestic Glory, *“This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased,”* we ourselves heard this very voice borne from heaven, for we were with him on the holy mountain.”*

Because of what he witnessed, John would say in John 1:14, *“And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth.”*

Wouldn’t it be marvelous to get to stay on the Mountain after seeing Jesus in all His glory and hearing the voice of God? To be away from all the things that pull us away and cause us heartache and pain? It does sound wonderful, but is that what God wants us to do?

Do you see Jesus today? Are you listening to Him? Are you hearing what He’s telling you? Has Jesus changed your life? If so, then you’ve been changed from the inside out. Just as the light was radiating from within Jesus, His light radiates from within us as His children. Now it’s up to us to show this light to others! We need to witness and tell others what Jesus has done in our life, every opportunity we get!

One of Jesus’ final words to His disciples before He ascended was about this mission in Acts 1:8, *“But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.”*

We can’t be an effective witness if we stay on the Mountain. We have to come down off the mountain, and often times, head down even lower into the valley, to share our faith in Jesus. Sometimes, witnessing can be uncomfortable. Maybe it’s being uncomfortable that causes us to not step out of our comfort zones and be willing to speak and act as one who has the light of Jesus in us.

Listen to what Nelson Mandela said about this, *“Our deepest fear is not that we are inadequate. Our deepest fear is that we are powerful beyond measure. It is our light, not our darkness, that most frightens us. We ask ourselves, “Who am I to be brilliant, gorgeous, talented and fabulous?” Actually, who are you not to be? You are a child of God. Your playing small doesn’t serve the world. There’s nothing enlightened about shrinking so that other people won’t feel insecure around you. We were born to manifest the glory of God that is within us, and as we let our own light shine, we unconsciously give other people permission to do the same. As we are liberated from our own fear, our presence automatically liberates others.”*

This Wednesday, we begin the Lenten season, where we’ll focus on Jesus as He suffers and dies for us. Thinking of being uncomfortable, I wonder how uncomfortable it was to have spikes driven through His hands and feet and hung on a cross? If Jesus loved us enough to do that, we need to love Him enough to step a little outside what’s comfortable for us and tell others how much Jesus loves us, and how much He loves them. We need to witness to others what is within us already. People need to see Jesus in us!

There’s one more reason the Transfiguration is relevant to us today, and it’s found in Matthew 17:6-7, *“When the disciples heard this, they fell on their faces and were terrified. But Jesus came and touched them, saying, “Rise, and have no fear.”* Even after such a remarkable transfiguration and conversation with Moses and Elijah, Jesus was still approachable, He cared. Because of faith in Him, we can “Approach the King!”

But how can we do that? We can approach our King, Jesus Christ, in prayer, bringing our sins and concerns to Him. In His Word, as we read and study to learn of Him. And in His body and blood, as we approach His table and celebrate what He’s done for us. As we approach Him He offers mercy, grace, and help.

Every time we’re here in worship, we’re spending time with Jesus experiencing His Light shining, although the world we’ve come from, and the world we’ll return to, is a dark place. The more time we spend in the Light, the more the Real Jesus is revealed to us, and every time we walk out the doors of this church, the world should look just a bit different, and so should we!

The words of a familiar song call out to us with this truth. Live in this truth, and be transfigured more and more into the likeness of Jesus every moment of every day: *“Turn your eyes upon Jesus, look full in His wonderful face, and the things of earth will grow strangely dim in the light of His glory and grace.”* **Be His Light to the world!**