

## **The Light and Silence of the Transfiguration**

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Luke 9:28-36, (37-43a)

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OUR WINTER HAS BEEN SO WARM THIS YEAR THAT I DON'T KNOW ABOUT YOU BUT I WAS SURPRISED BY THE SNOW STORM THAT CAME THROUGH A FEW WEEKS AGO. WE ALL HURRIED HOME TO BE SAFE IN OUR WARM HOUSES AND NOT ON THE ROAD. WHEN WE GOT UP THE NEXT MORNING WE COULD SEE THE FIRST FAINT GLOW OF DAWN SPREADING OVER THE SNOW-COVERED YARD AND DRIVEWAY, BUT WE REALLY DIDN'T NOTICE THE BEAUTY OF IT, FOR IT WAS THE BEGINNING OF ANOTHER DAY WITH TOO MUCH TO DO AND TOO LITTLE TIME TO DO IT IN. WE FEEL OUR CHEST TIGHTEN AS WE THINK ABOUT IT.

WE GULP DOWN SOME COFFEE BUT DON'T TASTE IT. WE GRAB OUR CELL PHONE OR GET THE NEWSPAPER OFF THE PORCH AND LOOK AT THE FRONT PAGE, WITH HEADLINES ABOUT POLITICAL TALKS OVER BUDGETS AND A MURDER IN A TOWN NOT TOO FAR AWAY, THERE'S NEW FIGHTING GOING ON OVERSEAS AND ALL THE DETAILS ARE INSIDE BUT WE ARE NOT READY TO TAKE ALL THAT ON THIS MORNING, SO WE GO IN, GET DRESSED TO START OUR DAY.

WE FINALLY WALK OUT THE FRONT DOOR TO LEAVE, THE COLD MORNING AIR HITS US IN THE FACE AND THEN WE SEE IT THE SUN HITTING THE SNOW ON THE GRASS JUST RIGHT AND IT'S BEAUTIFUL, IT'S OUR OWN PRIVATE MOMENT, WE SMILE TO OURSELVES AND THINK HOW BEAUTIFUL GOD'S CREATION IS.

OUR MORNING EPIPHANY ONLY LASTS FOR A MOMENT OR TWO. BUT FOR A BLESSED MOMENT OR TWO THE WORLD IS TRANSFORMED, TRANSFIGURED BY SOMETHING SO MUCH LARGER THAN WE CAN EXPLAIN.

I THINK SOMETHING LIKE THAT HAPPENED ON THE MOUNTAIN WITH JESUS AND THE THREE DISCIPLES. THEY HAD A MYSTICAL EXPERIENCE OF GOD'S PRESENCE. FOR A BLESSED

MOMENT OR TWO ON THE MOUNTAIN, GOD RIVETED THEIR ATTENTION WITH SHEER HOLINESS.<sup>1</sup>

WHEN JESUS TOOK THIS TIME WITH HIS THREE DISCIPLES, AWAY FROM THE BUSYNESS OF LIFE, HE WAS GETTING AWAY FROM THE CROWDS TO BE PRESENT WITH GOD. WE ALL NEED TO TAKE THAT TIME AWAY. WHEN WAS THE LAST TIME YOU TOOK TIME TO HEAR GOD WHISPER IN YOUR DAILY WORLD?

THAT IS PART OF WHAT THE TRANSFIGURATION SIGNIFIES IN LUKE. JESUS LED A BUSY LIFE, JUST LIKE THE BUSY LIVES OF PEOPLE EVERYWHERE, INCLUDING THE GOSPEL-WRITER'S COMMUNITY, AND OUR OWN. ALWAYS TALKING, ALWAYS WORKING, ALWAYS ON THE MOVE. BUSY, BUSY, BUSY. THAT IS WHAT LIFE WAS LIKE FOR PEOPLE IN LUKE'S GOSPEL AND OUR OWN. BECAUSE WE ARE HUMAN BECAUSE WE ARE MADE IN THE IMAGE OF CHRIST, WE NEED TO TAKE A BREAK SOMETIMES FROM THE WORLDLINESS OF OUR PURSUITS, AND LISTEN FOR HIS VOICE.<sup>1</sup>

IN OUR READING TODAY GOD TELLS THE DISCIPLES THAT JESUS IS HIS SON, HIS CHOSEN; AND THEY ARE TO LISTEN TO HIM.

C.S. LEWIS WRITES A FINAL WORD FROM ASLAN IN THE SILVER CHAIR: "HERE ON THE MOUNTAIN I HAVE SPOKEN TO YOU CLEARLY. I WILL NOT OFTEN DO SO DOWN IN NARINA. HERE ON THE MOUNTAIN, THE AIR IS CLEAR AND YOUR MIND IS CLEAR; AS YOU DROP DOWN INTO NARINA, THE AIR WILL THICKEN. TAKE GREAT CARE THAT IT DOES NOT CONFUSE YOUR MIND. AND THE SIGNS WHICH YOU HAVE LEARNED HERE WILL NOT LOOK AT ALL AS YOU EXPECT THEM TO LOOK, WHEN YOU MEET THEM THERE. THAT IS WHY IT IS SO IMPORTANT TO KNOW THEM BY HEART AND PAY NO ATTENTION TO APPEARANCE. REMEMBER THE SIGNS AND BELIEVE THE SIGNS. NOTHING ELSE MATTERS."<sup>2</sup>

THINK ABOUT HOW FAR AWAY CHRIST SEEMS TO MOST OF US DURING OUR DAY, WE GO ABOUT OUR BUSY LIVES, FROM ONE DAY TO THE NEXT, WITHOUT EVEN ONE PASSING THOUGHT OF HIM. WE TRAVEL ABOUT THIS WORLD ALMOST IN A DREAM, JUST SO WE CAN GET UP THE NEXT MORNING AND DO IT ALL OVER AGAIN. SAD TO SAY WE HAVE BECOME LIKE MACHINES, WE FUNCTION UNTIL FINALLY WE STARTING RUNNING DOWN, WE FEEL LIKE WE DON'T HAVE THE STRENGTH TO GO ON AND WE STILL WILL NOT TURN TO CHRIST. WE TURN TO A SLEEP AID, A DRUG, AND AN EXERCISE PROGRAM, TO SOMETHING WE SEE ON TV. WHY DON'T WE TURN TO JESUS, WHY IS HE SOMEONE WE THINK WE DON'T NEED? WHY CAN'T WE JUST SLOW DOWN AND LISTEN, LISTEN TO THE QUIET, LISTEN TO THE SMALL STILL VOICE INSIDE WHEN CHRIST IS TRYING TO GET OUR ATTENTION AND ALL WE HEAR IS THE LOUD WORLD AROUND US. IT SEEMS THAT WE WOULD DIE FIRST BEFORE WE WOULD GIVE UP OUR CELL PHONE FOR AN HOUR AND SPEND IT WITH GOD.

I DON'T KNOW ABOUT YOU BUT WHEN I JUST THINK ABOUT TODAY I GET OVERWHELMED, I DON'T KNOW WHERE THE TIME WILL COME FROM FOR KEVIN AND ME. BEING HERE THIS MORNING AND PREACHING FOR TWO SERVICES, AND IN BETWEEN KEVIN IS DOING A LESSON IN ADULT FORUM AND THEN AFTER THE SECOND SERVICE WE WILL BE GOING OVER TO KINGS GRANT ASSISTED LIVING FOR ANOTHER CHURCH SERVICE AND ANOTHER HOMILY WHICH WILL BE OVER AROUND 2 AND THEN WE WILL HEAD HOME AND GET READY TO GO TO A SUPER BOWL PARTY, WHO HAS TIME TO JUST BE STILL AND BE QUIET WITH GOD?

THINK ABOUT YOUR DAY, IT IS SUPER BOWL SUNDAY AND I KNOW MOST OF US WILL BE IN THE FRONT OF THE TV FOR HOURS WATCHING THE GAME, THE HALF TIME AND ESPECIALLY THE COMMERCIALS, OH THE COMMERCIALS, WHO HAS THE TIME FOR GOD?

IF WE REALLY THINK ABOUT IT, THINK HOW EXCITED WE ARE OVER A FOOTBALL GAME AND TV COMMERCIALS, WHEN WAS THE LAST TIME WE FELT LIKE THAT ABOUT GOD OR TOOK THE HOURS WE ARE SPENDING IN FRONT OF THE TV TONIGHT WITH GOD?

I KNOW, I KNOW IT IS ONLY ONCE A YEAR BUT HOW MANY DAYS AND NIGHTS DID WE SPEND IN FRONT OF THE TV AFRAID WE WERE GOING TO MISS ONE PLAY?

YES WE ARE TO HAVE FUN AND ENJOY LIFE BUT THINK ABOUT THE LIFE WE CAN ENJOY WHEN WE SPEND TIME WITH CHRIST LISTENING AND TALKING TO HIM INSTEAD OF THE COACHES AND PLAYERS?

GOD TELLS US TO LISTEN TO HIS SON, HIS CHOSEN ONE BUT WHO HAS THE TIME, SURELY NOT US, WE BELIEVE IN GOD, WE KNOW HE'S THERE WE DON'T NEED TO SPEND TIME WITH HIM EVERYDAY. HE KNOWS WE LOVE HIM AND HE LOVES US; WE ARE HIS CHILDREN SO WE JUST GO ABOUT OUR BUSINESS BUT GOING ABOUT OUR BUSINESS WITHOUT INCLUDING TIME FOR CHRIST ISN'T WHAT HE WANTS.

HE WANTS TO BE A PART OF OUR LIVES EVERYDAY NOT WHEN WE FINALLY COLAPSE ON THE SOFA BECAUSE WE HAVE EXHAUSETED EVERYTHING AND EVERYONE AROUND US. HE WANTS US TO GO TO THE MOUNTAINTOP WITH HIM, TO HAVE THAT EXPERIENCE OF JUST BEING WITH HIM. HE WANTS US TO JUST RELAX AND LISTEN WHILE HE SPENDS TIME WITH US.

THE VERY REV. MIKE KINMAN WAS OUR KEYNOTE SPEAKER AT COUNCIL THIS WEEKEND. HE SAID WE LIKE TO LIVE IN OUR COMFORT ZONE TO KEEP GOD IN THE COMFORT ZONE WITH US AND NOT BE CHALLENGED OUTSIDE THE BOX.

DO WE KEEP OURSELVES AND GOD IN THIS BOX OF ST AIDAN'S, WELL I WOULD LIKE TO CHALLENGE US TO GO OUTSIDE AND TAKE GOD WITH US, TO LIVE OUTSIDE OUR COMFORT ZONE.

I KNOW IT MAY SEEM LIKE A HARD THING TO ASK, YOUR DAYS ARE ALREADY FULL BUT I ASK YOU TO CHALLENGE YOURSELF TO START WITH A FEW MINUTES A DAY AND SLOWLY

INCREASE YOUR QUIET TIME WITH CHRIST. MAYBE INSTEAD OF STARING AT THE TV FOR FOUR HOURS BEFORE YOU GO TO BED YOU ONLY WATCH 3 HOURS. IT REALLY CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE. I DIDN'T REALIZE BEFORE WHAT IT MEANT TO TAKE THE TIME WITH CHRIST AND JUST LISTEN TO HIM; YOU DON'T NEED TO SAY A WORD JUST LISTEN. IT IS A WONDERFUL FEELING WHEN YOU KNOW GOD IS REALLY LIVING AND BREATHING INSIDE OF YOU. REMEMBER WHEN ADAM AND EVE WALKED IN THE COOL OF THE EVENING WITH GOD NOW WE CAN BE THE ONE'S THAT GOD IS WALKING WITH IN THE COOL OF THE EVENING.

SO AS I ALWAYS SEND YOU FORTH AT THE END OF THE SERVICE, I SEND YOU FORTH NOW TO TAKE SOME TIME WITH JESUS THIS WEEK, MAYBE NOT TO WALK IN THE COOL OF THE EVENING BUT INSIDE IN THE WARMTH OF YOUR HOME AND FIND OUT WHAT A DIFFEREC E IT CAN MAKE IN YOUR DAY WHEN YOU SPEND TIME IN THE PRESENCE OF GOD.

AMEN

1 [://www.fcceugene.org/documents/Sermons2010-2011/Sermon%2003-06-11.pdf](http://www.fcceugene.org/documents/Sermons2010-2011/Sermon%2003-06-11.pdf)  
2 MARYETTA MADELEINE ANSCHUTZ FEASTING ON THE WORD: PREACHING THE REVISED COMMON LECTIONARY – FREASTING ON THE WORD – YEAR A, VOLUME 1: ADVENT THROUGH TRANSFIGURATION