

Just Divine!

King of Glory Lutheran Church

Pastor Ruth Ann Loughry

Transfiguration: Year B: Mark 9:2-9

<sup>2</sup>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, <sup>3</sup>and his clothes became dazzling white, such as no one on earth could bleach them. <sup>4</sup>And there appeared to them Elijah with Moses, who were talking with Jesus. <sup>5</sup>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." <sup>6</sup>He did not know what to say, for they were terrified. <sup>7</sup>Then a cloud overshadowed them, and from the cloud there came a voice, "This is my Son, the Beloved; listen to him!" <sup>8</sup>Suddenly when they looked around, they saw no one with them anymore, but only Jesus. <sup>9</sup>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.

*We don't have to understand transfiguration. To pick it apart misses the beauty of God's presence. We do get to receive the gift of the fullness of Jesus. Come and sit in the glow of His presence!*

Do you remember the first time you ever looked into a microscope? Surely junior high science teachers must love seeing the looks on their students' faces. Suddenly a regular ordinary leaf becomes a highway of veins that look kind of like a neighborhood map. Cells appear and tiny bumps and ridges that can't be seen with the naked eye. The green is absolutely intense! Oh holy goodness!

After seeing the leaf for that very first time, then comes the lessons on cell structure: the stoma, upper and lower epidermis, the vein and the air space. Photosynthesis, decay and all the rest. (No, I don't remember all of that science. I looked it up on Google and so can you!)

When the unit is over on all the parts of an ordinary leaf, do the students have the same awe they did when they first experienced it under the microscope? Maybe, maybe not. But the ordinary has become visible.

This story of Jesus, Elijah and Moses up on the mountain is not to be understood. Just experienced! The ordinary has become visible.

Think about it. When you've come close to having a 'God moment', you are certain, fairly, that God was there, perhaps. You thought the hair stood up on the back of your neck. It surely felt like an epiphany – a revealing of the divine! Maybe. Or was it just in your head?

But then...then there are some epiphanies, revelations of God that are absolutely knocking it out of the ballpark kind of moments! Nobody misses them. Everybody sees them. Even the dogs begin to howl.

Moses crossing the Red Sea with all the men, women and children and the waters closing behind them to drown Pharaoh's army. Whew! God moment!

Remember Pentecost? The wind begins blowing and there are tongues of fire and people speaking in tongues! Everyone sees the divine!

----

Come close today. Here I'll scoot over. Come; take a seat behind Peter, James and John. You'll likely have to put your sunglasses on. Can't see Jesus real clearly, can you? He's turned into this glow of radiance, it almost feels warmer. We see Him, yet we don't because of all the...all the....you know...all those bright, whatever they are! But it really is Him. The ordinary Jesus turned fantastic. Divine!

This epiphany, this revealing of God isn't subtle. There's no doubt. Jesus' body is transfigured. His clothes shining, dazzling really. It's like He wants us to see Him; to not miss him. We're forced to see deeper into His existence, but His character hasn't changed at all!

It reminds me of an oboe who has a solo in an orchestra. She plays the notes on the page and suddenly they aren't notes on the page anymore. They ache with meaning and moaning as her one oboe voice is exposed for the whole audience to hear. Except this is more like a trumpet and a timpani drum don't you think? Oh holy goodness! I can hardly believe we're seeing it together.

-----

God did it for them, the disciples, you know. Peter, James and John needed to see Jesus like this and we do too. Jesus is a continuation and extension of the ministry of the oldest and most famous prophets in the Bible: Moses and Elijah. God is showing Peter, James and John that this ordinary guy they've been hanging around is truly the Messiah.

-----

Don't you think, it's like Jesus insists on being seen? Surely he didn't bring us up here to have a picnic. It feels more to me like Jesus is saying, 'Look deeper. There's more here than what meets the eye. I'm more than what meets the eye. Ministry is happening. The divine has arrived. Do you understand? Don't you see?'

What do you think? Oh that's right, I asked you not to think. I'll be quiet. Just come close. Soak in the warmth. Holy goodness. If you don't look directly at Him for too long it's easier...We're going to remember this forever.....Jesus is simply....divine!

Amen.