



14B - TRANSFIGURATION - ONLINE LITURGY

Wow

Abstract

Suddenly, when they looked around, they no longer saw anyone with them except Jesus.
Mark 9:8 (NIV)

Jim de Jong
jim@dejongs.id.au

Gospel

Mark 9:2–9

² After six days Jesus took Peter, James and John with him and led them up a high mountain, where they were all alone. There he was transfigured before them. ³ His clothes became dazzling white, whiter than anyone in the world could bleach them. ⁴ And there appeared before them Elijah and Moses, who were talking with Jesus.

⁵ Peter said to Jesus, “Rabbi, it is good for us to be here. Let us put up three shelters—one for you, one for Moses and one for Elijah.” ⁶ (He did not know what to say, they were so frightened.)

⁷ Then a cloud appeared and covered them, and a voice came from the cloud: “This is my Son, whom I love. Listen to him!”

⁸ Suddenly, when they looked around, they no longer saw anyone with them except Jesus.

⁹ As they were coming down the mountain, Jesus gave them orders not to tell anyone what they had seen until the Son of Man had risen from the dead. ¹

respond

For the word of the Lord

Thanks be to God

¹ [Revised Common Lectionary](#). (2009). Bellingham, WA: Faithlife.

14B - Transfiguration - Online Liturgy

Wow

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 14, 2021 | EPIPHANY | TRANSFIGURATION SUNDAY | Last Sunday After the Epiphany | YEAR B

Old Testament 2 Kings 2:1–12
 Psalm Psalm 50:1–6
 New Testament 2 Corinthians 4:3–6
 Gospel Mark 9:2–9ⁱ

Mark 9:2–9

Jesus invites his three closest disciples to go up a mountain with him. The disciples are dazzled by Jesus' altered appearance. In contrast to the voice that spoke to Jesus at his baptism, this time a voice speaks directly to the disciples and tells them to 'listen to him', before they then head back down the mountain.

This mountain-top experience provides a glimpse of the glory of God, but it is a passing experience. Have you had an unexpected or intense awareness of the glory of God? Was it difficult to leave the experience behind, wanting to hold onto it even as everyday life continued? How can we tune into God's 'wow' moments in our lives?

This week we explore unexpected life-changing moments.

	Pre-Service
	Introit TIS 718/P&W 679/HS Glory Bullock
	Greeting May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ The Love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with us all
	We Gather We are the people of God, raise our expectations of what it means to encounter God in this place. Let us be open to God revealing something of his divine nature to us, and changing the way we see the world.

	<p><i>Let us pray</i> Almighty God, we ask you to show us something more of who you are and how awesome your presence is. Overcome our fear of the unknown, and lead us into a new experience of you. May our worship today be as on a mountain-top, a transforming encounter that empowers our discipleship. Amen.</p>
	<p>Hymn/song</p>
	<p>Welcome</p> <p><i>Let us pray</i> The Lord, the mighty one, summons his faithful people to approach. Come, let us tune into his radiance, allowing his light of glory to shine upon and within us, as we offer our worship and praise. Amen.</p>
	<p>Readings Mark 9:2–9</p> <p><i>respond</i> For the word of the Lord Thanks be to God</p>
	<p>Hymn/song/video</p> <p>TIS 643 I want to walk as a child of the light Thomerson</p>
	<p>We say Sorry</p> <p>Lord, whereas it's part of our faith walk to seek and be open to life-changing moments, forgive us when we just plod through life and get despondent with the mundane. We are sorry, Lord. Shine on us, we pray.</p> <p>On the other hand, we can at times get fixated on the spiritual mountain-tops and so miss out on what's happening below in the everyday. When things are going well for us,</p>

	<p>we can get wrapped up in the moment and be forgetful of others. We're sorry, Lord. Shine on us, we pray.</p> <p>There are many voices tuned into today's world telling us how to live and what's best. But you, Lord, are our authority in life. Forgive us when we fail to test things against your word. We're sorry, Lord. Shine on us, we pray. Amen.</p>
	<p>Words of Assurance Jesus' divine nature was confirmed on the mountain – he is God's beloved Son. He went on to suffer; he died and rose again for us, conquering sin and death. Now he sits at God's right hand, glorified in heaven – and thanks to him, we are completely forgiven. Thanks be to God Amen.</p>
	<p>Hymn/Song TIS 675/AOV[2] 59/CH 448 Shine Jesus Shine Kendrick</p>

Response

Swimming with the sharks

Mark 9:2-13

There is a fascinating fact about sharks, those fierce monsters of the deep:
sharks only grow as large as their surroundings permit.

The shark, strangely enough, is one of the most popular fish for aquariums.
The reason for this is that sharks adapt to their environment.

If you catch a small shark and confine it,
it will stay a size proportionate to the aquarium in which it lives. ⁱⁱ

The same phenomenon is apparent with regard to some Christians.

If we are challenged to live heroic lives for Christ,
we have that capability.

If we are left unchallenged, however,
most of us stay where we are
with an immature understanding of faith
and a nominal commitment to Christ.

Our lesson for the day contains a challenging experience for Jesus' disciples.

Jesus is at the top of a mountain with his three most trusted disciples,
Peter, James and John.

As usual Mark doesn't give us many details.

ALL WE KNOW IS THAT SUDDENLY THE DISCIPLES SAW JESUS TRANSFIGURED.

What does that mean "transfigured"?

All we can say is that somehow the disciples saw Jesus transformed
into the glorified Christ who will one day reign over all of life.
Right before the disciples' eyes, Jesus was elevated to a new level.
The disciples saw Jesus as if he had come down from Heaven.

Mark tells us that Christ's clothes became a dazzling white " whiter, says Mark.
Then, says Mark,
the disciples saw Moses and Elijah talking with Jesus.
Moses, of course, gave the children of Israel the Law.
Elijah, on the other hand, was the greatest of the prophets.
So, here were the highest representatives of the Law and the Prophets,
and the transfigured Jesus was in their company.
And the disciples heard a voice:
"This is my Son, the Beloved; listen to him!"
And the disciples were terrified.

THE DISCIPLES WERE TERRIFIED.

That's a pretty apt response to a most unusual situation.
We would probably have been terrified, too.
We hear about people experiencing strange phenomena " extraterrestrial visitations, out-of-body experiences, etc. " but for the most part these sorts of things haven't happened to us.
And we are a little suspicious when they happen to other people.

So we could be suspicious of Peter, James and John's report " except for the way in which it affected their lives.
This experience, as well as many other experiences they had with Jesus, transformed them radically.
You and I, 2,000 years later can make light of their experience, but it was so very real to them that they gave their lives for Christ, literally!

Christ was transfigured " and the disciples were terrified.
Why were they terrified?
Because they were dealing with something outside their experience.
Here was Christ in all his glory.
Here was someone whose life shone with a beauty and an integrity they did not have.
Here was one whose dazzling white robe indicated his holiness, his purity, his uniqueness " and they were but ordinary mortals.
And they were afraid.

Being in Christ's presence made them aware of their inadequacy, their imperfection.
They were sinners in the presence of one who was sinless.
No wonder they were terrified.

A crewmember a gunboat in Vietnam,
was holding a phosphorus grenade some six inches from his face
when a sniper's bullet ignited the explosive.
In his book, he describes the first time he saw his face after the explosion:
"When I looked in that mirror, I saw a monster, not a human being.

Afterwards he watched the wife of another burn victim tell her husband that she wanted a divorce.

Then Brenda walked in.

"Showing not the slightest tremor of horror or shock," he writes,
"she bent down and kissed me on what was left of my face.

Then she looked me in my good eye, smiled, and said,

Welcome home, Davey! I love you.'

She had said,

You are my husband. You will always be my husband. You are still my man."ⁱⁱⁱ

That is grace.

To understand the grace of God poured out in Jesus Christ,

we must first understand our inadequacy, our imperfection, our ugliness.

But the transfigured Christ in all his loveliness, in all his holiness, in all his glory still loves us.

There was no need for the disciples to be terrified,

but they didn't know that.

All they could see was Christ's holiness and their own unworthiness.

And they were terrified.

THEN THEY WERE TRANSFORMED.

That is the second thing we need to see.

Transformed but not at once.

Transformation rarely happens all at once.

Don't let anyone mislead you.

Few people are genuinely converted completely all in one night.

The experience on the Mount of Transfiguration

was but one stop on the disciples' pilgrimage to becoming apostles of Jesus Christ.

They would share many other important experiences with Christ.

All the time, though,

something real and important was happening inside them.

They were becoming more like the Master.

They were becoming more committed to him and to one another.

Their faith " which was not even as large as a mustard seed " was growing.

They would stumble and lose hold of it from time to time,

but they would always come back to it

and it would blossom into a mighty faith

that would shake the Roman empire.

These men would move from being terrified to being terrific.

Their faith would grow from being easily intimidated

to being almost invincible.

They were in the process of being transformed by the presence of the transfigured Christ.

And the same thing can happen to us.

Like the disciples we can also be terrified in Christ's presence

because we are imperfect,

but when we discover that in his presence

we have value and we are not without hope.

Because Christ loves us, change is possible.

This is the heart of today's lesson:

The proper response to the transfigured Christ is transformation.
 To see the transfigured Christ is to be aware not only of our inadequacies
 but also our possibilities.
 As he is, so shall we one day be.

When we have been transformed by the transfigured Christ
 we catch a vision of what the world could be
 if we all lived under his Lordship.

No longer would Peter, James and John be content
 to live in a tiny fishbowl.

Christ had called them to bigger and better things.

Now it was time for them to reach their full potential as his followers.

And friends,

it is time for us to escape the fishbowl as well.

Suppose you and I had been there with Peter, James and John on the mountaintop
 when Jesus was transfigured.

What would have happened to us?

Wouldn't we have been terrified?

Wouldn't we have been transformed?

Wouldn't we have been turned loose to transform the world for whom Christ died?

Well, the transfigured Christ IS here.

And he is saying to you,
 do not be terrified but be transformed.

Reach your full potential in Christ this day.

Amen

	Hymn/song TIS 746 The heavens shall declare - Bullock
	Offering
	Notices
	Prayers for all people
	Lord's Prayer
	Hymn/song ATO 313/AOV[2] 3 Christ be our light Farrell
	We are sent out Lord Jesus, raise our expectations of what it means to encounter God not just in this place but in every place, in all the places we shall be in the days ahead. Help us every day to discover something new

	<p>about God's ways, about what God wants of us – and change the way we see the world, and the way we act. Amen.</p> <p>May the Lord bless us and keep us May His face shine upon us and be gracious to us May he lift up His countenance upon us and give us peace</p>
	<p>Benediction Morning Star - Lyric Video - Graham Kendrick</p>
	<p>Thank you</p>

ⁱ Revised Common Lectionary. (2009). Bellingham, WA: Faithlife.

ⁱⁱ John C. Maxwell, DEVELOPING THE LEADERS AROUND YOU (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, Inc.).

ⁱⁱⁱ Dennis and Barbara Rainey, MOMENTS TOGETHER FOR COUPLES (Ventura, California: Regal Books, 1995).