

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

Sermon February 14th, 2021

Christ Gives Us a Foretaste of What's to Come

Peter, James, and John are getting ready for another day of following Jesus. What will Jesus do today they wonder? Will he feed another five thousand people? Will he calm a storm (**Image**)? Will he heal a Leper? Will he preach another powerful sermon? Will he perform an exorcism? What outcast will he welcome into our group today? Another tax collector? A beggar? A Samaritan or Canaanite Woman? A Gentile? A sinner? What will Jesus do today they wonder?

As their anticipation grows Jesus comes to Peter, James, and John, and invites them to join him for a walk.

Now Peter, James, and John have witnessed a lot of things they never thought possible. But as we hear over and over again. They still are wrestling with who Jesus is and why he is able to do these things.

Yes. Peter did call him the Christ a few days ago. But, then didn't understand what this meant. He even rebuked Jesus when Jesus started foretelling everything that he would have to endure.

Well, Peter, James, and John are in for a big surprise. Though by now one would think nothing could surprise them.

Jesus starts walking up this steep mountain (**Image**). Nothing like the Rockies, but still, steep enough to get your calves burning. Peter, James, and John follow. With every step they breathe a little harder, as they try to keep pace.

When they finally get to the mountain top, they take a moment to catch their breath. Trying to find a position that will give them relief from the burning sensation in their calves. Suddenly, they see Jesus' appearance change. They see Jesus transfigure into something angelic. A reflection of God's heavenly glory.

If they didn't understand how closely connected Jesus was to God they do now. Jesus isn't like anyone else whoever tried to lead them. Jesus literally reflects God's heavenly glow.

Then they see Jesus hanging out with Elijah and Moses. Now Peter is so perplexed that he offers to build them shelters. What else could he say? Peter must be the extrovert in the group. Needs to say something to break the awkward silence.

Then if things didn't already seem out of this world, God speaks to the disciples through a cloud. Affirming Jesus' authority.

As Peter, James, and John come back down the mountain, they are trying to make sense of what just happened. Did they really witness all of that or will they wake up any moment now? Did God just speak to them? Was that really Moses and Elijah? Why couldn't Peter think of something more profound to say to them? As they wrestle to find answers to these questions, one thing they do agree on is that the experience they had on that mountain top was a foretaste of God's kingdom come. A glimpse of heavenly glory.

Coming to this new revelation about Jesus, they start to think back to all the things Jesus said and did with a fresh perspective. All along they have been witnessing glimpses of God's heavenly glory. They have been getting a foretaste of God's kingdom come in their world. Every time Jesus speaks and acts, God's kingdom is breaking into their world.

Through Jesus' transfiguration, their eyes are open to God's glory happening all around them. Even in the midst of living in an Empire that has persecuted them. That has made life hard for them. That has left them standing in moments of darkness.

As Paul says to the church in Corinth as they face persecution. God's light shines in the darkness through Christ (**Image**).

As we walk with Peter, James, and John up the mountain. As we stand on the mountain top catching our breath. Finding relief for that burning sensation in our calves. We too, witness the transfiguration of Jesus, the changing of Jesus' appearance, as we listen to the words of this narrative.

We too are reconnected to the moments in our lives where we see God's heavenly glory. Where we see God's kingdom come. Even when we live through suffering. Even when we live through the dark moments in our lives. Whether it is the challenges that the pandemic brings to our lives, or the emotional downfalls we experience when dealing with mental unwellness. Whether it is the sting of grief that comes with loss or the diagnosis of a debilitating condition (**Image**). Whether it is the breakdown of a relationship or the loss of a job. As Paul says, even in these dark moments in our lives God's light shines. God's light points us to where God is at work in our lives. Where we encounter glimpses of God's heavenly glory. God's kingdom come.

For example, we experience God's kingdom come when witnessing the generosity of others who are trying to help people through this pandemic. Or you experience God's kingdom come through the love of a friend who walks with you day after day as you deal with your debilitating condition (**Image**). Listening to your lament. Holding your hand when you need comfort. Motivating you when you feel weak. Or you experience God's heavenly glory through the peace you feel after a prayer. Or you experience God's heavenly glory when a narrative in the Bible gives you a revelation of where God is working in your life. Helping you make sense of the messiness that engulfs you. Or

you experience God's kingdom come when you feel God's presence in the taking of communion (**Image**). Or you experience God's heavenly glory when listening to a meaningful hymn that really speaks to you in the moment. Or you experience God's kingdom come when you come across a hospitable community who welcomes you. Even with all your mental wellness struggles. Or you experience God's kingdom come when a community welcomes you. Even when you stand out from the norm. Or you experience God's kingdom come when someone finally gives you a chance and hires you. Or you experience God's heavenly glory when you experience forgiveness and reconciliation from a broken relationship (**Image**). Or you experience God's heavenly glory when you experience new life through a new relationship. Or you experience God's heavenly glory in your annual Lenten journey as you grow in your spiritual practices (**Image**).

As there are many dark moments we walk through in life, there are also many places in our lives and in our world where we see God's light shine. Where we experience God's heavenly glory. Where we bear witness to God's kingdom come. Whether it is through the people we encounter or through our experience of the practices of our faith tradition or through the church. The body of Christ.

When God invites Elijah home God invites Elisha to keep up the work Elijah was doing. So, Elijah gives Elisha the Spirit so Elisha can continue to point people to where God's heavenly glory is at work in the world.

When Jesus is invited home, Jesus breathes the Spirit on his disciples, the church, so they can continue to show people where God's heavenly glory is at work in the world.

As people invited into discipleship through baptism, we too, are given the Spirit so that we can continue to reveal to people where God's heavenly glory is shining in our world. Giving people a foretaste of what is to come, just as we have received this foretaste in Christ.

Let us pray, loving God, thank you for reflecting your heavenly glory through your Son Jesus Christ our saviour. For giving us a foretaste of what is to come. As we walk through moments of darkness in our lives shine your light on us. Help us see where your heavenly glory is at work. Encourage us to answer your call to continue Christ's work in the world. Giving others too a foretaste of what is to come. **Amen.**