



DAILY FAITH PRACTICES

Transfiguration (C) – 2 Corinthians 3:12-4:2

Focus: *Being transfigured*

word of life

“And all of us, with unveiled faces, seeing the glory of the Lord as though reflected in a mirror, are being transformed into the same image from one degree of glory to another; for this comes from the Lord, the Spirit.” (2 Corinthians 3:18 NRSV)

Read 2 Corinthians 3:12-4:2

On Transfiguration Sunday, we recall Jesus climbing the mountain with Peter, John, and James to pray. While on the mountain, the appearance of Jesus is changed—transfigured. Suddenly, Moses and Elijah join him on the mountaintop. Although the disciples have fallen asleep, they awake to witness this scene of glory. God’s voice echoes, “This is my Son, my Chosen, listen to him.” (Luke 9:35 NRSV)

1. *Describe how Jesus was transfigured.*
2. *What would it have been like to see Jesus be transfigured on that mountaintop?*
3. *What might you have said to Jesus, Moses or Elijah on that mountaintop?*

Jesus is not the only one to climb a mountain to encounter God. One of the most famous encounters with God on a mountain was Moses when he received the Ten Commandments. When he came down from the mountain, he too was changed—transfigured. “Moses came down from Mount Sinai. As he came down from the mountain with the two tablets of the covenant in his hand, Moses did not know that the skin of his face shone because he had been talking with God.” (Exodus 34:29 NRSV)

The people were afraid of Moses and God’s glory coming through him, but Moses convinced them to speak with him. Afterwards, Moses put a veil over his face until he went before the Lord. This became the pattern: Moses would talk with the Lord, report to the people, and then cover his face with a veil.

4. *What is the significance of Moses covering his face with a veil?*
5. *What would that have been like for Moses to converse with the Lord?*
6. *How might the glory of God been reflected on Moses?*

One of the issues addressed in the second letter to the Corinthians is that of doing ministry during the confusing years after the crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Followers of Jesus had to clarify their interactions and relationships with both Jews and Gentiles. It was hard work. In the midst of the persecution and suffering, they were also promised the glory of the Lord and a life of hope. “Since, then, we have such a hope, we act with great boldness, not like Moses, who put a veil over his face to keep the people of Israel from gazing at the end of the glory that was being set aside.” (2 Corinthians 3:12 NRSV)

Christians are urged not to hide under a veil of timidity, but to boldly follow Christ, allowing his glory to shine through us. In doing so, we too can be changed—transfigured by the glory of the Lord. All this comes from the Holy Spirit at work in our lives. “Therefore, since it is by God’s mercy that we are engaged in this ministry, we do not lose heart.” (2 Corinthians 4:1 NRSV) Indeed, do not lose heart.

7. *How do you experience the glory of God coming through you?*
8. *What does it mean for the Spirit to free us and lift our veil?*
9. *What is the veil that needs lifted from our lives?*

Word among

Joey discovered how much he loved working with the homeless when he starting serving suppers at a local soup kitchen. On weekends, he found himself volunteering at a local shelter for homeless men. Joey genuinely tried to share the love of Christ with each person he met.

Eventually, he quit his good-paying job to become the executive director of a large homeless shelter in town. He loved the work, but the stresses of fund-raising, the daily needs of the transient population, and staff turnover began to take its toll. Although Joey felt this was his calling by God he was becoming weary, discouraged, and troubled. He was losing his joy in serving.

1. *What might you say to Joey?*
2. *Describe a time when you have become discouraged in serving others.*

Depression, discouragement and despair can feel like a veil, preventing us from fully experiencing the joy and hope of God, given through the Holy Spirit in Jesus Christ. Although Paul references Moses covering his face with a veil in order to hide the glory of God, he also addresses the veil which covered the hardened minds of the Israelites.

As Christians we are freed to live with unveiled faces and lives, encouraged by God's Spirit. "And all of us, with unveiled faces, seeing the glory of the Lord as though reflected in a mirror, are being transformed into the same image from one degree of glory to another; for this comes from the Lord, the Spirit." (2 Corinthians 3:18 NRSV)

3. *What does it mean to be transformed in the image of Christ?*
4. *How do we reflect God's glory in our daily life?*
5. *How does God's glory and calling help us to deal with times of discouragement?*

faith practice in daily life

Serve all people following the example of Jesus

Not even Jesus got to stay on the mountaintop basking in God's glory. Peter hoped the conversation among Jesus, Moses, and Elijah might continue. He even offered to build a shelter. But Jesus had other plans, descending from the mountaintop to minister in the valleys. His own personal valley included rejection, denial, betrayal and crucifixion. Just because Jesus encountered the glory of God on the mountaintop, it did not mean he would escape challenges on this earth. Instead, God's glory which transfigured Jesus gave him courage and hope to face death itself. Death would not have the final word.

"Therefore, since it is by God's mercy that we are engaged in this ministry, we do not lose heart." (2 Corinthians 4:1 NRSV) Sometimes we convince ourselves our service to others is *ours*. In reality, the work we do on behalf of God is truly done by the grace of God. It is God who works in our lives, transfiguring us in the image of Christ. So, let us be bold in serving and not lose heart.

6. *How is God trying to transfigure you and prepare you to serve your neighbor?*
7. *What is your prayer for this week of Transfiguration?*

Prayer

God, once more, touch us with your glory and transfigure us in your image. Amen.

last word

This week watch for signs of God's glory.

Daily Faith Practices

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