



Changed

Transfiguration | February 27

Family Worship Experience for February 27

Topic: Changed

Scripture: Luke 9: 28-43

Focus Verse: "As he was praying, the appearance of his face changed and his clothes flashed white like lightning."

Family Activity:

Supplies Included:

- Tube marked - "Seeing"
- Tube marked - "Living"
- Container marked - "Faith"

Instructions:

In today's message, Pastor Clair shares that Faith is "both-and"; the seeing and the living, the hearing and the heeding; the vision on the mountaintop, and the healing in the real world. Using the supplies provided we will create a visual to bring this important message to life. While the "Seeing" and "Living" tubes are fine on their own, no change is occurring in them. Life changing Faith comes from applying both of these each day. Pour the ingredients within the "Seeing" tube and the "Living" tube together into the "Faith" container. Based on the reaction, discuss the questions together as a table.

Family Discussion Questions:

- What keeps us from experiencing a life of faith?
- What happened when both tubes were combined into the container?
- How does that remind us of the message that was shared today?
- What steps can we take to experience a life of faith?

Table Prayer:

Dear God, help us to remember that faith grows and is lived out in many ways. Guide us in the mountaintops and the valleys, in the worship and the work. In all things may our lives reflect the glory of Christ. Amen.

Devotion:

There was this fascinating story that came out of Idaho several years ago. A long-time church-going woman passed away. After her death, her family got permission to have her embalmed and then bronzed for placement in her favorite pew at church. The same seat she had occupied most Sunday mornings for forty years. You know, it's really easy to get the notion that this is it, that our life of faith is completely encapsulated by what happens in worship. But as we will see in our scripture reading this morning, faith is built on a lot more than lofty moments of worship.

This morning, we come to Luke's account of Jesus' transfiguration, his mountaintop transformation. This is a pivotal moment for Christ and for the disciples who follow him. But this unique revelation of who Jesus is extends beyond what happens on the mountain that day. We cannot separate that mountaintop experience of Jesus' transfiguration from his healing of the demon-possessed boy down the mountain the next day.

Certainly, Jesus' dramatic mountaintop transformation is a moment of great significance. This transfiguration is the physical sign of God's message spoken just moments later, "This is my Son, whom I dearly love. Listen to him." But this is only half the story; the rest of the revelation, the rest of what we are to know, and understand, and believe about Jesus, happens the next day far from the heights of that mountain.

Luke tells us that Peter does not know what he is saying when he reflects that they should build some shrines there atop the mountain, but how many of us would say almost the same thing? We experience these beautiful moments in life; we reach the majestic heights of the mountains, and we want to stay there forever. We get so caught up in the comfortable, the ritual, the familiar, that we forget how these encounters with God actually compel us to go live life out in the world, not to enshrine ourselves within the walls of the church, like that lady now permanently bronzed on "her" pew.

Jesus is the Savior of the world, and to save the world, you have to be in the world. The transfiguration on the mountain underscores Jesus' identity as the Son of God and the fulfillment of God's promises and plans from the beginning of time, but Christ's work the next day is the real revelation of who he is. And we need to hear his very serious rebuke of his disciples, who are unable to deal with the realities of the world and the changes before them because of their lack of faith. Everything seemed so perfect and right on the mountain, but for that to be so, it must be applied to real life. Faith is not only something that is experienced; it is something that is lived!

Building a booth and hanging out wherever we are is the easy way out. But a life of faith in Jesus Christ is the "mountaintop" highs and the "valley" lows; it's the worship and praise in God's presence, and the sharing of God's love in the tough places of the world. Transfiguration is an invitation to go up the mountain and spend time with Jesus; searching and seeking, discerning, hearing, and heeding. But transfiguration is just as much a dramatic invitation to go down the mountain and work with Jesus in the valleys, in the turbulence and trials of everyday life. Sometimes we separate the mountain top experiences from the valley; we think

we've seen it all, we think we know all we need to know, and done all we need to do, so we just live our lives and then go to church on Sundays. But the two can't really be separated. Faith is "both-and"; the seeing and the living, the hearing and the heeding; the vision on the mountaintop, and the healing in the real world.

Christ's transfiguration was all about Christ's role in the kingdom of God. And our transfiguration is all about our faith in Christ. Now that we've experienced Christ, God's very own Son, what are we going to do about it? What will we make of "the other six days"?

Virtual Family Worship Experience:

If you are joining us virtually, please take a photo and share your experience on our closed Jones Memorial United Methodist Church Facebook groups before next Sunday!