

Transfiguration of our Lord February 14, 2021

Mark 9:2-9

Alleluia, Praise the Lord! The phrase we put away after today, is the language of doxology, praising God for who God is. As Christians, we believe that Jesus is God's self-expression to us. That Jesus is the best way to know who God is. What do we know from the Gospel of Mark about Jesus? What is there about this Jesus that is worth saying, Alleluia, Praise the Lord!?

The Good News of Jesus Christ, the Son of God! Baptized by John in the Jordan- coming up and seeing the heavens ripped in two and the Spirit of God flying freely into the world, Daddy speaking to him, "You are my Son, the beloved, with you I am well pleased" The Spirit landing on Jesus, driving him into the wilderness to come to grips with who he is.

Alleluia! Praise the Lord!

Jesus, stepping into his own when John is arrested- proclaiming the good news that God's reign has broken into the world and business is not like usual. Jesus, healing and casting out demons. Bringing sight to those who cannot see. Hearing to those who cannot hear. Restoring all to relationship with God and one another.

Alleluia! Praise the Lord!

Jesus, calling disciples to follow, the regular folks- working the family business. The tax collector. Sinners. The ones in need of healing because that is what he came out to do. An imperfect group of followers who can't seem to get it through their heads who Jesus really is. Who can't seem to understand what Jesus has come to do. But Jesus sticks with them anyway, tries again and again to help them understand.

Alleluia! Praise the Lord.

Jesus, giving hope to the hopeless, to those on the fringes of society- placed there by circumstances beyond their control; leprosy, blindness, , accidents of birth or gender, in the grips of things such that they no longer seem to have control of their own bodies. Jesus, speaking a work of power, restoring them to wholeness, giving sight, opening ears, casting out those things that have power over them. Restoring them to relationship, saying to these- you are loved by God, you are worth saving.

Alleluia! Praise the Lord!

Jesus, clearing away all our attempts to make religion safe- something within our planning and control. Convenient to us. Jesus, making faith so simple, and so hard- The most important commandment is to love God with all that we are- heart, soul, mind and strength- to love God in

deed and in truth- AND to love our neighbor as ourselves. These are more pleasing to God than any offering.

Alleluia! Praise the Lord!

Jesus, eating with his disciples, all of them. Dipping his bread into the bowl with the former tax collector, with the one who will deny him, with the one who will betray him, with all who will run away from him when being a disciple gets dangerous for them. Jesus, in relationship with them still- even knowing this. Loving them still- despite their weakness.

Alleluia, Praise the Lord!

Jesus, in the garden, knowing what is to come- not wanting it to happen- but willing for the sake of his Father, for the sake of his disciples, for the sake of the sinners, even those who will be the cause of his death. Willing, for love of the world and all who are in it.

Alleluia! Praise the Lord!

Jesus battered and broken on the cross. Entering the depth of human suffering and pain, to redeem human suffering and pain. Jesus' loud cry of death, the ripping of the curtain in the Temple- sign that God will not be contained by our paltry attempts to bound God, but is loose in

the world. The truth of Jesus visible even to the Gentile Centurion,
“Truly, this man was God’s Son!”

Alleluia, Praise the Lord!

Jesus, risen from the tomb, gone ahead of the disciples, calling all to
join him there- even Peter- impulsive Peter- who denied knowing him,
three times. Welcome now into the future- one where Christ is alive.
Loose in the world. A world changed because death no longer has
power over us.

Alleluia! Praise the Lord!

Jesus, Son of God, come into this world for all of us messy, ordinary
people. Jesus, who suffered because of our sin; our need to control, to
know, to win salvation at our hand. Who won victory over death by his
resurrection. Who claims us in baptism through grace and pulls us out
of the reign of this world making us citizens of the reign of God. Jesus,
who loved us right into his arms. Whose Spirit inspires us, prods us,
pulls us, encourages us into love for our neighbors. Love not only in
word, but in deed and in truth.

Alleluia! Praise the Lord!

This is the God we worship. Who created the world by his Word,
breathed life into the molded earth of our bodies. Who spun the world

on its axis, who laid the foundations of the universe, who knit us together in our mother' womb.

Alleluia! Praise the Lord!

This is the God we worship. Who has pursued God's people through the ages. Who sent Jesus, God's own Son, to show us who God is- lover of people, healer of wounds, restorer of relationships, speaker of knowledge, proclaimer of truth, whose kingdom looks weak and small in human accounting but which has already spread wider than any earthly kingdom.

Alleluia! Praise the Lord!

This is the God we worship. Come down to us in the flesh. Come to us now in water poured and received, in words spoken and enacted. Come to us now in bread and wine, in words spoken and enacted. Come to us in Spirit and in truth, to love us into being a new creation.

Alleluia! Praise the Lord!

And so, on this last Sunday before the season of Lent- we stand with the disciples on that mountaintop and see the truth of who Jesus is. Son of God. The one to listen to. And we do not know what to say. Except, perhaps.

Alleluia! Praise the Lord!