

Reflections for 14th February 2021

Sunday next before Lent

Surprised by Glory

This week's gospel reading tells the story of what we call the 'transfiguration' –when Jesus took three of his disciples away to the top of a high mountain, where they saw Jesus somehow transformed, and glimpsed something of the *glory* of who he really is.

There were challenging times for the disciples both before and after this special experience, as Jesus began to make clear to them that he must follow the way of the cross, and suffer and die in order to fulfil God's purposes.

Perhaps that is why Peter didn't want to leave the mountain top. His reaction was what they experienced to say something like 'Why don't we make some shelters, so that we can hold on to this special moment –so that we can just stay here.'

As I think about this story, it reminds me about two kinds of mistakes that we can make in the course of our lives:

- one is to want to stay in the special times (a bit like Peter), to cling to those special moments, or even to hide in them, and pretend that the rest of the world, with all its ordinary routine, and its challenges, isn't there.
- the other is to get so lost in the routines, the demands, the stress, the busyness, that we never stop, we never look up, or take a break, and so we can miss out on the special, 'mountain-top' moments when they surprise us.

The good news for us this week, in the midst of these challenging times that we are all facing, is that God has some 'mountain-top' moments for each one of us – special times of gift and blessing, when we may be surprised to glimpse something of the glory of God. Those times can strengthen us to 'come back down from the mountain top', and encourage us get back to the important things that we have to do in the ordinary routine of our lives.

Revd John Waller

Almighty Father,
whose Son was revealed in majesty
before he suffered death upon the cross:
give us grace to perceive his glory,
that we may be strengthened to suffer with him
and be changed into his likeness, from glory to glory.
Amen.

Bible readings: 2 Kings 2. 1-12; 2 Corinthians 4. 3-6; Mark 9. 2-9

Story: 'The true glory of Jesus' (based on the gospel reading)