

This story that closes the season of Epiphany and prepares us for Lent is meant to be savored as it is heard, rather than to be explained.

But, how do we savor an experience that we do not take part in? In the story of Jesus being transfigured, transformed from human form like ours into one shining with the light and glory of God where is our connection? You really had to be there to ‘get it.’

One of the greatest challenges in being a preacher is figuring out what to say and what to leave to the imagination. In our culture today where TMI/Too Much Information is the default communication style, we’re going to take some time this morning to let the scripture speak for itself.

There is an ancient way of listening to scripture called Lectio Divina. Since the earliest Christians didn’t have Bibles and for centuries many didn’t read, this method developed to help people not only hear the Bible but to encounter God in the words of the Bible. So, that’s how we’re going to hear our gospel reading today.

First we remember that we are going to listen to the Word of God and that **God is present**. Because God is present we trust that God will meet us in the word and that we will be changed by that encounter.

As I read this passage, close your eyes and imagine the scene unfolding. See in your imagination what is going on. Watch the people in the scene. What does Jesus look like? How do the others react to him? What are the people saying to each other? What emotions fill their words? What happens when Jesus is present? As we enter into the scene, we can place ourselves in the scene, perhaps as an observer, as one who witnesses the events, as one who comes to Jesus for healing, or understanding; or perhaps as one helping others to find Jesus.

I’ll read the passage once for you to hear the story. Close your eyes. Savor the story, particularly paying attention to any word or phrase that seems to draw your attention.

Luke 9: 28-45

About eight days after Jesus said these things, he took Peter, John, and James, and went up on a mountain to pray. ²⁹ **As he was praying**, the appearance of his face changed and his clothes flashed white like lightning. ³⁰ Two men, Moses and Elijah, were talking with him. ³¹ They were clothed with heavenly splendor and **spoke about Jesus’ departure, which he would achieve in Jerusalem.** ³² Peter and those with him **were almost overcome by sleep, but they managed to stay awake** and saw his glory as well as the two men with him.

³³ As the two men were about to leave Jesus, Peter said to him, “Master, it’s good that we’re here. We should construct three shrines: one for you, one for Moses, and one for Elijah”—but **he didn’t know what he was saying.** ³⁴ Peter was still speaking when a cloud overshadowed them. As they entered the cloud, they were overcome with awe.

³⁵ Then a voice from the cloud said, “This is my Son, my chosen one. **Listen to him!**” ³⁶ Even as the voice spoke, Jesus was found alone. They were speechless and at the time told no one what they had seen.

³⁷ The next day, when Jesus, Peter, John, and James had come down from the mountain, a large crowd met Jesus. ³⁸ A man from the crowd shouted, “Teacher, I beg you to take a look at my son, my only child. ³⁹ Look, a spirit seizes him and, without any warning, he screams. It shakes him and causes him to foam at the mouth. It tortures him and rarely leaves him alone. ⁴⁰ I begged your disciples to throw it out, but they couldn’t.”

⁴¹ Jesus answered, “You faithless and crooked generation, how long will I be with you and put up with you? Bring your son here.” ⁴² While he was coming, the demon threw him down and shook him violently. Jesus spoke harshly to the unclean spirit, healed the child, and gave him back to his father. ⁴³ Everyone was overwhelmed by God’s greatness.

We’ll take a minute for silence, then I’ll read the passage again.

ONE MINUTE.

This time as you listen, notice what the word of God is asking of you. What does this reading call you to **do or to be**? Or what does the passage call **this** community of faith to do or to be?

READ PASSAGE AGAIN

TWO MINUTES FOR SILENCE

What does this reading call you to do or to be? Or what does the passage call this community of faith to do or to be?

Hold those thoughts in your heart this week. Share them with me or with each other. Be still and know that God is God.

Finally this:

Not all is as it seems:
there is a glory hidden in everything
waiting to be revealed
to the eyes of those who believe
beyond what seems inevitable
who do not want to live in the status quo
but in the promises of God.

Hold onto the vision
as we turn towards lent
and walk the more difficult path toward the cross

there is yet a greater glory
still to be revealed.

Go in peace,
Go in hope,
Go in love.

Amen.