**Transfiguration** Mar 2, 2025 Lk 9:28-36; 2 Cor 3:12, 4:6

* Two kinds of sight: physical and spiritual (intuitive).
* Spiritual sight can be more significant than our physical sight because it informs our hearts.
* St Paul tells us in 2 Corinthians: “***The god of this age has blinded the minds of unbelievers, so that they cannot see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God***”
* Intuitive or spiritual sight is a wonderful thing – it opens us to growth - to deeper understandings, and helps us to live fuller lives.
* St Paul prays for the Ephesians: “***I pray also that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened in order that you may know the hope to which he has called you, the riches of his*** ***glorious inheritance in the saints”*** (Ephesians 1:18)
* When the eyes of our hearts are enlightened by the presence of God, it is a glorious thing.
* It is when we know & understand a truth of God’s presence in our lives at a level that is deeper even than physical sight.
* Whenever God reveals such understanding to us, we will know it is from God because we will also experience a deep peace – a sense of purpose & meaning in our lives that we did not have before.
* What I’ve just described is also known as a mountain-top experience.
* It is the same experience that Jesus describes to

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Nicodemus in John 3 as being born again spiritually.

* Means simply that we become aware, at our deepest level, of the **reality** of God’s presence in our lives.
* This awareness has such a profound effect on us, that we begin looking at things totally different, and our lives are changed.
* That is why Jesus called this being “***born again***”
* Because, with this new understanding & outlook, it will be like our life has just begun.
* When we have such an experience of God, it is so good that we want to remain in that place forever.
* That is what happened on the Mount of Transfiguration.
* We read in Luke’s gospel where Jesus took Peter, James & John & led them up a high mountain where Jesus was transfigured before them.
* The appearance of His face changed and His clothes became as bright as a flash of lightening.
* Words used in an attempt to describe something that is indescribable.
* There are some things we simply don’t understand intellectually and are beyond our ability to explain rationally.
* But just because we can’t explain something

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doesn’t mean that it isn’t real. It simply means that it is something beyond our understanding – such as the **many** mysteries of God.

* Sometimes we just have to trust so that God can work in us.
* Its called surrender & its something that we are usually not very good at because: “***The god of this age has blinded the minds of unbelievers, so that they cannot see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ.”***
* **But** - Our minds are only blinded if we allow them to be.
* Similarly God can only make Himself present in our minds when we allow Him.
* I’ve often wondered why Jesus took only Peter James & John with Him.
* Was it possibly that the other 9 disciples weren’t quite ready for what was to happen on the Mount of Transfiguration?
* God will not violate our free will, but when we give Him permission (surrender) He will sometimes manifest Himself to us in mighty ways.
* What was the purpose of the Transfiguration?
* Are we supposed to be going around with an obsession of seeking nice feelings that usually comes with an experience of God?
* The answer is: “***No, we are not***.”
* C.S. Lewis’s offers a clarification concerning

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the presence of God.

* He says: “***The presence of God is not the same as the sense of the presence of God.’***” Lewis then uses the following example: “***The act*** ***which engenders a child ought to be, and usually is, attended by pleasure. But it is not the pleasure that produces the child. Where there is pleasure there may be sterility: where there is no pleasure the act may be fertile. And in the spiritual marriage of God and the soul it is the same. It is the actual presence, not the*** ***sensation of the presence, of the Holy Ghost which begets Christ in us. The sense of the presence is a super-added gift for which we give thanks when it comes.***”
* What Lewis is explaining here is something called ‘*Incarnational Reality*’ – the reality that Christ is always with us, even when we don’t necessarily have a sense of that fact.
* The sense of the presence, which Lewis describes as a super-added gift, is really the mountain-top experience of God that we encounter, and it is a gift from God.
* It is a very good thing, but it is also not a continual thing.
* A person who is continually chasing this ***sense*** of the presence of God is really just chasing a feeling that is self-serving and this is not serving God, nor living in the reality of His presence

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in our lives.

* We are supposed to be open to God, Open to seek His will for our lives, & to be willing to serve Him.
* Sometimes however, in serving God, we may go through some difficult times and begin questioning His presence in our lives.
* In such times we can draw on the reality of the times when we did experience the sense of His presence to give us strength and encouragement.
* But when we are open to receive His presence, He **will** be there because that is what Jesus promised.
* Jesus said “***I will not leave you as orphans. I will come to you.***” (Jn 14:18)
* Or in Joshua, we read: “***I will never leave you nor forsake you.***” (Joshua 1:5)
* The Mount of Transfiguration was for a particular purpose – both for Jesus & His disciples:
* Jesus had just announced to His disciples that He would be going to Jerusalem, & that meant facing & accepting the torture of the cross.
* On the Mount of Transfiguration, Jesus was assured by the Father that He had not chosen the wrong way
* Significant that Moses & Elijah were part of this experience:
* Moses as the supreme Law-giver of Israel &

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Elijah as the 1st & greatest of the prophets, marked a transition from the time of the law and the prophets, to Jesus as the way of the New Covenant – the veil is lifted.

* For the disciples, they were shattered by Jesus’ statement that He was going to Jerusalem to die.
* They needed the strength of being in God’s almighty presence.
* Just as Jesus & the disciples needed a fresh experience of God’s presence to strengthen them to continue.
* We too need to be aware of the reality of God’s presence in our lives. Jesus never promised us that it would be easy
* Did however promise that he would be with us forever.

***And I will ask the Father***, ***and he will give you another Counselor to be with you forever.*** (John 14:16)

* In spite of this reality however, we still live in the same age as the 1st century where St Paul says “***The god of this age has blinded the minds of unbelievers.***
* Actually, today may be even worse than the 1st century where we have grown to depend so much on technology and material possessions.
* If we are to be a witness to the world around us, we need to move in the knowledge & strength that only Jesus can give us.

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* We don’t understand the Transfiguration, nor even the workings of God in our own lives – we don’t have to.
* All we can do is surrender ourselves in trust.
* And when we do, we will realize, as St Paul said in today’s Epistle reading: “***God will make His light shine in our hearts to give us the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ.***” (2 Cor 4:6)
* All we can then do is to bow in reverence & receive the blessing of His presence