



Bible Study Second Sunday of Lent Year A

St. Maria Goretti and
St. Peter Claver
Parishes

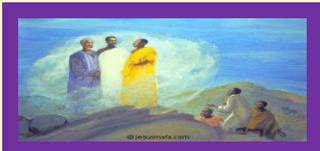
March 12, 2017
Volume 1 Issue 15

“And he was transfigured before them; his face shone like the sun and his clothes became white as light. And behold, Moses and Elijah appeared to them, conversing with him. Then Peter said to Jesus in reply, ‘Lord, it is good that we are here. If you wish, I will make three tents here, one for you, one for Moses, and one for Elijah.’ While he was still speaking, behold, a bright cloud cast a shadow over them, then from the cloud came a voice that said, ‘This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased; listen to him’.” Matt. 17: 2-5 NABRE.

Reading I: Genesis 12:1-4a

FAITH THAT TRANSFORMS - DOES YOUR FAITH NEED A MAKEOVER? On this second Sunday in Lent we continue with the request, “Lord increases our faith.” We seek a faith that transforms us to a total dependence on God.

There is a lot of money to be made in “makeovers”. Retailers sell makeovers in everything from makeup, body structure, clothes, homes, and professions. A makeover can be defined as, a complete transformation or remodeling of something. Commercials constantly bombard our world with advertisements to make permanent, materialistic changes to our lives. We put faith in life coaches, personal trainers and fad diets to transform ourselves. As Christians, we confront so many new challenges that it is appropriate to ask, does my faith need a makeover.



I AM GLAD WE
ARE HERE!

A makeover of faith is necessary to embrace the changes God has ordained for our lives. In the first reading, Abraham’s faith needed a makeover in order to follow God’s directions. He was directed to leave his family, nation and friends. To follow this directive, he needed transformed faith. The command was clear; “Go out”, but he was not told exactly where to go. As St. Paul wrote in [Heb 11:8](#), God required Abraham to be faithful. To accomplish God’s plan, Abraham’s faith needed a makeover. His faith had to be transformed, because God would transfer the blessings given to Adam and Eve to him. God’s blessings to Adam and Eve gave them a fruitful place to live; made them fertile; and, made them rulers of creation. They lost these blessings in the fall. Abraham’s faith needed a makeover, because God was now going to build his covenant people through him ([vv. 2-3, Gen 12:22](#)).
DISCUSSION QUESTION: Does your faith need a makeover?

FAITH

Faith is a belief in or confident attitude toward God, involving commitment to His will for one's life.

According to Heb. 11, faith was already present in the experience of many people in the Old Testament as a key element of their spiritual lives. In this chapter, the various heroes of the Old Testament (Abel, Enoch, Noah, Abraham, Sarah, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, and Moses) are described as living by faith. In addition, the Old Testament itself makes the same point. Abraham "believed in the Lord" (Gen 15:6); the Israelites "believed" (Ex 4:31; 14:31); and the prophet Habakkuk taught that "the just shall live by his faith" (Hab 2:4).

In the New Testament, "faith" covers various levels of personal commitment. Mere intellectual agreement to a truth is illustrated in James 2:19, where even demons are said to believe that there is one God. Obviously, however, they are not saved by this type of belief. Genuine saving faith is a personal attachment to Christ, best thought of as a combination of two ideas; reliance on Christ and commitment to Him. (From Nelson's Illustrated Bible Dictionary, Copyright © 1986, Thomas Nelson Publishers)

Reading II: 2 Timothy 1:8b-10

FAITH THAT TRANSFORMS - DOES YOUR FAITH NEED A MAKEOVER? St. Paul must have thought that Timothy’s faith needed a makeover. Because of Christian persecutions and the burning of Rome under Nero in 64 A.D., many Christian followers sought a lower profile. Their faith seemed to wilt during the harsh Roman persecution. Their faith needed a makeover.

St. Paul encouraged Timothy to reaffirm his faith in Christ ([vv. 8-10](#)). In previous verses, he reminded Timothy of the gifts and power God had given him through the laying on of hands. He suggested that Timothy remodel his faith for a time of persecution and preach the Gospel in the face of personal suffering. He told Timothy to transform his faith beyond a personal purpose, to the purpose that God intended. His faith makeover needed to include courage, love and self control. Timothy’s faith needed a makeover to accomplish God’s purpose for him. DISCUSSION QUESTION: Does your faith grow stronger during times of distress?

Gospel: Matthew 17:1-9

FAITH THAT TRANSFORMS - DOES YOUR FAITH NEED A MAKEOVER? Begin with a new hair cut, new clothes, and lose a little weight; then add a different hairstyle, or makeup. Top it off with new outfits and presto, you have the ingredients for a complete makeover! Now this is a cosmetic change. There is another complete makeover that absolutely changes our lives. It is the spiritual surgery that Jesus Christ performs when He transforms us from the death of sin, to life in Him. It is a makeover from faith in the world, to faith in Him. The fundamental elements of the makeover in faith in Jesus Christ are the spirit of forgiveness, love of neighbor and courage to live the Gospel, even at the expense of physical harm. Does your faith need a makeover?

In a sense, the Transfiguration of Jesus is a makeover of Jesus, Peter, James and John. It established three important facts. 1) It confirmed to the disciples that the kingdom was real. 2) It established that Jesus was the divine Messiah in three ways: the alteration of Jesus' appearance revealed that He was more than a human teacher; His association with Moses and Elijah demonstrated His messianic role; and the voice from heaven declared that He is the Son of God. 3) It confirmed to them that the Messiah had to suffer.

Jesus' makeover lies in the Greek word μεταμορφῶ (*metamorphoo*) which means to change shape or form (v. 2). His human appearance took on something of the divine, as His garments became bright as light (Is. 6; Ez. 1:26-28). Matthew presents Jesus as a new Moses. Jesus' face shines like Moses' did (Ex 34:29-30). The presence of Moses and Elijah testify that Jesus is the Son of God. The words of Yahweh that Jesus is the *Son of God*, reminds us of His appearance in a cloud to Moses (Ex. 24:12-16). His presence in the Tent of Meeting is manifested by the cloud that covered it. (Ex. 40:34; 1 Kings 8:10). Jesus is transformed from Jesus the teacher to Jesus the Son of God. His makeover is complete.

The faith of Peter, James and John got a complete makeover when they saw Jesus in His glorified splendor. They fell on their faces (v. 6). Peter, fearfully overjoyed, shows the transformation of his faith (v. 4). He wanted to build tents as Moses did, so that God and the prophets would live with them.. Their faith needed a makeover, as they would be tested beyond measure by Jesus' arrest, trial, torture and death. Fear was transformed to faith

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS: Does God speak to you? If so, what is your reaction? How does God dwell in us?

Pray About It!

Monday

Read Luke 4:34-35. Is your faith stronger than your fear?

Tuesday

Read James 2:19. What are the works of your faith?

Wednesday

Read Matthew 17: 2-4. Spend ten minutes in silent prayer.

Thursday

Read 2 Peter 1:16-18. Recall when you faith was transformed.

Friday

Attend Mass and receive the Eucharist.

THE TRANSFIGURATION

The Transfiguration of our Lord on a "high mountain apart," is described by each of the three evangelists (Matt 17:1-8; Mark 9:2-8; Luke 9:28-36). The fullest account is given by Luke, who, no doubt, was informed by Peter, who was present on the occasion. What these evangelists record was an absolute historical reality, and not a mere vision. The concurrence between them in all the circumstances of the incident is exact. John seems to allude to it also (John 1:14). Forty years after the event Peter distinctly makes mention of it (2 Peter 1:16-18). In describing the sanctification of believers, Paul also seems to allude to this majestic and glorious appearance of our Lord on the "holy mount" (Rom 12:2; 2 Cor 3:18).

The place of the transfiguration was probably Mount Hermon (q.v.), and not Mount Tabor, as is commonly supposed. (from Easton's Bible Dictionary, PC Study Bible formatted electronic database Copyright © 2003, 2006 Biblesoft, Inc. All rights reserved.)

Resources: Matthew, Daniel J. Harrington; Collegeville Bible Commentary, The Liturgical Press, Collegeville Minn., p. 886-887; *Living Liturgy Spirituality, Celebration, and Catechesis for Sundays and Solemnities Year A* 2014, Joyce Zimmerman, C. PP. S. Kathleen Harmon, S.N.D. de N., Christopher W. Canlon, S. M. Liturgical Press Collegeville, Mn. pp. 80-81; Scripture texts in this work are taken from the *New American Bible, revised edition* © 2010, 1991, 1986, 1970 Confraternity of Christian Doctrine, Washington, D.C. and are used by permission of the copyright owner. All Rights Reserved. No part of the New American Bible may be reproduced in any form without permission in writing from the copyright owner. Transfiguration - μεταμορφῶ (Biblesoft's New Exhaustive Strong's Numbers and Concordance with Expanded Greek-Hebrew Dictionary. Copyright © 1994, 2003, 2006 Biblesoft, Inc. and International Bible Translators, Inc.)

This meditation is prepared by Deacon Terrel J. Broussard for personal use in Adult Faith Formation at St. Peter Claver and St Maria Goretti Parishes in New Orleans, La. ©2014.