

February 10 2013

Scripture Lessons

**Exodus 34:29-35**

**Luke 9:28-36**

Sermon            *Facing Life's Ups and Downs*

Life presents many turning points, I don't have to tell you that where we must make decisions. Where we must make decisions that may affect the rest of our lives in fact. For having children is one of those decisions, continuing your schooling changing jobs buying or selling property getting married or even having an illness can change the course of your life for years to come; perhaps health wise and also perhaps an attitude as well. I think it is at these points that we wonder what God's will is for our lives and we ask ourselves what does God want me to do now for the rest of my life after I made this very difficult at times decision.

Jesus as we know had a human nature as well as a divine nature according to our Christian traditions but he was not without doubts and often Jesus' agony over God's Will for his life. He also had many such turning points or crisis points in his life. His point of decision at the Garden of Gethsemane was one of those crisis points. His baptism by John in the Jordan River was another. But long before Gethsemane there was a time when I think Jesus questioned God's will for his life. And there was a time when his disciples, also, questioned that what he had been saying was really true. Is this our kind of messiah they might have asked themselves? What does this messiah want us to do?

This time in Jesus' life was called, of course, the Transfiguration and was one of the most mysterious events in Jesus' life to that time. In fact scholars are still not sure, in fact, what as to Transfiguration significance is? For certain Luke places the Transfiguration such as it portrays a climax or crisis point in Jesus' life. It places Scripture near the center of the Gospel after Jesus' teaching about the Cross and just before Jesus' journey to that same cross. And a good part of that significance of the Transfiguration rises in that point of Jesus' life of when that transfiguration takes place. And here Jesus, I think, gives us an example of what to do at such decisions making or turning points in our lives as well. As when he goes to that lonely place that I tried to describe to the boys and girls to be with God and listen and to pray.

So what does the Transfiguration mean to our lives? What is the significance for Jesus and his disciples on that mountain? I think for Jesus it became the event

that helped him to make his decision to follow the way of the cross confirmed by who-Elijah, Moses and finally in an appearance by God in a cloud and God's voice coming from that cloud. And the response of Jesus, Moses represented the law and Elijah who represented the prophets points to the fact the old has given way to the new; the old is giving its blessing; and the old and the new there is continuity, there is a the continuation of God's old Covenant and God's new Covenant in Jesus. And the presence of God confirmed of course, also, that no matter how difficult it was for the disciples that Jesus was on the right path where God wanted him to go. God's Word at the Transfiguration. "Listen to my Son" was probably as distressful to the disciples as the cross was in its own way. Nevertheless Jesus' glory was made known to the disciples in this special event, He is God's Son. He did have the spirit of God walking with him. All would be all right, at least all right in the end.

Many of us are at similar turning points in our lives of faith as well as we have described before and maybe we can't quite expect an event as fantastic as the Transfiguration to come in our lives but we can go up to that mountain so to speak and take our doubts and take our fears before God. After all God can't help our decisions making if we don't give ourselves no opportunities to listen to God in those quiet times of our lives. As you know Wednesday is Ash Wednesday so why not use this as a beginning time of a heightened time of awareness of God's activity in your life. I think prayer, Bible Study and I think quiet meditation can be significance for determining God's will for our lives day by day. I encourage you in the upcoming Lenten season to keep God's loving will for your life. Keep God's loving will for your life on God's Mountain as we practice discipline for traditional of Lent and as we keep a few moments everyday to be with God.

And together we say AMEN