

January 16, 2022

The Transfiguration

Mark 9:2-8

How do you get someone's attention who isn't listening to you? Do you raise your voice or slam your fist on the table? Do you whistle or jump up and down? As a parent, I know that getting and keeping someone's attention is a constant battle. The world is full of distractions, shiny distractions far more interesting than eating vegetables and going to bed on time. I know what's best for my child, but sometimes she just won't listen. Sometimes it takes more than repeating myself or clapping my hands to get her attention, especially if she's about to walk into a dangerous situation.

This week's Focal Passage describes the Transfiguration, *the* mountaintop moment. As Peter, James, and John witnessed Jesus' miraculous transformation, they were in awe. They were terrified. Peter admitted he didn't know how to respond, so he wanted to start building shrines. That's when God got their attention and said, "LISTEN!" "Then a cloud overshadowed them, and a voice spoke from the cloud, 'This is my son, Whom I dearly love. Listen to him!' " (Mark 9:7). Jesus and the disciples were headed for the Crucifixion, the event that would change all of them (and the world) forever. It wasn't the time for shrines; it was the time to listen to Jesus and to prepare for what was coming. God didn't need their advice; they needed God's.

The student book author writes, "We ignore God at our own peril. Our Scripture text for this lesson, the account of Jesus' Transfiguration, is an important reminder of Jesus' unique relationship with God and an explicit directive to listen to Jesus' teachings and God's voice."¹ It's hard to listen sometimes. We have our own agendas, distractions, and ideas of how things should be done. God's instructions are clear, though; we must heed the teachings of Jesus: "Listen to him!"

1. What do you do when you need to get someone's attention? Is it usually effective?
2. Imagine yourself on the mountaintop for the Transfiguration. How do you think you would have reacted?
3. How have you been following your own agenda instead of God's? How can you better listen to the teachings of Jesus?

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¹From *Adult Bible Studies*, Winter 2021-2022, by Gary Thompson (Cokesbury, 2021); page 71.