

# St. Paul: On The Same page

02.23.14 for Transfiguration a

## Day One: Exodus 24:8-18

<sup>8</sup> *Moses then took the blood, sprinkled it on the people and said, "This is the blood of the covenant that the LORD has made with you in accordance with all these words."*

<sup>9</sup> *Moses and Aaron, Nadab and Abihu, and the seventy elders of Israel went up <sup>10</sup> and saw the God of Israel. Under his feet was something like a pavement made of lapis lazuli, as bright blue as the sky. <sup>11</sup> But God did not raise his hand against these leaders of the Israelites; they saw God, and they ate and drank.*

It's hard to impress people anymore. Our kids have grown up with special effects that simulate entire cities being swept away and mountains being buried under ocean waves. What would be so impressive about God appearing with a pavement of gemstones?

But it is not the gemstones or gold or silver or even the brightness of the light that reveals God's glory. It is his holiness, which no

"No prophecy was ever produced by the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit.

2 Peter 1:21

painting or computer generated video can portray.

"Honey, I shrunk God," should be the title of a movie. We have reduced God to our size, so that we no longer feel small in his presence.

But it is not his size, or his power, or his justice that should make you feel small. It is his miraculous love.

You should feel small, and yet unafraid, because this God who made the universe is the one who loves you. Today, remember your true size, and his.

**Prayer:** *Father, when I consider the heavens you have made, and the earth, the work of your hands, who am I that I should stand before you? I am your child. Amen.*

## Day Two: 2 Peter 1:16-21

*<sup>16</sup>For we did not follow cleverly devised stories when we told you about the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ in power, but we were eyewitnesses of his majesty. <sup>17</sup>He received honor and glory from God the Father when the voice came to him from the Majestic Glory, saying, "This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased." <sup>18</sup>We ourselves heard this voice that came from heaven when we were with him on the sacred mountain.*

We know all about “cleverly devised stories.” We need special websites now just to help us know which stories we hear are true and which are scams. (No, scientists have not found a crystal pyramid in the Bermuda triangle. No, they haven’t drilled a hole into Hell in Siberia either.) And those false stories are all over!

But Peter says, “we were eyewitnesses.” And John says these are things that we have “seen with our eyes” and “touched with our hands.”

Unlike scam artists, the disciples did not make fortunes from following Jesus. They gave their lives for the truth they witnessed.

Are you also a witness to God’s glory, and his mercy and grace? You have not seen Jesus face to face. You were not present with Peter, James, and John on the mountain of transfiguration to see Jesus’ glory. Nor were you privileged to touch him, as the disciples did in the upper room after Jesus’ resurrection.

But you have lived in Jesus’ promise. You know what it means to be burdened with guilt and trapped in sin, and what it means to know that your sins are forgiven. You know what it means to have meaning in your life, because your life has a purpose beyond eating and drinking.

You know Jesus. “Though you have not seen him, you love him; and even though you do not see him now, you believe in him and are filled with an inexpressible and glorious joy” (1 Peter 1:8) What story would you tell others about the Son of God?

**Prayer:** *Dearest Savior, the story of my life is one of sin and failure – but sin washed away in your blood, and failure transformed into your good gifts. Give me words to tell my story. Amen.*

### Day Three: Matthew 17:1-9

<sup>1</sup> *After six days Jesus took with him Peter, James and John the brother of James, and led them up a high mountain by themselves. <sup>2</sup>There he was transfigured before them. His face shone like the sun, and his clothes became as white as the light... <sup>9</sup>As they were coming down the mountain, Jesus instructed them, "Don't tell anyone what you have seen, until the Son of Man has been raised from the dead."*

What do you do when you see something amazing? Some people immediately send a text message to their friends – or a cell phone picture – or even a video. Others put it up on Facebook or YouTube. If it's really big we'll call the news, hoping to get a bit of our 15 minutes of fame. We hear about a miracle rescue, a miracle cure, a miracle baby, a miracle diet. And all of them come with the assumption that when you see it you will want to tell others.

If you genuinely believed you had seen a miracle, would you keep it to yourself?

Jesus told his disciples not to tell anyone what they had seen "until the Son of Man has been raised from the

dead." They not only saw a miracle, revealing the divine glory of Jesus, but they were told that an even greater miracle was still to come.

Maybe this is why the disciples didn't understand what was happening when Jesus was crucified. They were looking for the wrong miracle. They saw the glory of Jesus' transfiguration, and they looked for the glory of his resurrection, but they failed to understand the glory of his suffering and death – the glory of his sacrifice for sins.

If you had seen all these miracles, which one would you want to talk about most? Which would affect you most deeply?

If you know that Jesus is truly God – that he miraculously died for your sins – and that he rose again from the dead, how are you able to keep it to yourself?

**Prayer:** *Lord Jesus, fill me with the same excitement your disciples had, because I too have seen your majesty and power, and your love and mercy. Amen.*

## Day Four:

### *Sabbatical with God?*

<sup>18</sup> *Then Moses entered the cloud as he went on up the mountain. And he stayed on the mountain forty days and forty nights. Exodus 24:18*

Universities and churches will sometimes grant a sabbatical, an extended period of time for a staff member to go off and study or write or meditate. They usually expect some “product” from that period of time. The professor should write a book. The pastor should learn something new. There should be something to show for so much time away from work.

What do you think Moses did for 40 days on the mountain with God? Is this when God taught him about the creation of the world, and helped him to learn, and later write down, the first several chapters of the Bible?

Would these 40 days seem like a long time to Moses, or would they fly by? The Bible does not say, but it says that when Moses returned from the mountain his face was radiant. He was not the same person. He was filled with God’s Spirit.

It’s over a month away from work. I wonder, if you had to the chance to spend that much time with God, if you would take it.

If you were able to spend an extended time talking with God and learning from him, perhaps you would not write a miracle book or produce a movie about your “40 Days in Heaven.” But how might you be changed?

Ironically, we do have the chance to spend time with God. All of us have the opportunity to spend time in God’s word, listening and learning. And we can spend time in prayer, meditating and reflecting.

If we do not, it’s often because we have too much to do. We want to see some product from our time. But God wants to see something very different. He wants to see the change in us that comes from spending time with him.

**Prayer:** *Dear Savior, I have spent all my life with others, running from one thing to the next. Grant me time with you, with your Word, and in your Holy Spirit. Let me grow in faith this day. Amen.*