

Mark 9:2-9

Mountaintops and Windows

Daily I find myself wandering through our beautiful sanctuary, marveling at the stained-glass windows that depict God's handiwork in the universe. My favorite window is the one I call the "NASA window" in which a Gemini spacecraft is depicted alongside orbiting electrons, protons, and neutrons bearing witness to the reality of God's presence not only in the heavens, but specifically in science. Whether it be God the scientist or God the Word made flesh, each window reveals a bit of God's identity. And yet as beautiful and as inspiring as each of these windows are, they do not tell the whole story. It's hard to imagine, but God's amazing love story with humanity and all of creation goes far beyond the images contained in these windows.

As these windows cannot begin to tell the entirety of God's story, neither does the transformative event told in Mark's gospel. I can only imagine how beautiful it must have felt atop that mountain where in God's presence, Jesus was bathed in glorious light, hanging out with the greats: Moses and Elijah, being affirmed as God's beloved son. Had I been there with Peter, James, and John, I too would have wanted to capture the glorious moment; I too would have wanted to build the biggest damn booth possible. Who wouldn't want to remain in such a holy place commemorating such a holy event? It's not every day that Moses, Elijah, and Jesus show up to the party.

But Jesus doesn't stay there in that glorious place. Instead, he goes back down the mountain; back down into the darkest of valleys; into the broken lives of those below – healing, teaching, and feeding. – calling us to follow. And so we follow; not remaining in our glorious sanctuary, but down we come and out we go into the streets of our city; into the lives of those who feel hopeless, broken and disconnected; proclaiming in word and deed that God's love story with all creation is alive and well.

The windows in our sanctuary cannot tell the whole story of God because they do not contain an image of you reaching out in love to family, friends, or maybe even strangers. There's no window showing the working poor being fed at Mustard Seed Kitchen, or helping house families through Family Promise. There's no window depicting you distributing bags of nutritious groceries at LOOP or putting boxes of cereal in the Community Food Cupboard bin at church. There's no window of you speaking out on behalf of the most vulnerable among us at City Hall or at the County Legislature. There's no window of you helping the chronically homeless find permanent housing through the Homeless Initiative. It is only when the windows of our sanctuary combine with the windows of your life in Christ that we begin to catch a glimpse of God's entire love story for humanity.

Fed and nourished each week at the foot of the cross, you and I are God's windows in the world, revealing and proclaiming a God whose love knows no boundaries; revealing and proclaiming a God who will not be limited by the walls of this world and the hatred that builds them.

We have a different story to tell than the power brokers of our world. For our story is God's story; a story of love that is limitless, reckless, and above all, abundant. Join us on Sunday as we are once again fed on the mountaintop - to feed the world.

Peace and Love,
Pastor Doug