

Community of Grace

Daily Walk for the week of February 24, 2020

Transfiguration of Our Lord Written by Mary Anderson

Monday, February 24th

His Beloved Son

“While he [Peter] was still speaking, suddenly a bright cloud overshadowed them, and from the cloud a voice said, 'This is my Son, the Beloved; with him I am well pleased; listen to him!' When the disciples heard this, they fell to the ground and were overcome by fear. But Jesus came and touched them, saying, 'Get up and do not be afraid.' And when they looked up, they saw no one except Jesus himself alone.” Matthew 17:5-8. After seeing Moses and Elijah, Peter wanted to honor them with Jesus. But God identifies Jesus as his Son and tells the disciples to listen to him. After that, they only see Jesus. We are to learn from this transfiguration story that Jesus, God's Son, is the one we need to follow, learning about him through his teachings and making him first in our lives. Fear, as the disciples rightly showed, can overwhelm us and prevent us from seeing Jesus' love for us. It can keep us from hearing God's word in our own lives. My fear of hearing noises in the night as a child and thinking someone was in my bedroom were alleviated in the morning light. Now when I hear noises in the night, I know it is just the normal creaks of the house and trees outside. But fear of failure can keep me from accepting new challenges like writing daily devotions or leading Vision Board. We all need to trust that God is with us and listen to his call. **Prayer:** Our God, in the voice from the bright cloud declaring Jesus your beloved Son, you foreshadowed our adoption as your children. Make us heirs with Christ of your

glory and bring us to enjoy its fullness without fear, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives with you and the Holy Spirit, One God, now and forever. Amen

Tuesday, February 25th

Remembering Peter's Witness

“For we did not follow cleverly devised myths when we made known to you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but we had been eyewitnesses of his majesty. For he received honor and glory from God the Father when that voice was conveyed to him by the Majestic Glory, saying, 'This is my Son, my Beloved, with whom I am well pleased.' We ourselves heard this voice come from heaven, while we were with him on the holy mountain.” 2 Peter 1:16-18. Peter, one of the disciples who witnessed Jesus' transfiguration, was a leader in the early church. There was corruption in the world and Peter felt he was near the end of his life and needed to remind the people that Jesus' life and ministry were real as was God's declaring him his beloved Son whom they were to listen to and follow. We may be tempted at one time or another to follow what we think is best for us or listen to others who want to take us away from God. If we read and study God's Word and trust that he lived and died for our sins, worshiping him and praying with others, we can overcome our weaknesses and lead the life he calls us to live, putting him and others first in our lives. **Prayer:** God of justice, you preserve your people even when all seems lost. Give us good courage to stand firm in conviction. Uphold your promises and create faith in us, so that we may witness to your abundant mercy and transforming love. Amen

The Goodness of God...Over Sin

Written by Pastor Matt Henning

Wednesday February 26th

Opportunity for Our Hearts

“Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust consume and where thieves break in and steal; but store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust consumes and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.” Matthew 6: 19-21. Every year lent begins with this text inviting us to open our hearts to the goodness of God’s Spirit at work in us. Lent is that season where we can add a practice of faith in our lives: a new quiet time each day, daily reading of God’s word, or additional service to a neighbor. Each new practice can draw you away from this world of consumption and into the peace and presence of God who longs for your healing and restoration. Prayer: “This lent, Gracious God, open my heart to the work of your Holy Spirit that I might grow in your goodness each day.”

Thursday February 27th

Mercy for Us

“Have mercy on me, O God, according to your steadfast love; according to your abundant mercy blot out my transgressions. Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin. For I know my transgressions, and my sin is ever before me.” Psalm 51: 1-3. We all fall short in our daily lives and the psalmist is correct when lamenting that our “sin is ever before” each of us. We should also remember the goodness of God that this psalm writer is praying to. Yes, our sin is real and present but so is the love, grace, and mercy of God who never leaves

us. The journey of lent is about recognizing this reality in our daily living and letting that transform how we understand ourselves and the world. Prayer: “Draw me deeper into your grace, loving God, that I may understand your forgiveness of my sin. Amen.”

Friday February 28th

God’s Mercy is bigger than Mine

“But(God’s change of mind for mercy) was very displeasing to Jonah, and he became angry. He prayed to the Lord and said, ‘O Lord! Is not this what I said while I was still in my own country? That is why I fled to Tarshish at the beginning; for I knew that you are a gracious God and merciful, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love, and ready to relent from punishing.’” Jonah 4: 1-2. Jonah reveals his judgmental heart toward the people of Nineveh because of his anger about God’s mercy for them. Jonah wants his faith to be exclusive but the very nature of God is inclusive. This story is an important one for us to remember when we begin to feel that our relationship with God somehow makes us better than our neighbors. Jonah’s small spirit is a reminder to us all that God’s mercy is larger than ours will ever be and we need let that mercy work in the world around us and even in spite of us. When we want to draw a spiritual line in the sand, we should stop be humble and invite a merciful God into the picture. Our walk with God will draw us deeper into the practices of mercy because his mercy for us and our neighbors is so large. Prayer: “Lord have mercy on me, that I may have mercy for my neighbor. Amen.”

Saturday February 29th

We are Called to Speak for Justice

“Is not this the fast that I choose: to loose

the bonds of injustice, to undo the thongs of the yoke, to let the oppressed go free, and to break every yoke? Is it not to share your bread with the hungry, and bring the homeless poor into your house; when you see the naked, to cover them, and not to hide yourself from your own kin?" Isaiah 58: 6-7. The Prophet is teaching us that the goodness of God calls us into action on behalf of people who are suffering from injustice, hunger, or poverty. The blessings and power we are given in this life were intended to be used on behalf of those who have none. God in blessing us is calling us to bless other people so that blessings of God's kingdom would unfold in the world around us. Prayer: "Guide Me, O Lord, to speak and act for justice in this world. Amen."

Sunday March 1st

The Goodness of God...Over Sin

"Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. He fasted forty days and forty nights, and afterwards he was famished." Matthew 4: 1-2. Jesus is led by the Holy Spirit out into the wilderness and faces temptations to: turn stones into bread, throw himself down to be rescued by God, and power over all the kingdoms of the world. By trusting in the power of God, leading of the living word, and staying focused on his true calling within creation Jesus is able to withstand all the temptations brought before him that day. Seeing the nature of Sin and the ability of Jesus to conquer this reality gives us confidence in the goodness of God over our sinful nature. We are being called into a deeper level of trust in the power of God's goodness over the reality of all of our sin. Prayer: "Merciful Lord, help me place my trust in your goodness over my

sin. That I may grow in Your grace this day. Amen."