

*After six days Jesus took Peter, James and John with him and led them up a high mountain, where they were all alone. There he was transfigured before them. Mark 9:2 NIV*

What must it have been like for the twelve following Jesus? They had been with him less than three years. Yet they must have been overwhelmed with all that took place while they were with him. People healed, demons almost instantaneously called out, miracles on the most feared forces of nature, and when you think about it, all we are told may have just been a fraction to what Jesus did.

He was a different kind of teacher, teaching with stories about everyday life.

What a contrast with the religious authorities of their time, turned spirituality and faith into a legalistic rant! Then they probably had times of nervous anxiety following Jesus, since their religious leaders and Jesus were clashing big time.

So Jesus ups the whirlwind discipleship by asking a “loaded question”. “Who do you say that I am?” They answer that he is the Christ, then son of God.

This is really getting serious, they probably thought, and wondered where following Jesus was leading. It is at this moment, we are told, in Matthew, Mark, and Luke, that Jesus takes Peter, James, and John up to a high mountain where he is revealed with all his glory, along with Moses and Elijah. They are even treated to some amazing visions with God speaking out of a cloud; much like God did for the people of Israel on their trek to the Promised Land. It all hangs on the words, “this is my beloved son, listen to him”.

We are told that Jesus told them not to tell anyone until he was raised from the dead. I’m sure they probably thought that was a good idea. Who would believe them?? But they did see it, and it did make an impression on their lives. Peter even recounts it later in one of his letters using it to point to the authority and majesty of Christ.

You might say it was like an old commercial that used to be on. The product was men’s aftershave. It’s early in the morning; the person putting it on is groggy. He splashes on the aftershave and says “Thanks, I needed that”.

They needed to see Jesus transfigured to see God’s glory and plan to at least begin to grasp the meaning of the cross and the resurrection. Maybe even Jesus needed the transfiguration to help him on the day he would after anguished prayer face the cross.

Now not all of us, or maybe even none of us will be privileged to have the same kind of vision Peter, James, and John had to affirm who Jesus is .

But God does work in each of our lives, and I believe, along with the challenges of life, God will in various ways give us our “sign”. “vision”, or special time, when we will be affirmed, or strengthened in order to keep on the path God has planned for us.

Many times a hymn, scripture, or something in nature affirms my God and I especially when I am at a low point.

So when that happens to you, give thanks to God, “file it” especially for future challenging times, and say to God; “Thanks, I needed that!”

Pr. John Van Haneghan