

May 16, 2021

11. Jesus Transformed — Luke 9:28-36

“Mmmmm. Isn’t that lovely? Let’s build three dwellings . . .”

Those were the words my spiritual director said to me after a time of silence in our most recent session. Amid this chaotic pandemic season, with kids home from school and the extra anxiety and mental load of life right now, that time to meet with God was a precious gift. I relished the opportunity to “steal away with Jesus,” and I resonate with Peter’s impulse to dwell on that unique mountaintop revelation. It *is* good for us to be in God’s presence.

But God interrupts Peter’s plan to camp out there. “While he was saying this, a cloud came and overshadowed them; and they were terrified as they entered the cloud. Then from the cloud came a voice that said, ‘This is my Son, my Chosen; listen to him!’” (Luke 9:34-35).

Listen to him. Real listening involves more than just receiving the message. When my children don’t respond to my words, even if I know they’ve heard them, I say with exasperation, “Listen to me!” What I really mean is, “Do what I’ve said!” I have a feeling that’s what God really means here with the statement, “Listen to him.” And if *listen* really means *obey*, Peter and I need to walk down the mountain and get busy.

What is it we are required to listen to and obey? Jesus summed it up—love God above all else and love our neighbors as ourselves. I can easily bask in God’s love in the quiet of my office (and am happy to do so!), but that’s not all Jesus calls us to. Like Peter, I need to come down from my mountaintop moments and meet the needs of the neighbors who are on the other side of my office door. We need those moments with God to sustain us in our work with our neighbors, but we are not meant to stay on the mountain.

Pete Grieg, founder of the [24-7 Prayer](#) movement, compares this to breathing. “We must not fail to inhale the breath of God (by which we were created and without which we die) through disciplined prayer and meditation upon Scripture. And having inhaled God’s breath, we may breathe out His life in loving mission, acts of mercy, celebratory worship and generous hospitality.”¹

God’s directs Peter and us to listen to Jesus. Jesus tells us to love our neighbors.

—Rachel Wallace

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¹. Pete Grieg and Andy Freeman, *Punk Monk: New Monasticism and the Ancient Art of Breathing* (Ventura: Regal Books, 2007), 20.

Looking for participant guide page numbers in the leader guide? The page numbers in the leader guide work for both guides.

Editor's Note: The leader guide for this session identifies the mountain where Jesus' transfiguration happened as Mount Sinai, the setting of the two previous sessions. This is geographically impossible since Jesus and the disciples are still in Galilee—thus, on a different, unnamed mountain that we sometimes refer to as the Mount of Transfiguration.

We apologize for this mistaken geographical identity. Next time, we will check the GPS!

Resources for this session

- **Hunter Hess** is the presenter for unit 2, New Creation. These teaching videos are great for leader preparation or introducing each weekly session.
The videos are free and available on [MennoMedia's YouTube channel](#).