

Sunday Morning Worship at Brentwood – Feb 7, 2016

Transfiguration Sunday

Notes for the sermon on Listening to God in Jesus

Luke 9:28-36 – Sermon Text = Luke 9:35

**Then from the cloud came a voice that said,
“This is my Son, my Chosen:
listen to him.”
(Luke 9:35)**

[Hymns = 534, 530, 556]

Key focus = Luke, as a gospel writer, emphasizes that Jesus is the Messiah – in the tradition of Moses and Elijah – listen to Jesus as the culmination of my work through all the law and the prophets – follow him and you will follow me



Luke's claim about the identity of Jesus of Nazareth

- Details about Luke few and far between, but consensus that he was a Gentile physician who was a friend of Paul – gospel compiled towards end of the first century – a gifted literary artist of broad culture – written for a Gentile audience -
- Features of Luke's interpretation of Jesus' identity – the divine-human Saviour sent and favoured by God as chosen Son to draw the whole world back into relationship with its Creator – fulfill the promise of the law and the prophets
- The *Christos* or Anointed One who will show and teach what God wants us to be and do – a community of beloved children of God who loves into loving the world

– all barriers to that quality of human community removed in work and witness of Jesus, the Christ – take up the gift of redemption by accepting the invitation to participate in this new humanity in the new creation

Why Moses and Elijah?

- In Jesus, God's Christ or anointed One, the intent of the law and the vision of the prophets is fulfilled 'on earth as it is in heaven' – it is a reality, *the* reality for us – reality as God desires it centres on love – first and foremost, God's love for us – then in response, our love for God, others, and ourselves – in that simple formula, Jesus summarizes all of the law and the prophets
- Moses represents the law – as Richard Topping, principal at Vancouver School of Theology, explored with us in last year's Lenten 'ted talks,' these teachings are best seen as something you 'may' do, rather than something you 'must' do – permission rather than prescription – freedom rather than constraint – what we 'get' to do rather than what we 'have to do'
- Elijah represents the prophets – one thing that marks Elijah's prophecies, especially important for Luke, is his emphasis that God works in and through people outside of Israel – through and among the Gentiles – inclusive rather than exclusive – prophetic vision is for a new humanity in a new creation
- In Transfiguration experience, Jesus revealed as Master of these Jewish traditions – the Anointed One to carry them to fulfillment – the One to whom God wants the world to listen

So what?

- How, then, do we listen to God? – that's the key question that emerged for me this week as I focused on this passage
- Let's begin by admitting that it's not always easy – Raphael's painting – rich in imagery and meaning – disciples asleep and people, from their faces, fearful and divided – too tired or too terrorized to listen for Christ's message of love – but that's what the message is – accept as free gift the love of God that energizes you for good and protects you against all evil
- A suggested pattern of listening to God:
 - Space and time to pay attention to what God in Christ through the Spirit is offering and inviting – mercy and grace for flourishing – beginning of the day – may be a night prior to going to bed or first thing in the morning
 - Use a passage from the written Word of God in Scripture – perhaps our weekly Memorize & Ponder passage - a way of listening to God in Jesus – read, reflect, respond – using devotional resources puts you in conversation with other Christians sharing their responses
 - Do something with it – put your response into practice – do something with the permission and vision of the law and the prophets - try something loving – think about what that might be
- Now, come to the Lord's table and be fed to follow through on that intention