

E-Series Reflect and Shine



*With that kind of hope to excite us, nothing holds us back. **13** Unlike Moses, we have nothing to hide. Everything is out in the open with us. He wore a veil so the children of Israel wouldn't notice that the glory was fading away - **14** and they didn't notice. They didn't notice it then and they don't notice it now, don't notice that there's nothing left behind that veil. **15** Even today when the proclamations of that old, bankrupt government are read out, they can't see through it. Only Christ can get rid of the veil so they can see for themselves that there's nothing there. **16** Whenever, though, they turn to face God as Moses did, God removes the veil and there they are - face to face! **17** They suddenly recognize that God is a living, personal presence, not a piece of chiseled stone. And when God is personally present, a living Spirit, that old, constricting legislation is recognized as obsolete. We're free of it! **18** All of us! Nothing between us and God, our faces shining with the brightness of his face. And so we are transfigured much like the Messiah, our lives gradually becoming brighter and more beautiful as God enters our lives and we become like him. —**2 Corinthians 3:12-18***

This past Sunday we pondered the Transfiguration of Jesus. According to Matthew, Jesus went up on a high mountain with Peter, James and John. There he was transfigured. There was a metamorphosis. His face shone like the sun, and his clothes were brilliant, even dazzling white and “full of light.”

Not only that, but Moses and Elijah showed up too. Israel’s great lawgiver—or at least the one who *brought* to the Israelites the Law—and a representative from the long line of prophets both show up there having a conversation with Jesus.

It reminded me of the scene when Moses first went up Mount Sinai to receive the Law. “When Moses came down from Mount Sinai with the two tablets of the Testimony in his hands, he was not aware that his face was radiant because he had spoken with the Lord. **30** When Aaron and all the Israelites saw Moses, his face was radiant, and they were afraid to come near him” (Exodus 34:29-30).

When you’ve been in God’s presence, you can’t help but glow. Like the moon shining with light from the sun, our faces—our entire lives—are meant to reflect the glory of God. That’s true in all we do. In our job, our home, our family, our community...we are called to reflect God’s glory, the light and love of the Son. Our vocation is to be the light of the world.

But, we don’t always shine the light perfectly, or even clearly or brightly. Sometimes the dirt and grime of our sins hinder our ability to reflect. And, it’s not just sin. Sometimes the pain, grief and burdens of life work like a dimmer switch and the radiance of our reflection is diminished.

Yesterday was Ash Wednesday. All around the world Christians received a cross of ashes on their foreheads while hearing the words, “You are dust, and to dust you will return.” These were God’s words to Adam, after he and Eve sinned. This is one of the consequences. Adam and Eve are escorted out of the Garden where they had access to the Tree of Life. Without the fruit from that tree, they will surely die.

“You are dust, and to dust you will return.” It’s a reminder of our mortality. The dark, black sludge is a reminder of our sinfulness and its consequences.

Last night millions of Christians all around the globe went home and washed their foreheads. With a little soap and water the ash is easily removed. But, I hope that our Lenten cleansing is not over when we wash our faces on Ash Wednesday evening. I hope that we can spend the season of Lent introspectively, contemplating the areas of our lives where we need to allow God to do some cleaning. If we don’t do that cleaning, our lives will never reflect God’s radiant light the way they were intended to.



Time to Shine in 2009!

What areas of your life need some cleaning? What do you need to add to your life this Lent to help intensify your reflective potential?

Trying to Glow as I Go,
Pastor Michael