

The last Sunday after Epiphany 2009

February 22, 2009

Over the years reflecting on the ebbs and flow of life, I have come to recognize and appreciate the presence of God. It has been at my lowest moments the greyest of days, the most difficult of times that I have come to understand or appreciate the glory of God's power. I recall my desperate loneliness as an adolescent, my father's death when I reached my twenties, the daily encounters with poverty and death while serving in the missions, the loss of my identity, job, career and vocation while in between churches. Perhaps it is precisely when life has broken us, when we are on our knees begging for mercy that this power of God's grace is revealed.

I do not think that I am alone when I say that I have never had an experience as dramatic as we have heard about in scripture this morning. Nobody I ever knew was scooped off the earth in a fiery chariot or stood before me in dazzling brilliance. My experience of the glory of God was much lower tech than that. Nevertheless it was as transforming

Although we pride ourselves on a rationale appreciation of the place of the divine in our life we do not yield to easily to the God beyond our understanding. Pride almost always clouds our vision and leaves us closed to the possibility and the mystery of God's love. It is difficult for us to get our hearts around the idea that God could love us unconditionally out of pure grace.

We spend years upon years trying to justify ourselves before God. We ration out our time and our commitments according to our standards of

what is fair, amenable and proportionate. We like God to fit into our portfolio, our schedule of events, our time table of convenience. Yet God has other plans God's grace is beyond our control.

I reflect on the scriptures for today and discover two examples of faithfulness stand out. In the Old Testament reading Elisha seeking to inherit the spirit of God's power follows Elijah. It mattered little where he led him or tried to dissuade him to leave he remained faithfully by his side. In his story we recognize this passage of power, the passing of the prophetic tradition and the carrying forth the legacy of faithful witness.

The gospel offers us another example in the transfiguration of Jesus before James, John and Peter This theophany stands in the shadow of the cross. The ultimate mission of Jesus is to bring forth a new covenant that completes or fulfills the old. He would need to remain faithful through to the cross. In turn he was calling his disciples to be faithful witnesses of this event and to carry his message forward.

On this last Sunday after Epiphany we stand at the doorway of the liturgical season of Lent.

We too are being asked to be faithful witnesses of the power of God's glory in our own lives.

The church offers us an opportunity to journey up our own mountains of faith and witness the light that breaks forth in the darkness of our own lives. We gather as a Christian community for forty days to bear witness to the transforming love of God.

Here at St Timothy we encourage you to fully participate in a variety of opportunities before you.

In an honorable tradition we always feast before we fast so consider joining us at the Pancake supper this Tuesday.

Our Ash Wednesday service officially begins the season of Lent and experience the powerful symbol of being marked with ashes in testimony of our common humility before God.

Each Sunday of Lent we will offer the opportunity for you to be prayed over and anointed with oil for healing of mind, body or spirit immediately following our both Sunday services.

Each Wednesday of Lent come and gather with your sisters and brothers around a simple supper and participate in our discussions around the topics of ethics and faith.

Throughout Lent come and share in the disciplines of charity, bible study, personal devotions and an increased awareness of our common mission to assist the poor and destitute of our world.

In it all seek out amidst the shadows of your life the powerful and transformative examples of God's gracious love. May we all increase our commitment to be faithful witnesses of all that we will come to see. Amen