

“...our faith is not a matter of our hearing what Christ said long ago and ‘trying to carry it out.’

Rather, ‘The real Son of God is at your side. He is beginning to turn you into the same kind of thing as Himself.’

C.S. Lewis, quoted in *The Divine Conspiracy*, p. 20

Transfiguration and Ash Wednesday

As we enter the season of Lent, consider Christ’s glory revealed in his Transfiguration, our mortality that we are reminded of on Ash Wednesday, and the reality of this glorious Christ transforming your mortal self.

Scripture:

Since, then, we have such a hope, we act with great boldness, not like Moses, who put a veil over his face to keep the people of Israel from gazing at the end of the glory that was being set aside. But their minds were hardened. Indeed, to this very day, when they hear the reading of the old covenant, that same veil is still there, since only in Christ is it set aside. Indeed, to this very day whenever Moses is read, a veil lies over their minds; but when one turns to the Lord, the veil is removed. Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom. And all of us, with unveiled faces, seeing the glory of the Lord as though reflected in a mirror, are being transformed into the same image from one degree of glory to another; for this comes from the Lord, the Spirit. 2 Corinthians 3:12-18

So we do not lose heart. Even though our outer nature is wasting away, our inner nature is being renewed day by day. For this slight momentary affliction is preparing us for an eternal weight of glory beyond all measure, because we look not at what can be seen but at what cannot be seen; for what can be seen is temporary, but what cannot be seen is eternal. 2 Corinthians 4:16-18

Voice of wisdom:

“From the very beginning of (Jesus) work, those who relied on him had, at his touch, entered the rule, or governance, of God and were receiving its gracious sufficiency. Jesus was not just acting for God but also *with* God - a little like the way, in a crude metaphor, I act *with* my power steering, or it acts with me, when I turn the wheel of my car.

“And this ‘governance’ is projected onward through those who receive him. When we receive God’s gift of life by relying on Christ, we find that God comes to act with us as we rely on him in our actions. That explains why Jesus said that the least in the kingdom of the heavens are greater than John the Baptist - not, of course, greater in themselves, but as a greater power works along with them. The ‘greater’ is not inherent, a matter of our own substance, but *relational*.

“So, C.S. Lewis writes, our faith is not a matter of our hearing what Christ said long ago and ‘trying to carry it out.’ Rather, ‘The real Son of God is at your side. He is beginning to turn you into the same kind of thing as Himself. He is beginning, so to speak, to “inject” His kind of life and thought, His *Zoe* [life], into you; beginning to turn the tin soldier into a live man. The part of you that does not like it is the part that is still tin.’”

Dallas Willard in *The Divine Conspiracy*, p. 20. (Lewis quote is from *Mere Christianity*.)

Study 11

Contemplation:

What key words and ideas stand out to you? How do they help you take a deeper look at yourself as a spiritual being who can be transformed by Christ?

To you, what is the difference between “hearing what Christ said long ago and ‘trying to carry it out’” and having “‘The real Son of God...at your side’”? Try to think of specific examples of how these differ.

Are there parts of you that are still “tin”? Do you really want Christ to transform them?

Practices:

Write down one or two of the key phrases that are important to you. Hold them (literally) before God and wait silently on him. Record any further thoughts he may give you.

In truth, all of us have “tin” parts that we cling to with varying degrees of tenacity. God does not often pry these areas out of a tightly clenched fist. However, if we open our lives to him and have a real intention of letting him, he will guide us into transformation.

Take some time this week, perhaps two 20-30 minute sessions, and meditate on Psalm 139:23-24. Discern if what the Psalmist expresses is something you really desire. If so, be open to God showing you one area he would like to turn from tin to fully alive in Him. Give him permission and a commitment to act *with* him. In the following days, be intentional about noticing how he begins to work and how you respond.

Here is Psalm 139:23-24 in two versions:

Investigate my life, O God,
 find out everything about me;
Cross-examine and test me,
 get a clear picture of what I'm about;
See for yourself whether I've done anything
wrong—
 then guide me on the road to eternal life.

The Message

Look deep into my heart, God,
 and find out everything
I am thinking.

²⁴ Don't let me follow evil ways,
 but lead me in the way
that time has proven true.

Contemporary English Version

©sharonrake These contemplative studies are the result of the thoughtful and transformative teaching I have received both at The Dwelling Place (dwellingplaceindy.org), and as a student of The Renovare' Institute (renovare.org). I pray that as you use them, you will experience the presence and love of God, and learn more about living with Christ daily. Sharon Rakee (recess.rakee@gmail.com)