

*28Now about eight days after these sayings Jesus took with him Peter and John and James, and went up on the mountain to pray. 29And while he was praying, the appearance of his face changed, and his clothes became dazzling white. 30Suddenly they saw two men, Moses and Elijah, talking to him. 31They appeared in glory and were speaking of his departure, which he was about to accomplish at Jerusalem. 32Now Peter and his companions were weighed down with sleep; but since they had stayed awake, they saw his glory and the two men who stood with him. 33Just as they were leaving him, Peter said to Jesus, "Master, it is good for us to be here; let us make three dwellings, one for you, one for Moses, and one for Elijah" —not knowing what he said. 34While he was saying this, a cloud came and overshadowed them; and they were terrified as they entered the cloud. 35Then from the cloud came a voice that said, "This is my Son, my Chosen; listen to him!" 36When the voice had spoken, Jesus was found alone. And they kept silent and in those days told no one any of the things they had seen.*

More than a couple of times it has happened: Sue is talking to me – I hear her but I am not listening. The words leave her tongue, strike my eardrums – even get into my brain but in there somewhere they are shuffled off to a waiting room. A song on the radio – something I am preoccupied with – what someone is doing over there – that is what is on the big screen. Sue's words don't stand a chance.

But then she realizes her words are not getting through. "Lynn, you are not listening to me." She gets my attention. I listen.

I think of the event in today's gospel as God getting the attention of Peter, and James, and John and me and you.

It all began with Jesus praying. Jesus stayed connected with God, his Father. He prayed in many places - in many situations. All through the gospels we hear about Jesus praying – a few times we even get to listen in on his prayers. He prayed for guidance, for God's glory to be revealed, he prayed that he might not have to suffer, he prayed for his disciples. We can learn from Jesus prayers how much we need to stay connected to God. Not just in the holy places and holy times but where ever you are you can do as Jesus did and pray.

While Jesus was praying the appearance of his face was changed. His clothes became dazzling white. Moses and Elijah appeared in glory also and spoke with Jesus about his exodus in Jerusalem. These great prophets of God – were discussing his suffering and death with Jesus. Then a cloud came and from the cloud a voice said, "This is my

Son, my Chosen; listen to him.” And it was over- Jesus was alone. And Peter and James and John kept silent about it all in those days.

Did God get their attention? Would they listen from that time on? Sometimes they will – sometimes they won't.

And you? Will you listen to Jesus? I suppose it depends on whether Jesus has your attention.

Sometimes he does. When a job has been lost that opens our ears.

Or when a doctor delivers bad news.

In times of danger, or times of sorrow. Or times of shame. Jesus has our attention then.

But far too often we listen with half an ear to this one who loves us. Or less.

Jesus did not stay all lit up - glorious. If he had come down off the mountain still glowing think of all the attention he could have attracted.

If God would make miracles pop up like popcorn exploding one after another just think of all the attention God could have.

But Jesus did not stay all lit up.

I think of fireworks, how it used to be that we shot them into the sky one at a time but with each passing year more and more must be going off at once to impress us. These days a good firework display has explosions happening everywhere all at once. What will it take next year to impress us?

God does not want a Fourth of July kind of faith for us – a fireworks and parades kind of faith but an everyday praying and trusting kind of faith.

When God had the disciples' attention he told them that Jesus was God's Son , God's Chosen one and he told them to listen to Jesus.

Sometimes God gets our attention with an answered prayer – or a danger avoided – events that happen just so. God does it so that we will listen to Jesus.

We gather here each week to do just that. I study the scriptures so that I may listen to Jesus. I prepare a sermon and preach it so that you may listen to Jesus. What he speaks cannot be captured in a few sentences or in some ideas to live by. We need to listen to him all the time for our situations in life are always changing. A few weeks ago someone came up to me and told me that what was spoken in the sermon seemed a message from God just for her. Every week when we listen what is spoken in the sermon and read in the lessons and sung in the hymns and prayed in the prayers is a message from God just for me and just for you. We need to be listening, though.

That means that we need to be in worship each week, whether here or wherever you are. We need to come to worship ready to focus – staying up late the night before may not be a good thing for our relationship with God. We need to work to listen.

I work on listening to Sue because she loves me. I know that.

I hope you will be working on listening to Jesus for the same reason. He loves you more than anyone you know – wants the very best for you.

Listen to him. Amen.