

*2Six days later, Jesus took with him Peter and James and John, and led them up a high mountain apart, by themselves. And he was transfigured before them, 3and his clothes became dazzling white, such as no one on earth could bleach them. 4And there appeared to them Elijah with Moses, who were talking with Jesus. 5Then Peter said to Jesus, "Rabbi, it is good for us to be here; let us make three dwellings, one for you, one for Moses, and one for Elijah." 6He did not know what to say, for they were terrified. 7Then a cloud overshadowed them, and from the cloud there came a voice, "This is my Son, the Beloved; listen to him!" 8Suddenly when they looked around, they saw no one with them any more, but only Jesus.*

*9As they were coming down the mountain, he ordered them to tell no one about what they had seen, until after the Son of Man had risen from the dead. 10So they kept the matter to themselves, questioning what this rising from the dead could mean.*

I suppose the notification will be coming soon. People at your door with microphones and cameras, equipment ready, and then, Ring!

You hear the sound, open the door and are greeted with these words, "You have won the publisher's clearing house giveaway."

What changes in your life?

Is your job the first thing to go? Will you ever mow your lawn again, clean your house, shovel your driveway? Will someone else wash the dishes for you, cook the meals, do the laundry? Will every day be a sleeping in day? What would you do if money were no longer an issue?

Whenever I hear someone saying what they would do if they would win, I think, "Yeah, sure." I suspect the reality of wealth is far different than the imagining.

Maybe that is why the story of the transfiguration is told - so we would know that Jesus was not just imagining that the glory of God belonged to him. Already before the cross, before the resurrection Peter and James and John saw Jesus in glory.

Jesus took them up a high mountain apart, by themselves. Could we find this mountain on earth? Mark's words about it being apart make me wonder. A barrier is being crossed, the division between the realm of earth and the realm of heaven is crossed for a moment.

Jesus was transfigured before them; his clothes became dazzling white, such as no one on earth could bleach them. Moses and Elijah appeared, talked with Jesus. A cloud, God's voice, "This is my Son, the Beloved, listen to him!" Then it was over.

Yet Jesus remained the glorious Son of God. "This is my Son, the Beloved," God declared. Jesus already had everything: The glory of God, life without end. There was nothing more for Jesus to gain for himself. Now what?

Almost immediately Jesus speaks of the Son of Man, that he is to go through many sufferings and be treated with contempt.

Not for himself, Jesus endured this, but for you. The glory was already his but he suffered and died and was raised because he loves you.

Much later St. Paul would write: "If I speak in the tongues of mortals and of angels, but do not have love, I am a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal. And if I have prophetic powers, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have all faith so as to remove mountains, but do not have love, I am nothing. If I give away all my possessions, and if I hand over my body so that I may boast, but do not have love I gain nothing."

Without love, even suffering and dying mean nothing. With love, Jesus sacrifice means everything: forgiveness of sins, life from death, our adoption as children of God.

In our second lesson Paul writes: "For it is the God who said, 'Let light shine out of darkness' who has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ."

What is it that we see in the face of Jesus Christ? A bright glowing that is the glory of God? A shining, a light? No, it is his love, God's love, God's glory in the face of Jesus Christ.

And now God intends that same glory, love, to shine in your face.

You have been given the gift of eternal life in Jesus Christ. You have already received the riches of God's spirit with you in your baptism. The winner of eternity has been announced and it is you. Now what?

Will you follow Jesus? Will you in love give your life for others?

In Jesus Christ God forgives you all your sins. You will live forever with him. You have the promise of God's spirit in you.

Now what?