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BETHANY LUTHERAN CHURCH

ELKHORN, NEBRASKA

MARCH 9, 2008

PASTOR MARK FRY

1 PASTOR MARK FRY: Good morning. Great to be amongst
2 you. A show of Bibles would be a good thing. Fantastic,
3 beautiful. I'm so proud of you.

4 It's interesting, at the 7:45 service I did that and
5 somebody laughed at me and I kind of went I'm serious, and
6 they just kind of eyeball to eyeballed me on it.

7 I just don't understand that fear factor, and I
8 apologize that we have kind of made this book so unattainable
9 to ourselves.

10 It's really a funny dynamic, isn't it, you know, I
11 feel weird hauling my Bible around. I'm like that's a good
12 weird.

13 But if we really do want to learn what God has to
14 say to us and turn our eyes to Jesus and learn that, that as
15 disciples we are learners, and that journey never ends, we
16 are continuously learning, even in heaven, so it's a good
17 time to start that.

18 We are going to look at, as you may or may know not
19 know, we are doing Psalms of ascent on Wednesdays, we have
20 one more Wednesday this week, those were the Psalms the
21 Hebrew people would sing as they would travel to Jerusalem,
22 to Mt. Zion, three times a year.

23 One of those times they would travel there would be
24 for what is called the feast of tabernacles.

25 And that's what we are going to see in our story

1 today, is this tabernacle story.

2 But as they would sing along, they would sing these
3 Psalms, 120 through 134, and they would climb up to
4 Jerusalem.

5 So what we decided to do, and this is our last
6 mountain top experience, other than we have mountains of Palm
7 Sunday, we'll do a little mountain thing next week.

8 And also that mountain climb to Calvary on Good
9 Friday and then, of course, Easter.

10 So we are going to look at this Mount of
11 Transfiguration, and kind of the catch word of that is about
12 humility.

13 So we are going to see it in Mark 9, so join me in
14 the back of your Bible, the New Testament, Gospel of Mark,
15 the 9th Chapter.

16 And we're going to jump into Chapter 9 in just a
17 moment, but I want you to see a verse of context right
18 preceding this in Mark 8. So Mark 8, beginning at Verse 27.

19 "Jesus went on with his disciples to the villages of
20 Caesarea Philippi and on the way he asked his disciples, 'Who
21 do people say that I am?'

22 "And they answered him, 'John the Baptist, and
23 others Elijah, and still others one of the prophets.'

24 "And he asked them, 'But who do you say that I am?'

25 "Peter answered him, 'You are the Messiah.'

1 "And he sternly ordered them not to tell anyone
2 about him."

3 The context is that this mountain top experience of
4 the disciples hearing who Jesus is, and Peter confessing, you
5 are the Christ, takes place.

6 And then what Jesus does in that immediate next
7 little chapter is he starts to teach about how he's going to
8 be killed, and then we enter our story then of Mark 9.

9 So I want you to see that context, because when it
10 says right in our first verse we are going to look at, six
11 days later, six days after what?

12 What has just happened? Peter let the cat out of
13 the bag. You are the anointed one of God.

14 You are the Christ, the Messiah, and Jesus said
15 don't tell anybody.

16 Amazing secrecy there, but now we're going to unwrap
17 it a bit.

18 Let's look at Mark 9, Verses 2 through 8. This is
19 one of the few stories that is written in Matthew, Mark, and
20 Luke.

21 And it's always this same sequence of the confession
22 of Peter, and then Jesus tells about needing to die, and then
23 he goes to this Mount of Transfiguration, which we are going
24 to look at right now. Let's climb that mountain together.

25 "Six days later, Jesus took with him Peter and James

1 and John, and led them up a high mountain apart by
2 themselves.

3 "And he was transfigured before them, and his
4 clothes became dazzling white, such as no one on earth could
5 bleach them.

6 "And there appeared to them Elijah with Moses, who
7 were talking with Jesus.

8 "Then Peter said to Jesus, 'Rabbi, it is good for us
9 to be here. Let us make three dwellings; one for you, one
10 for Moses and one for Elijah.'

11 "He did not know what to say, for they were
12 terrified.

13 "Then a cloud overshadowed them, and from the cloud
14 there came a voice. 'This is my beloved son. Listen to
15 him.'

16 "Suddenly, when they looked around, they saw no one
17 with them any more, but only Jesus."

18 Great story. Now we've climbed this mountain with
19 our Lord, and so what I want to do right this moment is I
20 want to stop here and pray in this holy place. Let's do
21 that.

22 Lord, we thank for you to this invitation to climb,
23 and we thank you for where we are.

24 It's a good place, Lord. As Peter said, it is good
25 to be here.

1 And so, Lord, may we resist the temptation to do
2 something now and just be here, to be in your presence on
3 this holy mountain, Lord.

4 May we learn here now, Lord, about how precious you
5 are.

6 We bring you more than a song. We love the fact,
7 Lord, that you've called us to be right here in our lives.

8 This is holy ground, Lord, so forgive us that urge
9 to want to build something, to do something, but now, Lord,
10 would you please teach us, for we come into your presence
11 with gratitude, and with humility. Thank you, Lord. Amen.

12 That's it, see, is the disciples, they are in this
13 holy place, and they are terrified and they don't know what
14 they do.

15 Peter immediately offers to do something. It's so
16 good for us to be here, Lord. Do you want us to build three
17 booths?

18 He didn't know what to say, for they were terrified,
19 and I think that that's sometimes what happens.

20 But I want to look at this story with you and I
21 don't want to leave too quickly and I want to teach you a
22 little bit about it.

23 Rabbi, teacher, it is so good for us to be right
24 here, and that's the thing, God calls you right where you
25 are, and he loves you so much he doesn't want you to stay

1 there.

2 But we're here now and we need to be here.

3 Sometimes when the presence comes close to us we don't know
4 what to do so we'll do something, we'll wind our watch, we'll
5 clear our throat, we'll get out a cough drop, we'll want to
6 build something.

7 And so we are going to just pause in that story and
8 find ourselves with those three precious disciples and see if
9 we can learn some things from the text here.

10 It's just a great place to be, and it will be a
11 great place to do as well, but now we're here to be.

12 So let's look at this. I've always wondered why
13 these three. Why Peter, James and John?

14 I did a little research this week and what I found
15 was this isn't the only time that these three get to go to
16 special places with Jesus.

17 We see in Mark 5, Verse 37, we see a wonderful
18 experience that these precious three disciples, Peter, James
19 and John had.

20 This is from Mark 5, Verse 37, "He allowed no one to
21 follow him, except Peter, James and John, the brother of
22 James.

23 "When they came to the house of the leader of the
24 synagogue he saw a big commotion. People were weeping and
25 wailing.

1 "When he entered he said to them, 'Why do you make a
2 big commotion and weep? The child is not dead, but merely
3 sleeping,' and the people laughed at him."

4 He put them all outside and then he goes in and he
5 raises this little girl to new life.

6 But, you see, Peter and James and John had been
7 hand-selected by Jesus to go to very, very special places.

8 They are there when Jesus raises this little girl
9 back to life.

10 And we see other times then when these two, and they
11 even add another in another story from the 13th Chapter, the
12 3rd verse, Mark 13.

13 "When he was sitting on the Mount of Olives opposite
14 the temple, Peter, James and John," and now they add Andrew,
15 "asked him privately, 'Tell us then, when will this be and
16 what will be the sign that all these things are
17 accomplished?'

18 "And Jesus said to them, 'Be ware that no one leads
19 you astray.'"

20 This is like Jesus' little small group. This is
21 like his little accountability group.

22 He has Peter, James and John, and then this day they
23 also bring Andrew along, some private teaching, private
24 experiences.

25 And we see one final time then in the 14th Chapter

1 of Mark, 14:33, another time when these three are selected to
2 go do something very special.

3 Chapter 14, beginning at 32, "They went to a place
4 called Gethsemane," we will reenact that or we will hear all
5 about that in two weeks time, "and he said to his disciples,
6 'Sit here while I pray.'

7 "He took with him Peter and James and John and began
8 to be distressed and agitated.

9 "He said to them, 'I am deeply grieved, even to
10 death. Remain here and stay awake.'

11 "And going a little farther, he threw himself on the
12 ground and prayed that, if it were possible, the hour might
13 pass from him."

14 And you know the story. He comes back and these
15 select three are asleep.

16 They have been invited to very special places and
17 sometimes they've not lived up to that challenge.

18 But, again, why these three?

19 This is what I'm learning. Some disciples are
20 invited to other levels of discipleship.

21 And some are allowed these amazing opportunities of
22 learning and experiences. Amazing. I've been in on some of
23 those.

24 You see what happens, oftentimes when we have a
25 mountain top experience with Jesus, we start thinking that we

1 deserve that all the time.

2 So, again, the teaching is on humility, and it's
3 interesting, because Peter and James and John, they're on
4 this wonderful mountain top experience with Jesus, and they
5 want to capture the moment, they want to build some booths to
6 stay there, and that's not the proper thing to do at that
7 time.

8 And so it's interesting just in that very next
9 chapter, Mark 10, Verses 35 through 40, Peter is not with
10 them.

11 "James and John, the sons of Zebedee, came forward
12 to him and said to him, 'Teacher, we want you to do for us
13 whatever we ask of you.'

14 "And he said to them, 'What is it you want me to do
15 for you?'

16 "And they said, 'Grant us to sit, one at your right
17 hand and one at your left hand in your glory.'

18 "But Jesus said to them, 'You don't know what you
19 are asking. Are you able to drink the cup that I drink, or
20 be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with?'

21 "They replied, 'We are able.'"

22 It's amazing. They have been on the mountain top
23 with Jesus and now their sails are pretty full of themselves.

24 And so James and John, they're kind of like we're a
25 little better than the rest of these knuckleheads that you

1 called to follow you, so we would like you to give us the
2 best seats in the kingdom.

3 Jesus is kind of like are you able?

4 You bet we are. We've been to the mountain top.

5 And he basically says, well, you guys aren't able,
6 and Peter is not with them when they ask for special seating
7 privileges, but you remember the story of Peter that will
8 happen here in a brief amount of time.

9 He starts getting kind of full of himself and then
10 the next thing you know there's a charcoal fire where he's
11 warming himself, and Jesus has been hauled away, and he
12 denies Jesus three times.

13 That's his mountain top experience, and what he does
14 is he falls off of that mountain and he goes right into the
15 valley.

16 And then Jesus comes back to him on Easter and he
17 says Peter, do you love me?

18 You know I love you Lord.

19 Do you love me? He asks him three times. Feed my
20 lambs, tend my sheep, feed my sheep.

21 You see, that's the interesting thing, because there
22 are a lot of Christians who think they are on a special
23 level, a special dimension of connectivity to God, and it
24 just doesn't work that way.

25 It's about humility; it's not about achievement.

1 It's about being, regardless of what we've done.

2 And sometimes we're just privileged to go to those
3 next levels.

4 It's an awesome place to go. Today is one of those
5 times.

6 But we dare not get too full of ourselves. We need
7 to always understand that we aren't really able, but only
8 there but by the grace of God go I.

9 That's the only way we can go anywhere in this
10 journey. So discipleship is about humility.

11 It's interesting as we look back, we will stay in
12 Mark 9 for a few moments now.

13 I mentioned the tabernacle thing, where it says we
14 want to build three dwellings, we want to build three booths,
15 different translations, tents.

16 There was literally a feast of tabernacles in the
17 Old Testament times and it was a very precious thing.

18 The word tabernacle, I did a Bible study on this,
19 it's in the Bible 170 times, it's a weird word, isn't it.

20 You kind of think of tabernacle as this building,
21 but it really was a portable device.

22 Throughout the wandering in the wilderness they had
23 this tent of meetings, and so it's a ritualistic thing that
24 they have as Jewish people, this feast of tabernacles, and so
25 the temptation is to build one of those.

1 It's great, it's good to be here, let's capture this
2 moment, and it ties in then with some Old Testament
3 tradition.

4 I've always wondered, it's interesting as Mark is
5 writing the story, Jesus is going up there and he takes Peter
6 and James and John with him and all of a sudden Moses and
7 Elijah are there.

8 This may be a question you've never thought of, but
9 I think of stupid things like this, how did he know it was
10 Moses and Elijah?

11 They didn't have baseball cards back then, they
12 didn't have cameras, and all of a sudden they're there. How
13 did he know it's Moses and Elijah.

14 That's really a good question, because probably
15 Moses looked a little different because he has the white hair
16 from his encounter with God and stuff, but I always thought
17 of that. What is the connectivity to that?

18 I think it important for us to understand a little
19 bit of that, so grab your Bibles back 2 Kings 2, and we won't
20 read this story, but in 2 Kings 2, this is the story when
21 Elijah is taken up into heaven in the whirlwind.

22 Elijah is one of only two people in the Bible who
23 don't die, they just go right to heaven.

24 And so Elijah is taken up, and what we'll see here
25 in a moment, we'll see in the Book of Malachi, but 2 Kings 2

1 is where that whole story is recorded.

2 And then in Malachi, that's the last book of the Old
3 Testament, so right before Matthew you'll find Malachi,
4 that's one of God's great things of Malachi, Matthew, Mark,
5 those M & Ms right in there, but Malachi is this really
6 fascinating prophetic book.

7 Malachi 3, we're going to look at two things from
8 Malachi, but in Malachi 3, Verse 1, it's page 915 in mine, it
9 says:

10 "See, I am sending my messenger to prepare the way
11 before me, and the Lord whom you seek will suddenly come to
12 his temple."

13 As a beautiful coincidental thing, that verse,
14 Malachi 3:1, is the same exact verse as Mark 1, Verse 2.

15 Mark 1, Verse 2, "See, I'm sending my messenger
16 ahead of you, who will prepare your way."

17 So Malachi is talking about the sending of a
18 messenger that will prepare the way.

19 And Mark, the Gospel of Mark is saying, okay, this
20 is that.

21 This book of Mark is going to tell about this long
22 awaited person that Malachi is talking about.

23 But we need to look a little bit more closer at what
24 this Malachi prophet is going to look like.

25 We see in Malachi 3, my notion of Malachi, it's not

1 the book I read all the time, but I think that Malachi talks
2 about two things, really.

3 He talk about the tithes and the time, and I love
4 what Malachi writes about the tithes in Chapter 3, Verse 6.

5 "For I the Lord do not change; therefore, you, O
6 children of Jacob, have not perished."

7 In other words I've let you live. Malachi 3:6.

8 "Ever since the days of your ancestors you have
9 turned aside from my statutes and have not kept them.

10 "Return to me and I will return to you, says the
11 Lord of hosts, but you say, 'How shall we return?'"

12 And here is how he is going to tell them.

13 "Will anyone rob God? Yet you are robbing me. But
14 you say, 'How are we robbing you?'"

15 "In your tithes and your offerings. You are cursed
16 with a curse, for you are robbing me, the whole nation of
17 you.

18 "Bring the full tithe into the storehouse, so that
19 there may be food in my house, and thus put me to the test,
20 says the Lord of hosts, see if I will not open the windows of
21 heaven and pour down for you an overflowing blessing.

22 "I will rebuke the locust for you so that they don't
23 destroy the produce of your soil, and your vine in the field
24 shall not be barren, says the Lord of hosts.

25 "Then all nations will count you happy, for you will

1 be a land of delight, says the Lord of hosts."

2 What Malachi is saying is, you guys, you're cheating
3 me.

4 The Lord says you're robbing me when you're not
5 bringing in the full tithes.

6 And he says you can test me on this. If you do
7 this, I will bless you.

8 There will be more than enough. See if when you
9 bring in the full tithe if I just don't open the gates of
10 heaven and just keep pouring it on.

11 And I can tell you it's true, it happens, but
12 Malachi is talking to the people, you guys, you are cutting
13 some corners in your faith walk, you're not being generous,
14 and if you're generous in the tithes, then I will bless you.

15 So he talks about the tithes and then he talks about
16 the time at the end of Malachi's 3rd Chapter, then beginning
17 with Chapter 4. Chapter 4, Verse 4.

18 "Remember the teaching of my servant Moses, the
19 statutes and ordinances that I commanded him at Horeb for all
20 of Israel."

21 Remember all the teachings of Moses, the first five
22 books of the Bible, where he starts talking about tithing and
23 everything else.

24 He says remember the teaching of my servant Moses,
25 "Lo, I will send you the prophet Elijah before the great and

1 terrible day of the Lord comes.

2 "He will turn the hearts of parents to their
3 children and the hearts of children to their parents, so that
4 I will not come and strike the land with a curse."

5 The last verse of the Bible, Old testament. I'm
6 going to send Elijah back and you need to remember what Moses
7 has taught you.

8 And so Mark, you see, that's exactly what he's
9 talking about then at the Mount of Transfiguration is those
10 prophecies are now being fulfilled, and the disciples are
11 there, and holy cow, here's Moses, and here's Elijah.

12 And the context of that is right after Mark 8 when
13 Jesus had just asked those disciples, remember we read it.

14 "Who do people say I am?"

15 "Some say John the Baptist, some say Elijah, and one
16 of the prophets."

17 And Jesus turns it right on its head and says, "But
18 who do you say I am?"

19 "You are the Christ, the anointed."

20 And that is exactly, see, this crucible then that
21 this whole thing is taking place in.

22 Now Mark is showing us that Elijah is back, Moses is
23 here, this is a really important moment, and so Jesus is
24 transfigured.

25 I was reminded yesterday of my age. Mr. Habrock is

1 the principal out here at Elkhorn High School.

2 I went to work out yesterday morning, it was
3 probably about 8:30 or something, and it's a big deal in our
4 community here because the basketball team is in the state
5 tournament, Bennington was in the finals, and so was Elkhorn.

6 I was privileged to go down and watch Bennington
7 Thursday.

8 Two Bethany kids from Bethany actually saved the
9 game for them, fantastic, Ben Sowers and Dexter Higgins, they
10 just played a great game.

11 And then Elkhorn won their game, and they won their
12 second game, and so they were both playing in the finals
13 yesterday.

14 So I'm out working out at about 8:30 and I see Bary,
15 he's on one of the treadmills, "Coach Habrock," I call him,
16 "do you have your game face on?"

17 He goes, "Oh, this is a big deal, Mark. This is a
18 big deal."

19 I said, "It's a really big deal. It's fantastic,
20 isn't it?"

21 He's getting ready to go to the game and stuff and
22 he said, "They have not won since 1971. They have not been
23 this far. I wasn't even born in 1971."

24 And I'm like, "Well, I was."

25 (Laughter)

1 So I get back on the treadmill and was reminded
2 again of my climb kind of a thing, but this is a big deal.

3 This is mountain top experience, is really what
4 we're seeing in this story.

5 And the reason for telling you how old I am, I can
6 remember back in the day when the Fuller Brush man used to
7 come.

8 Raise your hand if you are old enough to remember
9 the Fuller Brush man.

10 You poor people, you're like me, you're looking back
11 at more of life than you're probably looking ahead to.

12 But I can remember he used to come and my mom would
13 let him in and she would buy some junk from him.

14 This is before we had all the convenience stores and
15 stuff we've got now.

16 But if you notice real closely down in your
17 footnote, where it talks about Jesus becoming transfigured,
18 Verse 3, "His clothes became dazzling white such as no one,"
19 footnote, "on earth could bleach them."

20 So as no "fuller" could bleach them.

21 The Fuller Brush man couldn't make the stuff this
22 clean. That's where the Fuller Brush people got their name.

23 So the point being Jesus comes and he's absolutely
24 sparkling, he's glistening.

25 The light is coming out of him into this wonderful

1 experience they've got in this cloud.

2 And what Jesus has to say is important. If you look
3 closely at what happens, the first thing that the disciples
4 want to do, characterized by Peter, is they want to build
5 something.

6 "He did not know what to say, for they were
7 terrified. Then a cloud overshadowed them and from the cloud
8 there came a voice, 'This is my beloved son, listen to him.'"

9 You may say, well, what is the big deal about that?
10 Go back to Mark 1.

11 Mark 1, where we just saw this, "See, I'm sending my
12 messenger ahead of you," this Malachi reference in Mark 1:2.

13 Now we see in Mark 1:11, "And a voice came from
14 heaven, 'You are my son, the beloved, with whom I am well
15 pleased.'"

16 The difference being now what the Lord says is now,
17 okay, this is him, listen to him. He's got really important
18 things to say.

19 Same refrain, the same Greek, listen to him, and
20 don't build tents to contain him; rather build lives that
21 honor him.

22 In other words, don't try and contain him; convey
23 him.

24 Do you see the difference?

25 And so the way we do that is by listening to him,

1 and this is why it's very important that we familiarize
2 ourselves with this book, because one of the ways God speaks
3 to us, one of the ways Jesus speaks to us, is when we open
4 the word.

5 And we do that at home, we do that here, we do that
6 when we're on vacation, we do that at different times.

7 That's one of the ways we listen to Jesus. We
8 should never minimize that, and we should never then try to
9 contain that either.

10 But we need to understand, when the cloud says,
11 "This is my beloved son, listen to him," that's the most
12 important thing we do in the world.

13 We seek God's word, and we listen to him, and we
14 look for him, and we then try to be obedient to him.

15 But, you see, the temptation again is to get nervous
16 about that and want to go do something right away.

17 But it's revelation, and then interpretation, and
18 then application.

19 This is why we have been talking this whole time
20 about the climb up. This is very important stuff.

21 The flow of grace always begins up, and then it
22 comes down to in, and then it goes to out.

23 But that's very important for us to understand.
24 Don't contain me; convey me and listen to me, is what Jesus
25 is saying.

1 In other words, before you go off and do something,
2 put your head on my chest and listen to my heartbeat of love
3 for you.

4 I love you. I love you. Receive that love,
5 perceive that love, and believe that love.

6 Don't immediately go, well, I have to go do
7 something, I have to go build something, and then that moment
8 needs to be there.

9 This is a place we need to be and then we'll go from
10 there.

11 There are things he wants us to build, but it isn't
12 tents, tabernacles, dwellings, booths.

13 He want us to build lives that convey him, honor
14 him, praise him.

15 We're sorry for the things we've made our
16 relationship with you, Lord.

17 We bring you more than a song. We worship you.
18 That's what it's about.

19 Let's see what we have for a conclusion. I think
20 this is the deal.

21 God's voice calls the church first and foremost
22 upwards, back to listening to Jesus in different ways.

23 It was so cool when we had our annual meeting here,
24 First Communion was wonderful.

25 And, by the way, we heard some of those observations

1 that we love having the annual meeting on Sunday morning, but
2 don't do it during First Communion, it was little bit busy.

3 We've heard those voices and we thank you for that
4 feedback.

5 We also are listening and learning and we won't do
6 our annual meeting when there's a huge First Communion
7 gathering again.

8 It was really cool because we went through some of
9 the goals of our church.

10 And Dave Glatte, bless him, was sitting right there
11 and he goes I think one of the number one goals is we should
12 listen to God.

13 Everybody is like that makes sense, doesn't it?
14 That was what God said that day. Listen to him.

15 So that is what we want to do. So we go back to
16 listening to Jesus, we go back to listening to his word, and
17 he calls us to where we are, and he loves us so much he
18 doesn't want us to just stay there.

19 This is a great place to be, and I mean be, and then
20 it's a great place to go from to do, and to build and to make
21 a life that is pleasing to God.

22 So it's not what would Jesus do, WWJD, it's not just
23 that, but it's WIJD, what is Jesus saying and what would
24 Jesus be doing.

25 So what is Jesus saying? I think he's saying a

1 couple things to me today.

2 He says, first of all, don't be terrified. Wenda
3 had that in the opening prayer.

4 I don't know where that came from. That was
5 fantastic.

6 And I know what Jesus is also saying to me, and I
7 was absolutely overwhelmed when Alec was praying for me down
8 here before I got up to speak and I just had the sense of the
9 Lord coming and I was quivering like a leaf right here.

10 And, you see, he's not Peter, James and John, he's
11 better than that, but it's humility, see.

12 That's the way we go into the Lord's presence. It
13 isn't by pedigree, and degree, and I've done all this and
14 that kind of stuff.

15 It's just receiving and believing and perceiving the
16 presence of God.

17 So what would Jesus do?

18 Yes, that's important, but what is Jesus saying and
19 what is Jesus doing?

20 I think what he wants to do is build lives that
21 honor him; that don't contain him but rather convey him.

22 That's where I'm at with this wonderful text. It
23 has been a joy doing this climbing stuff with you and I'll
24 ask Pastor Wenda to close us out.

25 PASTOR WENDA FRY: Thanks, Mark. I really

1 appreciated the invitation to, in that prayer, to not think
2 about changing my watch, because I didn't do it yet, or like
3 what we're going to have for lunch.

4 That was a real challenge, because sometimes I
5 wander as well in my mind, what am I going to do later, or
6 how am I going to get that done.

7 So that was awesome, just the invitation to sit in
8 his presence, and it was true when Alec prayed and ushered us
9 into his presence at that moment.

10 In my Bible, after the cloud says this is my son,
11 listen to him, this is what it says.

12 "The next minute the disciples looked around,
13 rubbing their eyes, seeing nothing only but Jesus."

14 Wouldn't that be awesome if we did that, usually
15 when we rub our eyes we see the world, if we rubbed our eyes
16 and saw only Jesus.

17 So as a way of responding today, I don't think we've
18 ever done this actually, but I'm wondering if you would be
19 willing, instead of looking this way, I wonder if you would
20 be willing, like the disciples, they had to go back down the
21 mountain after they were in the presence, would you be
22 willing to stand and look that way with me.

23 I would like to give you a blessing for the week,
24 because we've just been with Jesus and now we are going to go
25 do, and we are better at doing, aren't we, than being.

1 So as we face the world, and as we face our homes,
2 and our lunches, and our tasks for this week, I just want to
3 return, because that's what the disciples did.

4 They turned and went down the mountain with Jesus
5 into the valley.

6 And the first thing they encountered were some
7 religious people who cross-examined them.

8 That's the first thing that happened to them, and it
9 might happen to us.

10 So, Lord, we are going to ask your blessing upon us.
11 We've been anointed here today to sit with you, and now we
12 pray that you would anoint us to go with you.

13 Give us a shield, and a protection, Lord, we have it
14 already in our baptism, we know, we forget it, we thought
15 that was then, but it can be used today, a shield against
16 those who would cross-examine us.

17 And, Lord, we want to come up, having rubbed our
18 eyes, and see only you, only you at lunch, only you in our
19 child's questions, only you in our irritations, because maybe
20 you're trying to love us.

21 Help us as we go today to remember that you are with
22 us, nearer to us than we're able to ask.

23 Help us to rub our eyes, in Jesus' holy name. Thank
24 you. In your holy name, amen.

25