

Devotional Blog

Sunday 14th February

A while back I was tidying up the creche area at the rear of the church. As I popped the toys, which had been strewn across the floor, into a box, I spotted something that gave me a nostalgic smile. It was at first sight, a rather bashed Jet Plane with several bits missing. But I recognised that it was more than that. You see, if you knew the right way to twist and turn it, the jet plane became a Robot.

Yes, it was a Transformer, a robot in disguise! Transformers were must have toys when my lads were young. The good Transformers were called Autobots, led by their noble leader Optimus Prime, who disguised as a juggernaut lorry fought to save Earth from the evil Decepticons.

Now, the idea of positive transformation is very much a part of our lives. So many of us start a new year determined to release the thinner person from within our over-weight selves. Make-over transformations are stock in trade for much day-time telly, be it beauty treatments, house and garden designs, or even changing the look of your pet dog.

Transformation also makes it into the Gospel of Mark. Mark tells us in Mark 9:1-11 that Jesus goes up a mountain with three of the disciples: Peter, James, and John. The three witness Jesus being transformed. Well actually, the word used is transfigured. He physically glows! Not only that, but he is also joined by none other than Moses and Elijah. The three disciples are totally stunned by what they see. Mercifully as they climb down the mountain after the event Jesus explains that they are to keep quiet about what they have seen until after he has died and risen from the dead.

The disciples talk among themselves afterwards trying to work out what this “rising from the dead” is all about. It’s fair to say that at that time they don’t fully get its meaning, but they knew they had seen a revelation.

The disciples had experienced the glory of God, the shekinah, and it transformed Jesus’ face and clothes. This stunning and fleeting event powers out several major Gospel messages. The Jesus they knew and spent their time with is not only divine but has a pre-existent relationship with God the Father.

Jesus’ divine identity which often feels hidden in Mark’s Gospel is revealed. The Transfiguration points forward to the Resurrection and Jesus’ own Second Coming. The Resurrection of Jesus was a staggering revelation of Christ’s glory, which was briefly glimpsed that day on the mountain top. And to come for all of us is Christ’s second Coming when that very glory will manifest itself in complete splendour!

The marvellous thing is that like Peter, James, and John, we too get a peek at that glory, when we learn the Gospel. And it’s not just about our understanding. Brothers and sisters, God’s glory is changing us, transforming us by the Holy Spirit.

What is it transforming us into? Surely not a Robot! No! The amazing fact is that the Holy Spirit is making us more and more Christ-like! This is no physical make-over, it is a fundamental spiritual transformation.

When we, daily, accept Jesus into our lives, not only will our beliefs and values change, but we change our inner self. The Holy Spirit brings God’s love into our lives, into the joy and the pain, the success and the failure, the laughter and the hurt.

So, let's study the word, pray, worship, meditate, listen to the Spirit, and acknowledge the change in us. When we do that, we become agents of change and transformation as we tell of God's glory to all who will listen.

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