

**“CHANGED ON THE MOUNTAIN”**

**Pastor Mike Corwin**

**TEXT: PHILIPPIANS 4:4-9    GOD’S WORD: EXODUS 34:28-30**

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**I – CLOSE ENCOUNTERS:**

It was released in November of 1977, over 40 years ago, but has become a classic. I imagine most, if not all of you will remember this movie...

**SHOW MOVIE CLIP OF CLOSE ENCOUNTERS OF THE 3<sup>RD</sup> KIND.**

Remember it now? Telephone lineman Roy Neary, played by Richard Dreyfuss, has his life changed when he has a close encounter with a UFO. It changes him and something calls to him and calls to him. It causes him to do strange things like Build Mountains out of his mashed potatoes, or shape mountains out of paper-Mache in his living room. He finally makes it to and climbs the mountain against all odds and with the military trying to stop him and others who have been called to the mountain. At the top of the mountain he finds what’s been calling him, the mother ship, and ultimately ends up leaving his family and his world and going with the aliens into space.

**II – CHANGED ON THE MOUNTAIN:**

I got to thinking about this movie this week because it lays out what we’ve been talking about on our prayer month Sundays. The man was called to the mountain, it was a deliberate calling. As we discovered in week one we too are called to the mountain of faith. Like Moses, some burning bush in life usually sends us to the mountain. In the movie, Roy climbed the mountain and found the source of the call, the alien mother ship. When we climb the mountain, which we do by praying, we find the source of our call to. As we discovered last week, we find God on that mountain. The higher he climbed, the more he explored, the more Roy found out about the aliens. The higher we climb, the more we explore, through prayer, the more we find out about our God.

This morning’s lesson is that we are changed on the mountain. Roy’s life was drastically changed on the mountain. So much so that he left behind the life he knew

and left with the aliens. He walked away from his job, his family, and his world to be with the source of his call. He was trying to shape the mountain with mashed potatoes, but in the end it was the mountain that changed him.

We too are changed on the mountain. That's exactly what we see happening in our continuing story of Moses on the mountain that you heard read this morning. Moses has been up and down the mountain a few times now. He has prayed and spent time with God. A relationship has developed between God and Moses, and Moses is changed. It says that after spending 40 days and nights with God on the mountain he came down and his face glowed. It glowed so much that his own brother was afraid to come close. It says that it had this glow because he had been speaking with God. As Moses prayed with God on the mountain, he was changed.

### **III – TEXT:**

My message for you today is that you can still be changed on the mountain of God. You can still come away from the mountain with a glow because you have spent time with God. That's one of the messages contained in this morning's text.

### **Philippians 4:4-9 (NLT)**

<sup>4</sup>Always be full of joy in the Lord. I say it again—rejoice! <sup>5</sup>Let everyone see that you are considerate in all you do. Remember, the Lord is coming soon. <sup>6</sup>Don't worry about anything; instead, pray about everything. Tell God what you need, and thank him for all he has done. <sup>7</sup>Then you will experience God's peace, which exceeds anything we can understand. His peace will guard your hearts and minds as you live in Christ Jesus. <sup>8</sup>And now, dear brothers and sisters, one final thing. Fix your thoughts on what is true, and honorable, and right, and pure, and lovely, and admirable. Think about things that are excellent and worthy of praise. <sup>9</sup>Keep putting into practice all you learned and received from me—everything you heard from me and saw me doing. Then the God of peace will be with you.

Paul says that we are to rejoice always. We're supposed to be happy always. We are supposed to grin and bear it always. No matter what happens to us, no matter how bad our life is, no matter what difficulties are staring us in the face, we are supposed to be happy! We are supposed to glow by being full of joy. He goes on to tell us we are

supposed to glow by our outward appearance to others like showing gentleness as we are considerate to everyone.

Sounds preposterous doesn't it? Sounds undoable and crazy! How can I be happy when the world is crumbling around me? How can I be happy when my wife or husband leaves me? When the boss yells at me? When I get downsized? When my children are being unruly brats? When my best friend is spreading rumors? When I can't pay the rent? When I can't get well? And the list goes on and on. How do I show Joy and gentleness in the face of my life...I can spend enough time on the mountain with God.

That's what Paul is telling us in the rest of this passage. Do you want to glow? Do you want to overcome adversity? Do you want to be able to laugh in the face of trouble...then pray! Spend some time on the mountain with God thanking him for all he's done and telling him all that you need. He says that if you do that you will experience a peace that passes human understanding...you will glow!

So quit worrying about things, pray. Quit fretting and just climb the mountain, talk to God, think about God and all the good things that flow from the mountain and you'll glow. And then when you come down from the mountain, just like Moses, you'll glow. If you put into practice what you learn on the mountain with God, if you allow yourself to be changed on the mountain, then you will always glow because the God of peace will always be with you!

#### **IV – MAKE THE CLIMB:**

If you want to glow...then you have to climb. If you want to be changed, you have to climb the mountain...you have to pray. I know it's not always easy to climb. But you have to be like Roy in the movie. He climbed the mountain regardless of the forces that tried to stop him. The army set up roadblocks and he drove around them. They closed down roads and he walked through fields, they laid out dead animals to scare him off and he kept going. They even leveled weapons at him and made threats but he continued to climb. Even when they gassed the people who were climbing the mountain, he persevered, he made it to the top, and he found the source of his call, and he had his life changed.

I know your climb won't always be easy. You'll be faced with time consuming matters. You'll be tired. Your family will demand your attention. Your boss will set

deadlines. Your health will fail you from time to time. The enemy will do everything in his power to stop your climb, putting up roadblocks and trying to scare you off the mountain. But you must persevere. You must overcome every obstacle; make it around and over every roadblock put in your way so that one day you too will reach the top of the mountain. Your life will be changed each and every day by the climb. Some days in little unnoticeable ways, some days in dramatic and remarkable ways, but you will be changed and someday you will reach the top of the mountain and your life will be changed for all of eternity. You'll find the source of your call and you'll leave for even greater heights for eternity. Your glow will become heavenly.

Ask yourself this day what you need to do to make the climb. What roadblocks and obstacles you need to overcome, drive around, or defeat to be able to spend time in prayer with God. If you don't make the climb, your life will never change, and you will never glow.

### **V – FOLLOW JESUS:**

If you want to make the climb successful, then follow Jesus. I've shown you numerous examples already about how he climbed up the mountain to pray. Last week we looked at the story of the transfiguration and how he glowed dazzling white as he spent time in prayer with God.

He climbed another mountain a short time later. A mountain called Calvary. He climbed it in the face of adversity with blood pouring down his body from the open wounds left by the lash. With blood pouring down his face from the wounds caused by the thorns. He climbed it with the rough wood of a cross bearing down on his shoulders as he climbed. With people yelling taunts and insults at him as he climbed. But climb it he did and when he got to the top of the mountain he climbed up on that cross, got nailed to that cross, and died on the mountain. But because he did, three days later he was resurrected and glowed like no one has ever glowed before or ever will again as God gave him the glorious place he deserved and made him the King of kings and Lord of lords. He was changed forever and because he was so can you be.

What is it you have to overcome on your climb up that mountain that even compares to what Jesus overcame to climb his? And yet if you follow him and make the climb too, you will one day glow brighter than you ever have before too. Make the climb, it will change your life. God is calling...it's time to answer!

AMEN

