

The Adopted Life

Fourth Sunday of Advent ~ 12.19.2010

Being Faced

This week's Psalm cries out the thrice-repeated chorus: "Restore us, O God; let your face shine, that we may be saved." Being faced by God causes healing. Because of this, the scriptures are permeated with the longing for the divine face: "May the LORD make his face shine upon you." "You hid Your face; I was dismayed." "Hide Your face from my sins." "Your face, LORD, do I seek."

Our desire for God's face is infinitely fulfilled in Jesus' coming to face us in person. We behold "the glory of God in the face of Jesus." When Jesus showed himself to his disciples, "his face shone like the sun." Those who disbelieve the gospel fear his face; they ask the mountains to fall on them to prevent his face from shining on them. But those who believe see his face in unveiled glory, and their own faces are made to shine as a result.

The coming of the incarnate Christ is the coming of Immanuel, God-With-Us, God-in-Your-Face. In Jesus, once and for all, God has faced us. In Jesus, we have faced God. And it is healing us.

~ John Stonecypher