

April 14th, 2019
The Transfiguration
Mark 9:1-13

BIBLE IN A YEAR READING PLAN

Apr 7	2 Samuel 8-12	Apr 11	2 Samuel 22-24
Apr 8	2 Samuel 13-15	Apr 12	1 Kings 1-2
Apr 9	2 Samuel 16-18	Apr 13	1 Kings 3-5
Apr 10	2 Samuel 19-21	Apr 14	1 Kings 6-7

Lesson Introduction: *This short passage is one of great significance in the Gospel of Mark. Up to this point, Jesus had been concealing who He was, but as we saw last week, God had revealed the fact that Jesus is the Christ to Peter and the disciples. In these verses, that revelation will be taken to the next level, as Jesus will be seen for who He really is, “the radiance of the glory of God and the exact imprint of his nature” (Hebrews 1:3). As we study today, we will see who Jesus really is, God’s love for His Son, our human nature, and God’s instruction regarding His Son.*

FOUNDATIONAL TRUTHS OF THE PASSAGE:

- **Jesus is the image of the invisible God (V. 2-3)**
- **Jesus is the beloved Son of God (7)**
- **God calls us to listen to and follow Jesus (V. 7)**

Mark 9:1-13 English Standard Version

1 And he said to them, “Truly, I say to you, there are some standing here who will not taste death until they see the kingdom of God after it has come with power.”

2 And after six days Jesus took with him Peter and James and John, and led them up a high mountain by themselves. And he was transfigured before them, 3 and his clothes became radiant, intensely white, as no one on earth could bleach them. 4 And there appeared to them Elijah with Moses, and they were talking with Jesus. 5 And Peter said to Jesus, “Rabbi, it is good that we are here. Let us make three tents, one for you and one for Moses and one for Elijah.” 6 For he did not know what to say, for they were terrified. 7 And a cloud overshadowed them, and a voice came out of the cloud, “This is my beloved Son; listen to him.” 8 And suddenly, looking around, they no longer saw anyone with them but Jesus only.

9 And as they were coming down the mountain, he charged them to tell no one what they had seen, until the Son of Man had risen from the dead. 10 So they kept the matter to themselves, questioning what this rising from the dead might mean. 11 And they asked him, “Why do the scribes say that first Elijah must come?” 12 And he said to them, “Elijah does come first to restore all things. And how is it written of the Son of Man that he should suffer many things and be treated with contempt? 13 But I tell you that Elijah has come, and they did to him whatever they pleased, as it is written of him.”

Discussion Section 1: Who Jesus Really Is (V. 1-4)

-How does **V. 1** relate to the following verses?

-What does the word, “**transfigured**” mean?

-What was the significance of Moses and Elijah’s presence?

-When Jesus was transfigured, what was it about His nature that was revealed?

Note: *In verse 1 of this chapter, Jesus states, “**there are some standing here who will not taste death until they see the kingdom of God after it has come with power.**” What did Jesus mean by this statement? He certainly could not have meant that there were some there who would witness the second coming before their death, because that obviously did not happen. This statement is placed right before the transfiguration account in Mark, as well as Matthew and Luke for a reason. Jesus was saying that some of them, namely Peter, James, and John, would receive a glimpse, a sneak peak, if you will, into the coming glory of Christ on the Mount of Transfiguration. What they were about to witness would point to the not so far off resurrection and exaltation of Christ.*

The Greek word for “transfigured” means “to change in form,” or “to be transformed.” With His death just around the corner, Jesus brings His disciples up on a mountain, in order that He might show them a glimpse of His glory. Mark refers to the clothing of Jesus shining brighter and whiter than any bleach could cause! In Matthew, we learn that “His face shone like the sun” (Matthew 17:2). Unlike Moses, who only reflected the glory of God when He caught a glimpse of His glory on the Mt. Sinai (Exodus 33-34), Jesus radiated with glory of

His own, for indeed He was showing His disciples that He is **“the radiance of the glory of God and the exact imprint of His nature” (Hebrews 1:3)**. The presence of Moses and Elijah signified and affirmed that, indeed, Jesus is the one that the Law and Prophets pointed to. Jesus is the better Adam, the better Moses, and the better Elijah. In this moment of transfiguration, Jesus’ disciples could see that the confession that Peter had made about Him just 6 days before was indeed true!

Discussion Section 2: God’s Love for His Son (V. 7)

- What does the cloud in this verse represent
- What does the Father’s love for His Son tell us about their relationship?
- What does the Father’s love for His Son tell us about the Father’s love for us?

Note: Amazingly, as this event unfolds, another glory appears. We see that **“a cloud overshadows them” in V. 7**, and this cloud was the cloud of God’s glory, the Shekinah glory of God, which John MacArthur calls, “the Old Testament Symbol of God’s presence.” So now, in the presence of God, the disciples hear that Jesus is God’s **“beloved Son.”** What a beautiful statement this is! The Father deeply loves the Son! John 17 speaks of the glory and fellowship that the Father and Son have shared with one another for all eternity. There is a deep love and fellowship that the Father and Son have always shared, and here, God speaks of this deep love. Amazingly, God has demonstrated His deep love for us by sending His only begotten Son, whom He deeply loves, to die for our sins (**Romans 5:8, John 3:16**). Because God did not spare His beloved Son, but gave Him for our iniquities, we can have absolute confidence that the foundation for our salvation is firm and immovable (**Romans 8:32**).

Discussion Section 3: Our Human Nature (V. 5, 9-13)

- What was wrong with Peter’s reaction?
- How does Peter’s reaction reflect how we sometimes interact with God?

Note: **Psalm 46:10** says, **“Be still, and know that I am God.”** The proper response when confronted with the glory of God in light of who we are is one of solemnness, reflection, humility, fear, and reverence. When we truly experience the glory of God, when we really understand

that He is all sufficient and we are nothing compared to His vastness, there should also be peace and rest. We can rest in knowing that Christ is more than enough to meet all our needs. Yet, Peter, when confronted with the glory of Jesus in our passage today is compelled to work. This may seem strange, but it is our natural bent.

Peter wanted desperately to control the situation. He believed that the best thing that He could do in that moment would be to setup three tabernacles for Jesus, Moses, and Elijah. The tabernacle, in Jewish culture, was the house of God and Peter hoped to keep the glory that he was experiencing right there were it was. Ultimately, he wanted to wrangle Christ’s glory. As we consider how Peter’s first reaction was to work, to produce something of his own in the presence of God, it should cause us to consider how it is that we ourselves approach. God’s goodness and glory cannot be confined to spaces we try to create for Him. Rather than being focused on what to say or what to do, often times we simply need to be still and reflect on God’s glory. Indeed, 2 Corinthians 3:18 tells us that it is in beholding the glory of God that we ourselves will be transformed.

Discussion Section 4: God’s Instruction Regarding His Son (V. 7)

- What did God instruct in regard to His Son?
- In what ways do we need to pause for a moment, and simply listen to the Son of God this week?

Note: As we close out this lesson, may we consider the Father’s instruction to the disciples. After telling them of the love that He has for His son, God says, **“listen to Him (Jesus).”** This had been Peter’s problem in the past, as well as at that very moment. Peter, like us, had his own ideas of how things should go, so much so, that He rebuked Jesus when He began to foretell His death and resurrection! We, like Peter, are quick to seek our own way, and do what feels right to us. **Proverbs 14:12** tells us that, when we follow the way that feels right to us, it leads to death. So, the Father tells the disciples on the Mount of Transfiguration, **“the way to life, the way to peace, the way to ultimate victory is to listen to My Son!”** If we are fixed on listening to Jesus, we will not be quick to build tabernacles in our attempt to keep Him by our works, rather we will rest in knowing that we are His, that He carries our burdens, and that through Him we will be presented as blameless before God (**Matthew 11:28-30, John 6:37, Colossians 1:22**).