



SERMON QUESTIONS

Mark 9 – The Transfiguration of Jesus / February 5, 2017

GATHERING

1. Have you ever had someone make such a strong impression on you that you wanted to take their advice for something important?
 2. In what areas of your life have you ever had a mentor, someone who walked with you and showed you the ropes?
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BACKGROUND

This week we are reminded that Peter, the author of 2 Peter, was an eyewitness to the life and work of Jesus. In the first chapter of his second letter, he reminds us that “we were eyewitnesses to his majesty.” Next week we will look at that passage, but for now we will look at the incident Peter is probably thinking about. Jesus led Peter, James and John to a high mountain and “he was transfigured before them.” This would have been an unforgettable event under any circumstances, but the context of Mark 8 illuminates the power of the moment even more.

The transfiguration comes nearly halfway through the Gospel of Mark. Most scholars think that Peter was the main source of information for Mark when he wrote his account of Jesus. In particular, the events of Mark 8 and 9 would have been burned into his memory and they are relevant for our application of 2 Peter.

Read Mark 8:27-33

1. Why do you think Jesus brought this topic up at this time?
2. What do you think it going through Peter’s mind when he answers Jesus about his identity? How does that fit with why he rebukes Jesus?
3. The name “Satan” is literally the word “adversary” (devil is “slanderer”). In what way is Peter an adversary to Jesus here?

Read Mark 8:34 – 9:1

1. Jesus calls the crowd to him because this is something he wants all of his followers to know. Jesus makes his famous statement about following him. **How does this statement fit with what has just happened between Peter and Jesus?**
2. People use the phrase “my cross to bear,” meaning some type of trial or difficulty. **What did it mean to the people in Jesus’ day? How do you think people responded to that?**

Looking at the Transfiguration

Jesus closes his comments to the crowd with the strange statement in 9:1. Some will not “taste death” before they see the Kingdom of God come with power. Some have concluded from this that Jesus or Mark must be wrong since that generation died and Jesus’ visible Kingdom did not come. But in every Gospel where this statement is recorded, it is followed by the transfiguration, which probably means that this is what Jesus means by “seeing the Kingdom of God.”

Read Mark 9:2-12

1. What do you think the dazzling white appearance signifies?
2. Who are Moses and Elijah? What do you think they represent? Moses was the lawgiver and the one who brought freedom and Elijah was a prophet after the kingdom split in half.
3. It is important to grasp that Elijah and Moses are there to meet with Jesus – it is his meeting you might say. Moses and Elijah are both revered people in the Jewish religion, yet when the cloud comes, what does God say and what does he mean for Peter and the rest of us?
4. Jesus tells them not to say anything about seeing his glory until after he has risen from the dead. Think of the conflict between Peter and Jesus earlier. Why do you think Jesus keeps his glory hidden until after the resurrection?

FURTHER APPLICATION.

In 2 Peter 1 we are told to add to our faith “goodness,” which we defined as searching for the good life in following Jesus. We also learned that at key points in our lives we will need to exercise God-enabled self-control to obey Christ, and that we must continue to do this if we are to grow (and to your self-control perseverance). All of it adds up to a life of love for those in and outside of the Church. This can be an intimidating thing to commit to. Imagine if we had heard the words that Peter heard from Jesus about following him: “Take up your cross.”

1. God allows Peter to see behind the veil of his humanity and to see his glory just after Jesus challenges the disciples to full commitment. **How do you think the revelation of Jesus' glory fits into the call to obey?**
2. Worship and obedience go hand in hand. We alter our lives around Jesus only when we grasp who he is. Worship reminds us of this. **How is your commitment to worship and how does this affect your obedience?**