

Sunday, July 24, 2016
Pastor Don Denyes

Introduction to Mark 9:1-8

We often sing in church that we want to see Jesus “high and lifted up” and “shining in the light of [His] glory.” That is a great line to be sure, but do we really know what we are singing? If right here, right now, we saw Jesus “shining in the light of [His] glory,” would we even know what to do? Sure movies and special effects may help us think beyond the bounds of our own imagination to have an idea of what it would be like, but even these things fail to capture the physical reality of seeing Jesus in all of His glory.

In this passage in Mark, Jesus gives three of His disciples a glimpse of His glory. It is clear from their response that they don’t know how to respond either, but it is clear from the fact that Matthew, Mark, and Luke all report this story, that this was one of the most significant things they experienced in their time with Jesus.

Context

In the previous section, Jesus clarifies for His disciples that a life spent following Him is not going to be rainbows and unicorns. If He was going to suffer and be rejected and killed by the world, they could expect similar treatment. Not only that, but it would be a regular pattern of suffering that they would experience. This passage, then, serves as an affirmation that there is glory coming, that the suffering of those who follow Jesus is not forever.

Structure

- I. Transfiguration and testimonies to Jesus (1-3)
- II. Reactions to the event and confirmation from heaven (4-8)

Read and Reflect *(Use this section to write down any thoughts you had on the sermon. Make sure to note any questions you had about something in the passage or in the sermon.)*

Read Mark 9:1-8

“A Glimpse of Glory”

What We Learn About Jesus

- Astonishing Transfiguration (vv. 2-3)
 - He is the God-Man
- Extraordinary Conversation (vv. 4-6)
 - He is the Final Word
- Definitive Affirmation (vv. 7-8)
 - He is the Beloved Son

Discuss

1. What kinds of people do we tend to “idolize,” or look up to reverentially, in our culture? Why do we idolize those people? And what kind of danger is posed by viewing other people that way?
2. Read 2 Peter 1:16-21. What does this passage teach us about how we should view religious experiences like the disciples had at Jesus’ transfiguration in relation to God’s written words in the Bible? How does that impact the way you think about weekly sermons, or daily quiet times?
3. Pastor Don said that when we have a deep, religious experience like the disciples had, we must eventually “come down off the mountain.” Have you ever had a time in your life where you have had a tremendous religious experience (where you felt really close to God)? What was that like? And what was it like to return to regular, day-to-day life after that experience?
4. Peter’s mistake was failing to give Jesus unique honor and glory when He was transfigured alongside Moses and Elijah. What would it look like for you to give Jesus unique honor and glory in your life this week? What are some ways that you can reflect Jesus’ unique glory to those around you?
5. How does Jesus’ transfiguration give us hope for what eternity will be like on the New Earth? How does that impact the way we view suffering, and even death, in the here-and-now?

Go Deeper *(This section is especially for leaders to consider as they prepare for the Growth Group meeting)*

Gospel Connections: The gospel is incomplete if we only say that Jesus died for our sins. The fact of the matter is that Jesus currently reigns in glory. What Peter, James, and John saw only a glimpse of that day on the mountain, has been the heavenly reality ever since Jesus ascended and will continue to be the reality long after these heavens and earth pass away. The good news of the gospel is that despite all of the suffering and rejection Jesus endured, He now reigns in glory and so we are encouraged in the midst of our suffering to remember the glory which will be revealed to us when He comes again (Rom. 8:18).

Whole Bible Connections: The connections between the appearance of Elijah and Moses on the mountain with Jesus and the Old Testament are vast. During their lifetimes, Elijah and Moses both faced suffering and rejection at the hands of the people of Israel, a fate that certainly awaited Jesus' disciples (Mark 8:31-38). Elijah and Moses were committed to the word of God being proclaimed in their respective days, as Jesus was the one sent from God to speak the truth about God. Elijah and Moses both encountered the glory of the LORD on a mountain—Mount Sinai/Horeb (Ex. 24:15-18; 1 Kings 19:8-19). There was great mystery surrounding both of their “deaths.” Elijah was taken up in a cloud (2:11-12), and Moses died in a place where no one knew the location of his body (Deut. 34:6). According to Old Testament prophecy, Elijah was to go before the coming of the Messiah (Mal. 4:5) and Moses was a type of the end-times Prophet, to whom the LORD Himself told the people they must listen (Deut. 18:15, 18; Mark 9:7). So Mark does not need to mention any one reason for the appearance of Moses and Elijah on the mountain with Jesus because their presence screams with the meaning that Jesus is God come down in flesh to be with His people. Finally, even though they are not mentioned by name, John clearly intends the reader to understand the two witnesses of Revelation 11 to be Elijah and Moses as the deeds of the “witnesses” reiterate verbatim the great deeds God did through them in their lifetimes (Rev. 11:3-12).

Theological Connections: Jesus is the exact imprint of the nature of God. He Himself is the second person of the Godhead. As such, He radiates the glory of God. He, along with the Father and the Holy Spirit, have glory within themselves since before the world began. They do not need anyone else to bring them more glory than they already have. For us to ascribe them “glory,” then, is to acknowledge the fact that they are glorious. As created beings, we do not radiate the glory of God, but we can reflect it to the world around us. The classic verse is, “we love because He first loved us” (1 John 4:19), but it is crucial because God is glorified when we love as He loves, and He did it first. Therefore, whatever glory is received for living the way Jesus lived, is rightly due Him.