

Sunday, July 31, 2016
Pastor Doug Phillips

Introduction to Mark 9:9-13

It is strange to our modern sensibilities to read that Jesus would not want someone to talk about Him. Jesus is the most amazing person we could ever know, and we want others to know Him, so it seems counter-intuitive for Jesus to prohibit His disciples from saying anything about Him. Yet that is exactly what Jesus does when people do not rightly understand who He is, why He came to earth, or what it truly means to follow Him.

The truth is, a lot of people do not have an accurate understanding of who Jesus is. Some say He is a good moral teacher. Others would even go so far as to say He is the Son of God. But until we know for sure what “Son of God” means, or until we have the proper category for His teaching, we ought not say anything. Thankfully, in the Bible, we have, rightly understood, all we need to know about Jesus to enjoy Him fully and share Him with others.

Context

In the previous section, Jesus had just given Peter, James, and John a glimpse of His true, heavenly glory. They had gone up with Him on the mountain, where He was changed before their very eyes and appeared with Moses and Elijah. While it was reminiscent of the glory cloud which descended on Mount Sinai when Moses led the people of Israel, it also signifies the future when Jesus will no longer be the suffering Son of Man, but will return in glory with the angels to judge the world.

Structure

- I. Transfiguration (1-8)
- II. Command to Silence (9-13)

Discuss

1. Pastor Doug referenced the Socrates quote: “an unexamined life is not worth living.” Why would someone want to live an “unexamined” life? Why do you think people are comfortable living without thinking about life’s meaning and purpose?
2. Read Romans 1:18-32 as a group. What does that passage tell us about our non-Christian friends? How does that change the way you might interact with them or share Christ with them?
3. Jesus’ death paid the penalty for the sins of those who trust Him and emancipated us from bondage to sin. In light of that, how should we think about and relate to God?
4. Jesus’ resurrection exhibited His power over death, His rightful rule and reign over all creation, and gave a preview of His second coming when He will judge all people everywhere. How does this help us understand God better? How does it help us understand the world around us better?
5. Read Hebrews 1:1-3 and 2 Peter 1:3-4 as a group. How do these passages describe the certainty with which we can know God? How is that different from the majority view in our culture today?

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

Gospel Connections: At the heart of the gospel is the truth that God has communicated to us in the person and work of Jesus. To understand the gospel means understanding that we cannot know God apart from Jesus and that our salvation is not subjective but objective. We cannot be Christians on our own terms, we must submit to God in the way He has revealed Himself in Jesus. Likewise, our salvation is not a matter of degrees relative to our faithfulness or sincerity of our repentance. Rather, salvation is objective—it comes to us from God through Jesus so that all who grasp Him by faith can have eternal life. But we cannot obtain this salvation through any of our own contrivance, it must be through Christ as He has revealed Himself in Scripture.

Whole Bible Connections: Both the Old and New Testaments of Scripture testify to the gospel as it is revealed in Jesus. Have you ever wondered why God didn't send Jesus to die right after Adam and Eve sinned in the garden? Well, part of the reason, at least, is that Jesus' death would have had little meaning had it happened then and we certainly would not have understood it. But when the "fullness of time had come," Jesus came as a man, lived the obedient life, suffered and died, and rose again. If that had happened without the covenant promises, without the sacrificial system for making atonement, without the promises of a prophet like Moses, or a king like David, without a suffering Servant in Isaiah, or the Son of Man who will inherit the eternal kingdom in Daniel, then Jesus' life, death, and resurrection would have very little meaning. But as it is, God worked out the timing such that His death is unfathomably rich in meaning and gives meaning to each of our lives as well.

Theological Connections: Divine revelation is ultimately filtered through Jesus. Though there are many false revelations out there, but we can know for sure that the Bible is God's revelation because it uniformly points to Jesus as the ultimate ruler over all creation. Jesus is the pinnacle of God's special revelation of Himself to His people. We cannot know God apart from Jesus.