

Mountaintop Experiences

Today we celebrate one of the most neglected passages in the Bible - The Transfiguration. Jesus did not take a mountaintop vacation to get away from it all. Jesus was transfigured on the mountain to meet the challenge waiting for him back in the valley. We need to allow Jesus to take us up on the mountaintop periodically. We should not seek experiences, but neither should we reject them. We need mountaintop experiences with Jesus, and to come away changed. So, let's learn how to put ourselves in position to experience the glory of God.

Luke 9:28-36

As usual Peter broke the silence, but did not truly know what to say. I feel a bit this way about the transfiguration. Peter wanted to build booths to stay on the mountain, to bask in the glory. The blinding light on the mountaintop was the presence of God's glory in the world. God's glory is always present in the world, but we are not always sensitive and aware of it. A manifestation of God's tangible glory on the mountaintop is intended to remind us that God's glory - his presence and power are always present.

When Jesus and his inner circle came down from the mountaintop, his first encounter was to bring healing and deliverance to a terribly tormented epileptic boy. Thusly, we must have our own mountaintop experiences to empower us for the challenges down in the valley of our real life. We must conquer demons that attack us personally and those attacking people around us.

Jesus is the light of the world. Further, he said to his followers in Matthew 5:14, "You are the light of the world." We must have glorious mountaintop experiences, but for the purpose of living victoriously in the valley of real life for ourselves and on behalf of others. Peter wanted to stay on the mountain, but life moves on in the way that Jesus moved toward the cross. Moments of transformation are not to be held on to, but must be allowed to change us.

MOSES AND ELIJAH

- Moses and Elijah represent the Law and the Prophets
- Jesus perfectly fulfilled the Law and the Prophets--Matthew 5:17
- Elijah never tasted death, but was carried away by a chariot of fire. Moses went up to the mountain of God to die. Yet, his body was never found.
- Peter suggested three tents be erected, almost putting Jesus on equal terms with Moses and Elijah. But the voice from the cloud made clear that they were in no way to be compared with Jesus.
- When the voice had spoken, Jesus was found alone.
 - There is no one and nothing to compare with Jesus.

- In the letter to the Hebrews the writer shows the superiority of Jesus above the prophets, angels, Moses, the Levitical priesthood. Jesus established a better covenant the Old Testament, based upon better promises--Hebrews 8:6
- As much as the disciples adored Jesus, I doubt that they saw his uniqueness. Who knows if Peter even yet could have put Jesus in the same category of these heroes of Israel's history?
- I hear silly arguments today as to "who was right Jesus or Paul?" Our entire understanding of God is found in the person of Jesus. Jesus is my definition of God, of love, of Scripture etc. Jesus' words. Define the way I can please God, what is sinful, how to deal with fellow human beings, etc.
- **ONLY JESUS REMAINED!**
- THE TRANSFIGURATION gives us sliver of a picture of what our own glorified bodies will be like in the resurrection--**Romans 6:5-14**

FULLY AWAKE

- "When they became fully awake..."
- The realization of God's glory came to them, not in their state of dullness or stupor, but in a moment of heightened awareness: "when they became fully awake."
- Peter's logic only revealed his inadequacy. His reasoning was completely misinformed.
- It is popular to discredit religious experiences. Many poke fun of religious nuts who "hear from God" and such things. "Only the simple and weak depend on God!"
- Yet, the glory of God is only revealed to those who are fully awake.
- I have experienced glorious times in the presence of God in church, on the tractor, on my bike and in my study.
- We live in a day when we must see Jesus transfigured in full glory. Like Moses we need to go up to the mountaintop, and come down again with the glory of God shining on our faces.
- There are many demons to conquer in the valley of real life.
- Many are quick to downgrade faith perceptions.
- People say that , "love is blind." Not true. Love has the ability to see some things others cannot see. The same is true of faith. Faith is not blind to the realities of life; it simply enables us to grasp and understand things which otherwise are beyond us.
- Mark 5:20 tells how "everyone was amazed" at the miracle he just had performed. But, in Jesus' own hometown the unbelief of the people was such that "he could do no mighty

work there," except for a few minor hearings. Mark states in 6:5-6 that Jesus "marveled because of their unbelief."

- The crowds marveled that Jesus could work miracles. Jesus considered unbelief as out of the ordinary.
- Believing, living fully awake is our natural state as a Christ follower.

HOW CAN WE LIVE MORE FULLY AWAKE TO THE GLORY OF GOD?

- We are what we eat. Society feeds on a constant diet of what is secular-stuffed to the brim with non-nourishing fillers of unbelief and scoffing.
- Michelle is a gourmet chef. When one regularly feasts on exquisite Latino, Asian and American feasts, greasy tasteless fast food cannot satisfy. When traveling, we regularly find excellent Indian, Thai, Mediterranean food and brick oven pizza.
- I have tasted the glory of God. Dull, lifeless faith does not satisfy. The glorious, Transfigured Jesus lives in me!
- We live more fully awake when we enter worship services ready to fully engage in worship-singing, lifting hands, kneeling in prayer, sitting in silence and opening our hearts and minds to the risen Savior.
- Our daily worship and study in our private prayer closet is where Jesus will reveal his glory and transform your life. A shared meal with faith-filled conversation with brothers and sisters in Christ awakens our spiritual senses.
- We are not one-dimensional creatures, who live only by the perceptions of human reason and physical experience. We need to be shaken fully awake, so that we can see the glory of God.
- Let us seek God in holy expectation. Let's go up to the mountaintop to meet with our glorious Lord.
- Let's come down again to the valley of our real life living victoriously in this world!