

Valley Bible Church
Sermon Notes for May 21, 2017

Up The Mountain
Mark 9:1-8

Background: -Our text could not come at a more perfect time for the disciples
-Mark 8:27-30 highlights the greatest breakthrough for disciples in affirming Jesus' identity as Messiah
-After breakthrough, they were immediately deflated by Jesus' words
 -Jesus plainly revealed His path to suffering and death (vv. 31-33)
 -Jesus plainly revealed their path to suffering and death (vv. 34-38)
-Think of the doubt, confusion, anxiety and fear that were assaulting the disciples after such words from Christ

I. The prediction of power (9:1)

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."

"And he said to them"

-This verse is connected to previous passage (8:34-38)

-While the previous passage was a call to suffering and sacrifice for following Jesus, it ended with a picture of the coming of the Son of Man in glory

-Mark 8:38 "For whoever is ashamed of me and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation, of him will the Son of Man also be ashamed when he comes in the glory of his Father with the holy angels."

"Truly, I say to you,"

-Jesus will now give a startling prediction for His disciples

"There are some standing here who will not taste death until they see the kingdom of God after it has come with power."

-Some disciples present with Christ will witness the kingdom of God in its power before they die!

Question: Is Jesus implying that the Kingdom would be established in their lifetime?

-There are different views:

- (1) the transfiguration
- (2) the resurrection and ascension
- (3) Pentecost
- (4) the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70

- (5) the manifestation of the kingdom in the church
- Clearly Jesus was not promising that the Kingdom would come and be established in the lifetime of His disciples
 - The Kingdom as described in the OT was a kingdom of physical dominance and blessing over the world
 - The Messiah would be her King and there would be peace and justice on the earth
 - This never happened in the lifetime of the disciples
 - Up to the present, it still has not happened
 - People might advocate that the Kingdom came in and was established in the resurrection, ascension, or Pentecost
 - 2 obvious problems with these solutions:
 - 1) Note the phrase “the kingdom of God after it has come with power”
 - The Messiah-King was expected to rule with power in the Kingdom according to the OT prophets (Daniel 7:13-14)
 - 2) Mark 13:26 “And then they will see the Son of Man coming in clouds with great power and glory.”
 - In future days of tribulation unlike the world has ever seen, the Son of Man will come on the clouds with great power and glory

Answer: Jesus is implying that some of the disciples would get a glimpse or preview of “the Kingdom of God” coming with power

- This glimpse is what we see next in our text (vv. 2-8)
- All three gospels (Matthew, Mark, and Luke) contain this progression of promise and then preview in the transfiguration

II. The preview of power (9:2-4)

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.

“And after six days”

-This links 9:1 to the following account in verses 2-8

“Jesus took with him Peter and James and John”

-Jesus only took the “inner three” with him for this special moment

-Similar to the moment when He raised Jairus' daughter from the dead
(Mark 5:37)

“And led them up a high mountain by themselves.”

-Not certain where this high mountain was exactly

-Since the recent account was in Caesarea Philippi, many people think that this mountain was located north on Mount Hermon

-Verses 30 and 33 indicate that they would eventually return to Galilee and Capernaum

“And he was transfigured before them,”

-We would love to have more information about this!

- “transfigured is similar to our word metamorphosis

-Oversimplified, he became a different form or was altered

“And his clothes became radiant, intensely white, as no one on earth could bleach them.”

-This shining was also used to describe polished metal or the flashes of lightning

-This was a burst of glorious light

-Not just clothes but face also was changed

-Luke 9:29 “And as he was praying, the appearance of his face was altered, and his clothing became dazzling white.”

-Matthew 17:2 “And he was transfigured before them, and his face shone like the sun, and his clothes became white as light.”

“And there appeared to them Elijah with Moses,”

-Question: Why do Elijah and Moses appear?

-Neither's bodies were found (Deut. 34:5-6, 2 Kings 2:11-12, Jude 9)

-Moses represents the beginning as the Lawgiver

-Elijah represents the end as the one who was to return before the terrible Day of the Lord (Malachi 4:5-6)

-They are two witnesses that happen to be the most credible witnesses

-Elijah=Prophets, Moses=Law; thus, Law and Prophets represented

“and they were talking with Jesus.”

-According to Mark, we have no idea what they were talking about

-Luke 9:30-31 “And behold, two men were talking with him, Moses and Elijah, 31 who appeared in glory and spoke of his departure, which he was about to accomplish at Jerusalem.”

III. The petition for more power (9:5-6)

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.

"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.'"

-At first, this might sound like an odd response from Peter

-Not too crazy of a response, since Peter was thinking of the Feast of Tabernacles

-This was a feast to commemorate God tabernacling with Israel in Wilderness

-Israel set up tents to remember this time (Leviticus 23:34-36, Neh. 8:17)

-Leviticus 23:42-43 "You shall dwell in booths for seven days. All native Israelites shall dwell in booths, 43 that your generations may know that I made the people of Israel dwell in booths when I brought them out of the land of Egypt: I am the LORD your God."

-It will be celebrated in the Millennium (Zechariah 14:16-19)

-Peter thought it was time for the Kingdom!

"For he did not know what to say, for they were terrified"

-This is Mark's quick note explaining Peter's behavior

-Peter's words show his neglect of the necessary suffering that Jesus just taught

IV. The proof of power (9:7-8)

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.

"And a cloud overshadowed them,"

-Similar to the brilliant lightning and glorious presence of God on Sinai with Moses

-Exodus 19:16 "On the morning of the third day there were thunders and lightnings and a thick cloud on the mountain and a very loud trumpet blast, so that all the people in the camp trembled."

"And a voice came out of the cloud, 'This is my beloved Son; listen to him.'"

-God the Father spoke out of the cloud on that glorious mountain

-He spoke in a similar fashion at the baptism of Christ

-Mark 1:11 "And a voice came from heaven, 'You are my beloved Son; with you I am well pleased.'"

-God affirms Jesus as His Son and thus, the Messiah (Psalm 2)

- God also commands the disciples to “listen to him”
- This command appears to build off of the book of Deuteronomy
 - Deuteronomy 18:15 “The LORD your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among you, from your brothers—it is to him you shall listen—”
- The disciples might be tempted to reject Jesus’ teaching on suffering and discipleship
- Instead, God commanded the disciples to listen to Jesus, specifically in regard to what He taught about suffering and discipleship
- “And suddenly, looking around, they no longer saw anyone with them but Jesus only.”
 - As quick as the moment must have occurred in its surreal nature, it ended
 - The preview vanished in a moment “suddenly”
 - “looking around” the disciples noticed that everything was changed
 - They were privileged to see this glorious display of Christ’s powerful coming Kingdom
 - Surely this moment lifted them out of the doubt, confusion, anxiety or fear they had been experiencing
- How did this event impact the disciples?
 - 2 Peter 1:16-21 “For we did not follow cleverly devised myths when we made known to you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but we were eyewitnesses of his majesty. 17 For when he received honor and glory from God the Father, and the voice was borne to him by the Majestic Glory, ‘This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased,’ 18 we ourselves heard this very voice borne from heaven, for we were with him on the holy mountain.”
 - 2 Peter 1:19-21 “And we have the prophetic word more fully confirmed, to which you will do well to pay attention as to a lamp shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts, 20 knowing this first of all, that no prophecy of Scripture comes from someone's own interpretation. 21 For no prophecy was ever produced by the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit.”
- God pointed Peter to the living Word “listen to Him”
- Peter points us to the written Word “to which you will do well to pay attention”