

The Gospel of Mark

Part 29


Jesus Unmasked!

TALKING POINTS WALKING POINTS

Leaders' Guide

2024.6.30



A publication of  the adult discipleship ministry of Triangle Community Church.

Talk together about the glory of God's kingdom. –Psalm 145:11
Love the Lord your God and **walk** in all his ways. –Joshua 22:5

Questions for Reflection or Discussion

- 1 What from Sunday's message interested you? ...made sense to you? ...confused you? ...intrigued you? ...upset you? ...encouraged you? ...and **why**?
- 2 Pastor Doug noted that the narrative surrounding Jesus' transfiguration is one of those passages which, if you read it casually, you miss a whole lot. What are some insights **you'd** missed before?
- 3 Read Mark 8:34—9:10. Jesus mentioned **both** his suffering **and** his glory. The disciples asked him only one question: what "*rising from the dead*" meant. What do you think **they** were thinking about?
- 4 When **you** think about Jesus, which comes to mind first: his suffering or his glory? Why that one?
- 5 The disciples' expectations regarding Jesus were shaped by Old Testament prophecies and contemporary longings for freedom from Roman oppression. What factors have shaped **your** thinking?
- 6 Read John 15:18-20. How does your experience correspond to this prophesy about what awaits you?
- 7 How have you experienced hatred and persecution from the world? Tell us about it.
- 8 Have you seen some of the world "keep your (Jesus') word"? Tell us about it.
- 9 According to v. 19, **why** does the world hate Christians?
- 10 Pastor Doug said that Christian discipleship isn't built on spectacular visions, but on the inspired, unchanging Word of God. Draw a graph of your growth as a Christian, labeling the highs and lows.



Which of the "highs" on the graph of your growth were due to experiences? Which were the result of living a Word-centered life of obedience?

- 1 Standard “starter question”—you know what to do.
- 2 You *may* need to “prime the pump”, so be prepared with your own answer to this question. (But wait for others to think and answer. Check your watch—20 seconds feels like an eternity!)
- 3 Obviously we don’t know for certain what was going through their minds. However, we know for certain that they understood what the **concept** of “rising from the dead” meant. The resurrection of the dead was a hotly-disputed topic of the day (Acts 23:6). So, their question could have related to the timing and order of events. It could indicate that the disciples held the popular misconception that the Messiah would never die (see John 12:34).
- 4 Allow group members to answer this one—but don’t take too much time on it. It mainly serves as a segue to the following questions.
- 5 Pay close attention to how folks answer this question. It will give you insight into the most significant influences which shaped the religious views of group members.
- 6 You may need to “prime the pump”, so be prepared with your own answer to this question. (But wait for others to think and answer. Check your watch—20 seconds feels like an eternity!)
- 7 ditto
- 8 ditto
- 9 Because we no longer belong to the corrupt, perishing world of those who hate God.
- 10 Prepare your own graph before your group meets, so as you ask this question, you can show them your graph. Don’t let them study it in detail, just to see the various “ups and downs” and the fact that you’ve identified what precipitated each “growth spurt”. The key is for folks to think about times and places in which their graph took a noticeable turn upward, and then to try to identify what accounted for that growth. Give folks three minutes to draw their graphs and analyze upward movement. Then ask for a volunteer to identify the highpoints and what they determined caused it. Keep things brief! If you have ten people in your group and each takes three minutes, that half an hour.

Sermon Summary **Key Text: Mark 9:1-13**

We have arrived at one of those passages which, if you read it casually, you miss a whole lot. There is a lot going on in this passage, and if you don't have a Jewish background and aren't from the first century, there are a lot of things that just go over your head. You think, "Jesus is awesome," but you don't appreciate all of the details.

Some have mistakenly concluded that Jesus claimed that his return would occur within the lifetime of some of those standing in his midst (9:1). Obviously, Jesus didn't come back during the first century. But the immediate biblical context (v. 1-2) clarifies that he was referring to his Transfiguration, rather than to his Second Coming. At the transfiguration they saw a glimpse of Jesus's glory and power. For a brief time on the mountain, His deity was no longer veiled by his humanity. Matthew, Mark and Luke all carefully connect the Transfiguration with Jesus' declaration that some would glimpse the Kingdom of God before they died (1 Peter 1:16-19). Now, you may be wondering, "Doug, how did the disciples recognize Moses and Elijah?" I don't think they wore nametags. Instead, it seems that, just as the saints in heaven don't need to be introduced and named to us but are known at once through an intuition that is wrought by God, so Peter, James and John were supernaturally enabled to recognize men who'd died centuries before. One confusing issue—an apparent contradiction—is when the Transfiguration took place. Was it six days later (Matthew and Mark), or was it eight (Luke)? But Luke, in contrast with Matthew and Mark, often spoke in approximations—and did so again here, as the Greek word, *hosei*, indicates.

The Transfiguration was a revelation of Jesus' majesty, a validation of Messianic prophecies, a preview of Jesus' second coming, and as we shall see, an opportunity to speak plainly of his impending death on a cross—not his sitting on a throne (Mark 8:31)! The disciples couldn't reconcile the popular understanding of a Conquering Messiah King with the notion of a Suffering Servant King. What was needed was a convincing and dramatic display that despite Jesus' prediction of his own death, He continues to be God's agent of redemption! The transfiguration reassured the disciples that the necessity of Jesus' death was neither a mission defeat nor an indication that God had withdrawn from Jesus His heavenly favor. What looked like a defeat was instead the ultimate victory! Jesus' death was central to God's salvation plan!

You may be wondering why God chose Moses and Elijah to appear with Jesus here on Mt. Sinai. Why not Noah or Abraham? It seems that they best represented the Old Testament Scriptures which predicted the Messiah's coming (Moses represented the Law, and Elijah the Prophets). Moses once asked to see God's glory (Exodus 33); what was denied then was fulfilled in the Transfiguration (Matthew 17:2)! Elijah once heard the voice of God on Mt. Sinai (1 Kings 19), but now he sees God in the flesh! One day we too will see God face-to-face (1 John 3:1-3)!

Peter, overwhelmed by what he saw, spoke before he thought (v. 5-6). He wanted to prolong this mountaintop spiritual experience for as long as he could. Yet again Peter is out of sync with God's will. Earlier he had rebuked Jesus for suggesting that he was headed to Jerusalem to die (8:31-33). God's voice from the shekinah glory lets Peter know that he's talking when he should be listening (v. 7; cf. James 1:19). And it is to Jesus—more so than to Moses or Elijah—that we should give our attention. Christian discipleship isn't built on spectacular visions, but on the inspired, unchanging Word of God. We need to listen to Jesus, to obey him, to stop questioning his wisdom, stop opposing his plan, and simply follow Him.

Jesus instructed Peter, James and John not to speak of the Transfiguration until after Jesus died and rose again. Glory, crown and kingdom are coming—but first comes the cross. But the idea of a cross confused the disciples (v. 9-10). They were fixated on the Old Testament's prophecies of glory (Malachi 4:5-6), and overlooked prophecies of his suffering (Isaiah 53:4-10). We too have difficulty harmonizing those ideas—even though Jesus promised that the world will hate us, as it hates him (John 15:18-20). As followers of Christ we need to realize that as our culture moves further and further away from God, we will find ourselves more and more marginalized—and hated by many!

Digging Deeper in Your Daily Quiet Time

"Five Question Bible Study" (see below) *is useful for studying any topic. Let's use it to explore the glory which Christ shares with the Father...*

Monday— Read Hebrews 1:1-3.

Tuesday— Read Exodus 24:15-16.

Wednesday— Read Exodus 40:34-38.

Thursday— Read Num. 9:15-22.

Friday— Read 1 Kings 8:10-13.

Saturday— Read John 1:14-18.

Need blank copies for doing more
"Five Question Bible Study"?
e-mail: Dan.Clement.TCC@gmail.com

Five Question Bible Study

Bible Text: _____ Date: _____



What idea particularly strikes me from this text? [Note in which verse(s) it is found.]



What question does this text raise in my mind—and how would **this text** answer it?



What about Jesus Christ—his character and/or his redemption—relates to this text?



What action must I take as a result of this text? Be concrete and specific.



With whom will I share what I learned from this text? [and what was their response?]