

The Transfigured Christ

Mark 8:9:1-13

March 8, 2026

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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.”*

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. 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. 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.

⁹ And as they were coming down the mountain, he charged them to tell no one what they had seen, until the Son of Man had risen from the dead. ¹⁰ So they kept the matter to themselves, questioning what this rising from the dead might mean. ¹¹ And they asked him, “Why do the scribes say that first Elijah must come?” ¹² And he said to them, *“Elijah does come first to restore all things. And how is it written of the Son of Man that he should suffer many things and be treated with contempt?”* ¹³ *But I tell you that Elijah has come, and they did to him whatever they pleased, as it is written of him.”*

Have you wondered if following Jesus can ever exclude self-denial and picking up your cross?

Many or all of you may say no, but I wonder how many live without the reality of any self-denial or repentance.

In a month from now, we will celebrate the Risen Christ on Easter Sunday. But before Easter we will also remember the agony of our Lord, how he was forsaken for you and I. Jesus was led to the cross for your freedom, from oppressive power of sin.

Self-denial is not just giving up something for that its own sake but to look at Christ as our superior delight and satisfaction. So, if Jesus is not Lord, then someone else has lordship over your life and therefore you are a disciple of that lord – self, the world or the devil.

The implication is that hundreds or thousands of your mini or micro choices will be under Christ or under someone else.

Last Sunday we looked at Jesus’ call to discipleship and Jesus’ requirement to becoming

his disciple. And we ended last Sunday with verse 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.”*

Jesus tells his disciples that he will return one day. In the glory of his Father. With his holy angels. Jesus will return for his own people and judge those who are not his own. So, when Jesus returns, he will be pleased with some *and* will be ashamed of some.

Who are those people Jesus will be ashamed of? Those who were ashamed of Jesus and his Gospel.

But those who, without reservation, unapologetically, in love and in truth profess and follow Jesus, those Jesus will welcome into his kingdom.

In Matthew’s Gospel, Jesus says the following:

“When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, then he will sit on his glorious throne. ³² Before him will be gathered all the nations, and he will separate people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats. ³³ And he will place the sheep on his right, but the goats on the left. ³⁴ Then the King will say to those on his right, ‘Come, you who are blessed by my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.’” Matthew 25:31-34

This morning Mark the Gospel writer gives us a glimpse of his future glory.

So far in chapter 8 we have seen who the Christ is.

Who is the Christ? Christ Jesus is the Prophet, Priest and King of the Kingdom of God. The Christ is also the Suffering Servant. Jesus himself said the Son of Man must *suffer*, be *rejected* and be *killed* and be *raised* from the dead.

But in the context of this passage, our Lord had just announced his death and his resurrection. Jesus tells his disciples that he will return one day even as he announces his immediate death and resurrection.

Here, Jesus is going to give some of his disciples a *preview* of his glory before his death and resurrection. This is proof of his future glory. Now the disciples are getting to understand about the full meaning of Jesus’s death and resurrection.

Jesus says in verse one that *“there are some standing here who will not taste death until they see the kingdom of God after it has come with power.”*

Does Jesus mean that some of these men won’t physically not die until Jesus returns a second time?

In a metaphysical sense, as a Christian, as a disciple of Jesus, your soul will live on after physical death. This is our Christian hope. Do you ever groan in this life? Paul says in 2

Corinthians 5:2 that “..we groan, longing to put on our heavenly dwelling”. Paul’s desire was to “*depart and be with Christ*”. Philippians 1:23
 So, when a child of God dies, he or she goes to be with Christ.

What does Jesus mean “*until they see the kingdom come in power*”?

I’ve seen at least *six* different interpretations of this verse.

Some say this verse means the display of Jesus’ words and actions.

Some point to Jesus’ death and resurrection as inauguration of the kingdom.

Some point to the Day of Pentecost when the Spirit was poured out.

Others say the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 A.D as a precursor to final judgment.

Here is another translation of verse 1 in Mark 9.

And he said to them, “*Amen, I say to you that there are some who have been standing here who will never taste death until they see the kingdom of God has had arrived in power.* The words *standing* or *come* are in perfect tense - past action with future implication. The kingdom of God *arrived* when Jesus came the first time. The kingdom of God will be fully *unveiled* when Jesus returns.

When you look at the next verse you see Jesus taking his disciples to the mountain. There they will see him in a *glorified, exalted* and *transfigured* state.

Look at verses 2 and 3.

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.

- Matthew’s Gospel describes the transfiguration this way:
And he was transfigured before them, and his face shone like the sun, and his clothes became white as light. Matthew 17:2
- Luke’s Gospel describes the transfiguration this way:
And as he was praying, the appearance of his face was altered, and his clothing became dazzling white. Luke 9:29.

Mark does not mention Jesus’ face but both Matthew and Luke mention his face shining as bright as the sun. All three Gospels mention his garments or clothing being bright or white.

Jesus *took* them. And *led* them. Where? To a mountain.

There Jesus was transformed. He was transfigured. The word transfigured comes from the word metamorphosis. Jesus was *metamorphosized*. The language is passive – meaning Jesus himself did not transfigure but *was* transfigured by God.

And we see a description of his transfiguration.

His garments became so bright. They were so white that no one could make it any more cleaner, brighter or whiter.

How should we understand Jesus' transfiguration?

Here are a few observations and implications:

1. Jesus' transfiguration reveals his Glory, Kingship, Lordship, Majesty and Divinity
 - a. Revelation 1:12-16 *"Then I turned to see the voice that was speaking to me, and on turning I saw seven golden lampstands, ¹³ and in the midst of the lampstands one like a son of man, clothed with a long robe and with a golden sash around his chest. ¹⁴ The hairs of his head were white, like white wool, like snow. His eyes were like a flame of fire, ¹⁵ his feet were like burnished bronze, refined in a furnace, and his voice was like the roar of many waters. ¹⁶ In his right hand he held seven stars, from his mouth came a sharp two-edged sword, and his face was like the sun shining in full strength.* When John saw the vision, he fell at his feet as though he was dead.
 - b. Revelation 19:16 *"On his robe and on his thigh he has a name written, King of kings and Lord of lords."*
2. Jesus' garment of whiteness is symbolic of his righteousness and salvation.
 - a. *I will greatly rejoice in the LORD; my soul shall exult in my God, for he has clothed me with the garments of salvation; he has covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decks himself like a priest with a beautiful headdress, and as a bride adorns herself with her jewels.* Isaiah 63:1.
 - b. *Now Joshua was standing before the angel, clothed with filthy garments. ⁴ And the angel said to those who were standing before him, "Remove the filthy garments from him." And to him he said, "Behold, I have taken your iniquity away from you, and I will clothe you with pure vestments." ⁵ And I said, "Let them put a clean turban on his head." So they put a clean turban on his head and clothed him with garments.* Zechariah 3:3-5

Implications:

1. Jesus' transfiguration is an *assurance* of your future transfiguration. There are people in this world – unbelievers, skeptics, religious people, even some church going people who demand that they need incontrovertible proof, solid evidence, irrefutable data that Jesus Christ died, that he rose again and he's going to come back. But for a true disciple, a Christian, this is your assurance that your destiny is glory.

- a. *For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, in order that he might be the firstborn among many brothers.* Romans 8:29
 - b. *Just as we have borne the image of the man of dust, we shall also bear the image of the man of heaven.* 1 Corinthians 15:49
 - c. *But our citizenship is in heaven, and from it we await a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, who will transform our lowly body to be like his glorious body..* Philippians 3:20-21
 - d. *Beloved, we are God's children now, and what we will be has not yet appeared; but we know that when he appears we shall be like him, because we shall see him as he is.* ³ *And everyone who thus hopes in him purifies himself as he is pure.* ¹ John 3:2-3
2. Jesus' transfiguration reveals our need to be transformed in this life. There are two places outside of the Gospels in the New Testament where this word *transfigured* is used. In these two places, *transfigured* means progress in holiness and godliness or non-conformity with this world.
- a. *"Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect"* Romans 12:2-3
 - b. *And we all, with unveiled face, beholding the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from one degree of glory to another.* ² Corinthians 13:18

So, Jesus is transfigured and then we see two major figures from the Old Testament: Verses 4 through 6.

⁴ And there appeared to them Elijah with Moses, and they were talking with Jesus. 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.

Why are Moses and Elijah there?

Moses and Elijah are simply there to confirm the authenticity of Jesus as the Messiah. Luke tells us that Moses and Elijah talked about Jesus' death. Moses was the mediator of the Law. Jesus gave and fulfilled the Law. Elijah was a forerunner for Jesus. John the Baptist was called Elijah who would prepare the way of God. Both the Law the Prophets testify to the Messiah who would come.

The disciples, Peter, James and John perhaps thought that Jesus is equal to Moses and Elijah. Jesus is not equal to Moses but greater than Moses and Elijah. Hebrews 3 tells us about the greatness of Jesus over Moses.

Here, again, Peter blurts out, “Teacher or Rabbi, it is good to make *three* tents – one for Jesus, one for Moses and one for Elijah. Peter did not know what to say. He was terrified at the transfiguration of Jesus. Well, better not to say anything if you can’t say the right thing. And if you are terrified, you are going to say the wrong thing.

Hear John 1:14 “And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth

The word *dwelt* is the verbal form of the word tent. The Glory of God tabernacled or became a tent among us. There is only one tent of glory not three tents. That tent is the glory of Christ as of the Father.

And how quickly Peter is corrected. He is rebuked by Jesus and now Peter is corrected by the Father himself. And this is such a gracious correction from the Father.

Verses 7 and 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.

You see Peter was given a special revelation about the Christ by the Father. But Peter blows it right after Jesus tells them about his death.

And here Peter blows it again.

But see how gracious God is?

Following Jesus is not just denying and picking up your cross but also having a right understanding of who the Christ is.

Follow Jesus exclusively. God will not accept any competitors to His Son Jesus Christ. Even someone as illustrious as Moses or Elijah.

All other lords must fade. They must decrease. Christ alone must have your heart, soul, mind and body.

What area(s) of your life are still not under the domain of the Lord Jesus Christ?

In John 9, the Pharisees say they were disciples of Moses and yet they hated Jesus. Here this voice from heaven, the voice of God, tells Peter, James and John to listen to His Son. So, to *follow* Jesus is to *listen* His Beloved Son only.

What follows after this mountain top experience is another charge by Jesus to tell no one about his future glory. Why? The disciples must see his cross, his death before his resurrection, his ascension and his glory.

Verses 9 – 12 describe this warning.

⁹ And as they were coming down the mountain, he charged them to tell no one what they had seen, until the Son of Man had risen from the dead. ¹⁰ So they kept the matter to themselves, questioning what this rising from the dead might mean. ¹¹ And they asked him, “Why do the scribes say that first Elijah must come?” ¹² And he said to them, “*Elijah does come first to restore all things. And how is it written of the Son of Man that he should suffer many things and be treated with contempt?*” ¹³ *But I tell you that Elijah has come, and they did to him whatever they pleased, as it is written of him.*”

For the sake of time, we may have to pick this last portion next Sunday.

To conclude this morning’s message – I want to comment on a couple of things in light of the transfiguration of Jesus.

- There are people who seek some supernatural experience, a miraculous sign from God, a voice from God. Peter had received all these. And yet, do you know that Peter does not make too much of these supernatural experiences? It might surprise you but see 1 Peter 2:17-19.

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. ¹⁹ 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. 2 Peter 1:17-19

We have something more sure. Something more confirmed. The prophetic Word of God – the Bible! We will do well if we pay attention to it.

If there anyone who has not yet repented and trusted in Jesus, turn to him.

Follow Jesus. Listen to Jesus.

Great joy and peace awaits you!

----- Discipleship Questions-----

MESSAGE SUMMARY: The Transfigured Christ. Mark 9:1-13

HEAD: These questions help you examine the truth of God's Word.

1. What does the transfiguration of Jesus Christ reveal? What implications can you draw from his transfiguration?
2. HEART: These questions help you wrestle with what you believe.
 - Do you believe Jesus alone is to be worshipped and followed? Why? In Mark 9:7, what does the voice from God authenticate and imply for you as a believer?
 - What is God convicting you of and to believe in light of this message?

HANDS/HABITS: These questions help you bring the truth into your everyday life and develop behaviors that change your habits.

3. HEART For personal reflection: What will you do to be a better *listener* of God's Word and *follow* Christ?