

The Transfiguration

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[0 : 00] Welcome to Tri-State Community Church, our wonderful family that God gave us to be a part of. So amazing and special, isn't it? We weren't meant to walk alone.

We're meant to walk with each other. If we walk out our life for Christ and for Him. Such a special thing that we have. And we're going to hear part of that today.

Yeah. Yeah. Let's just go ahead and pray. Father, I want to say thank you for your amazing love and grace that you have for us each and every day.

Each and every hour. Whether we blow it or not, you're there with us. Forgiving us, comforting us, and helping us. I just praise you for that, Lord.

Continue to help our relationships here at the church grow. And especially with you, that we can get to know you better. We can spur each other on for love and good deeds, Lord.

[1 : 07] Continue to show us them truths. And at the baptism today, our relationship's even stronger, Lord. I pray for that. I pray for that.

Someone perhaps can know Jesus today for the first time. Perhaps at the baptism, Lord. I'd like to pray for someone there that doesn't know you, that can make the decision to have eternal life with you, Lord.

We put that person in your hands. Again, we lift up the different people that are ailing and healing. And please, we're asking you for a miraculous work in that area.

All those people that we're aware of, Lord, we've been praying for. Put them in your hands. And I give you the glory, Lord, here this morning. And show us the truth and the word. Lord, and what it means, help me speak clearly, Lord, that it would be not me, but you speaking.

And that we would hear it. And it wouldn't fall on deaf ears. That the truth would come in and we'd learn something new. Perhaps something we already know that we've forgot about. That we need to practice and experience with you, Lord.

[2 : 10] Today. Amen. Okay, so we're continuing back to the book of Mark. We're in chapter 9 today, starting with verse 2.

And I forgot the clicker. Someone could bring me the clicker. So you can open up your Bibles if you like. Mark, chapter 9, verse 2.

I'm going to read through verse 13. Thank you. So let's read through the passage today.

Let's read through verses 2 through 13. And six days later, Jesus took with him Peter and James and John and brought them up on a high mountain alone by themselves.

And he was transfigured before them. And his garments were shining intensely white, as no launderer on earth can whiten them. And Elijah appeared to them along with Moses, and they were conversing with Jesus.

[3 : 14] And Peter answered and said to Jesus, Rabbi, it is good for us to be here. Let us make three booths, one for you and one for Moses and one for Elijah.

For he did not know what to answer, for he became terrified. Then a cloud formed, overshadowing them, and a voice came out of the cloud, This is my beloved son.

Listen to him. And all at once, when they looked around, they saw no one with them anymore except Jesus alone. And as they were coming down from the mountain, he gave them orders not to recount to anyone what they had seen, until the Son of Man rose from the dead.

And they seized upon that statement, arguing with one another what rising from the dead meant.

And they began asking him, saying, Why is it that the scribes say that Elijah must come first?

And he said to them, Elijah does come first and restore all things. Yet how is it written of the Son of Man that he will suffer many things and be treated with contempt? But I say to you that Elijah has indeed come, and they did to him whatever they wished, just as it is written of him.

[4 : 23] So I guess I don't have that TV on here either, but that's okay, I guess. So if we just think back a little bit about Mark, where once again we know the disciples continue to struggle to learn and understand who this Jesus is.

And Jesus is once again going to show them more about him. In this transfiguration, a very important story in the Gospels.

And so let's go to verse 2 and 3 here. Go back to the beginning here again. And six days later, Jesus took with him Peter and James and John and brought them up on a high mountain, alone by themselves.

And he was transfigured before them, and his garments were shining intensely white, as no launderer on earth can whiten them. So it was six days.

It was six days from Peter's confession. If you look in chapter 8, verse 29, he said, you're the Christ. And we know that six days earlier, Jesus rebuked Peter strongly because Peter didn't fully understand what was going on.

[5 : 49] No, you're not going to suffer, Peter says, but we know it has to happen. And the disciples just don't fully understand. And so Jesus, in this passage, is going to show them another very important truth about him.

He's reaffirming to the disciples who he is. Just kind of like us. We're learning as we read the word daily and regularly who Jesus really is.

It's hard. We forget. I forget. So Jesus now, so after that stiff rebuke to Peter and all these things, Jesus is just so gracious and kind.

Peter, I want you to come with me. And James and John, let's go, the three of you. We're going to go up a mountain, a high mountain. He takes them up there.

So I'm pondering a little bit, why was it Peter, James, and John? Why did he pick those three? You know, was there a favoritism there?

[6 : 55] I don't think so. I don't think so. I think maybe these three were, he was getting closer to these three. They were perhaps more committed than the other three.

They were willing to sacrifice more than the other disciples. I can't say for sure. I can tell you this. In my own relationships, it's hard to have relationships with more than three or four close relationships.

I would always encourage everyone when you're building relationships with people, you can't be friends with everybody. Yeah, we're kind, and all you guys are my friends.

But when it comes to more intimacy and close with people, I've got my wife and a few other close men that I'm close with. Maybe that's one of the examples Jesus is showing us here.

And it's just like our savior to be constantly patient with these guys as they struggle and don't understand fully what's going on. So they go up to this high mountain. It's interesting about mountains.

[8 : 01] God uses mountains in the scriptures here. Most scholars believe that this took place at Mount Hermon, which is on the north side. It is the highest mountain in Israel.

It's over 9,000 feet. And we see in scripture, lots of things happen on mountains. If you've got your Bibles handy, let's look at Mark 6.46.

Lots of things happen. We learned this earlier in our studies of Mark. What happens on 6.46? And after bidding them farewell, he left for the mountain to pray.

Went on a mountain to pray. Luke 6.12. We'll look at a couple of them. Luke 6.12.

Humidity. My hands stick to the pagers. It's easy to move the pagers when I've got all this humidity. Luke 6.12. Now it happened that at this time, he went off to the mountain to pray.

[9 : 07] And he was spending the whole night in prayer to God on a mountain. Mark 3.12. Mark 3.12.

And he earnestly... I must have that one wrong. 3.13, sorry. And he went up on the mountain and summoned those whom he himself wanted, and they came to him, and he appointed 12.

So he appoints 12 on the mountain. Matthew 5. Sermon on the mount, right?

Gave a sermon on a mountain. Moses in the Ten Commandments was on a mountain. Mount Sinai, right? Also known as Mount Horeb. Elijah was on the mountain many times.

Many things happened there. We see the mountain is where God and humanity have an encounter in this passage. There's an encounter here together.

[10:17] God and humanity. I don't know if you've ever had a chance to go to a mountain. Have you ever had a chance to visit the mountains, some sort of a mountain? It's pretty amazing.

If you ever get a chance, I would encourage it. It's just awe-inspiring. Cheryl, you go to see the mountains every year, don't you? Nearly. Glacier, it's just an amazing place to see a mountain. I had the experience of climbing a mountain with my family many years ago. We went up to a mountain that was 12,000 feet. Switch backs, back and forth, back and forth. It wasn't like climbing rocks, but, you know, it's nice trails, but you've got to be in fit.

It's just awe-inspiring, mountains. So he was transfigured before them. Before them. The them is the disciples.

We haven't seen Elijah and Moses yet. We see an outward, visible transformation of Jesus. His clothes were shining intensely white, whiter than anything you could use bleach with.

[11:22] And it says in Matthew and Luke, on the same account, transfiguration, that his face shone like the sun. And I was wondering when did this happen, what time of the day?

In Luke, it says the disciples were getting sleepy. Maybe it was evening, nighttime. Can't say for sure. But that glow, that transfiguration, well, it must have been remarkably amazing to see.

Can't imagine. Can't imagine. I'm going to jump to Corinthians here.

But we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as from the Lord, the Spirit.

It's a similar meaning of transformation here as we see in the transfiguration. It's a very radical transformation that we go through.

[12:33] Very important. It's very important to be reminded of that, that God's transforming us. It's easy to forget that. And life moves slowly sometimes, right?

If you look back, you can see the things that God's been doing in your life. It's okay to do that. See this great, miraculous work. It's good to remember that.

It's really good to remember that. Write things down. Glory to glory. We're being transformed into the very image of Christ. It's good to remember that.

But, our transformation emanates all kinds of things. Service, loving each other, giving, sharing the gospel, our relationship.

These things all spring from the relationship we have with Jesus. As that relationship grows, these things come out of us. He's trying to make us the way he intended us to be.

[13:36] Let's go to verse 4. Elijah and Moses were there.

Why did he pick them two? Why were they there? Well, we know Moses was a great deliverer. God used him to deliver the Israelites from Egypt.

That amazing story where they travel through the wilderness. For 40 years, Moses was their leader. It's a picture of a Christian living. The struggles that they had through the wilderness.

Elijah also delivered people from the Baal worshipers, if you remember that story. He also was a great prophet. Both of these were really renowned ministers of God in their day.

And Moses with the law. Jesus fulfills the law. We know that in the New Covenant. But here's another reason to go along with that.

[14:43] Malachi chapter 4. Let's read it. Malachi chapter 4. Remember the law of Moses, my servant. Even the statutes and judgments which I commanded him in Horeb for all Israel.

Behold, I'm going to send you Elijah, the prophet, before the coming of the great and awesome day of Yahweh. And he will turn the hearts of the fathers to their children and the hearts of children to their fathers, lest I come and strike the land, devoting it to destruction.

Likely, this is one of the reasons why Moses and Elijah are with Jesus. And notice they're having a conversation. They were conversing with Jesus. I wonder what that was about.

Talking with Jesus. We're all going to love to do that. Talk with Jesus. And we do talk to Jesus, don't we?

We talk every day to Jesus, hopefully. We can talk to him as much as we want. And he talks to us. So they had prophetic roles in preparing the final prophet, Jesus.

[15:52] Jesus is the final prophet, fulfilling the Old and New Testament. And obviously he's more than a prophet. He's the Messiah, right? He's the Son of God, the Son of Man, the Messiah.

So most people believe John the Baptist fulfilled that verse in Malachi. Where it says, verse 5, Behold, I'm going to send you Elijah the prophet.

It's believed that John the Baptist fulfills that prophecy there. Of what John the Baptist did, proclaiming the way of the Lord. And Jesus certainly believed that.

If you look in Matthew 11, to back that up. Matthew 11. For all the prophets and the law prophecies until John. And if you're willing to accept it, John himself is Elijah, who was to come.

He fulfilled the prophetic role of Elijah. John the Baptist did. And in Luke 1, verse 17. And he will go before him in the spirit and power of Elijah.

[16:59] We're talking about John the Baptist here in this chapter. To turn the hearts of the fathers back to the children. And the disobedient to the attitude of the righteous. To make ready a people prepared for the Lord.

So could it be that Moses and Elijah were forerunners to Jesus? And this attests to the purposeful revelation of God's son with the history of Israel.

Two important people. Elijah and Moses were with Jesus. How did the three recognize? It says they...

We'll see here in a minute that... Peter recognized them as Elijah and Moses. I wonder how that happened. There's not a real certainty of that.

But perhaps in the presence of God, all things are known in this transfiguration. It's interesting. Here Peter says, and back to verse 5 and 6.

[18:02] And Peter answered and said to Jesus, Rabbi, it is good for us to be here. Let us make three booths. One for you, one for Moses, and one for Elijah. See, they know who it is.

For he did not know what to answer, for they became terrified. They became terrified. I wonder why he wanted to create booths.

Some say that the Jewish people thought that God would come to live with them, and he wanted to build these booths, these temporary shelters for them to live in.

Or, in keeping with what we've been learning, in keeping with what we've been learning, did they think, did Peter think that Jesus was just another prophet? See, they're still struggling to understand.

It's why God's bringing him this transfiguration. He's showing him more truth about his deity, that he's God. So I've been thinking about this booths.

[19:05] What is this Feast of Booths all about? It's actually pretty, fairly simple. The Feast of Booths is a celebration of God providing for the Israelites in the wilderness. And a temporary booth, if you will, that they lived in.

It's also a celebration of a harvest that God provided for the children of Israel as they traveled for 40 years in the wilderness. That's what the booth is all about. It's a temporary shelter.

What Peter failed to understand is that God is providing his own tabernacle to dwell in. God's providing his own tabernacle, namely Jesus.

Jesus is a new tabernacle of God's dwelling with humanity. And what do we have today? We have the Holy Spirit indwelling in us, don't we?

He's always gave us his help. We have help. Peter is calling Jesus to dwell in booths, when in fact Jesus is calling Peter to discipleship and to be with him.

[20:14] We look at Mark chapter 3, verse 14. And he appointed 12, whom he also named apostles, to be with him. And he appointed with him and to send them out to preach.

That's what Jesus is calling us to do, to discipleship. It's our life, knowing God. It's everything we do. And being with him the whole time.

Jesus' divine nature attests to God and dwelling with men. We look at John chapter 1, verse 14.

And the word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld his glory, glory as the only begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth.

He came to be with us. And we know from the book of Acts that he came to live in us through the work of the Holy Spirit. Jesus is God.

9-7, are we there? Okay. Then a cloud formed, overshadowing them, and a voice came out of the cloud. This is my beloved Son.

[21:31] Listen to him. Oh, that is a powerful verse. If you'd like to memorize scripture, there's one to memorize and meditate on. And a cloud is an important symbol in the Bible, signifying God's presence and glory.

It's not the first time we see a cloud with the glory of God. And Exodus 24, 15-16. Back to mountains again.

Then Moses went up to the mountain, and the cloud covered the mountain, and the glory of Yahweh dwelt on the mountain Sinai, and the cloud covered it for six days.

And the seventh day he called to the Moses from the midst of the cloud. And this is when Moses receives the law, when they're traveling the 40 years in the wilderness.

The presence of God is in a cloud. We see a... Remember when they were traveling in the wilderness? What was it? A fire by night and a cloud by day.

[22 : 38] A pillar of cloud by day. This cloud shows the divine presence of God, symbolizing that in Jesus, God dwells bodily with humanity.

This transfiguration is to solidify that Jesus is God. And the disciples needed to hear this. They were constantly misunderstanding and confused.

Another good example of a cloud is back in Solomon's day. So if you remember King Solomon, he was the third king of the Israelites.

And he was allowed to build the temple. David wasn't because he's a man of bloodshed. So they built this amazing temple. Israelites did. And let's read this verse.

1 Kings 8. Now it happened that when the priest came out of the holy place, the cloud filled the house of Yahweh. So that the priest could not stand and minister because of the cloud, for the glory of Yahweh filled the house of Yahweh, God.

[23 : 49] That's a great verse too. Would have been amazing to see that. And back to 9 verse 7, which is really a climactic part of the event.

This is really important. This verse. And then the cloud formed overshadowing, and a voice came out of the cloud. This is my beloved son.

Listen to him. This is hugely important. We see it in Mark 1 verse 11. At the baptism of Jesus.

And a voice came out of the heavens. You are my beloved son. And you, I am well pleased. Verse 11, it's God talking to Jesus.

Mark 9, 7, it's God talking to the disciples. It's an interesting change. Very important. They needed to hear this. Man, do we need to hear things over and over again, don't we?

[25 : 03] I just don't get stuff many, many times. I just have to hear it over and over and over. I hear it from all kinds of different people. Sometimes it's the least likely person I'll hear something from.

It's like, wow. It is only God that can impart the mystery of Jesus' sonship.

We're hearing it. God's doing it. This declaration sets apart from Moses and Elijah and signifies Jesus as God's son, making himself to be God.

We've studied that before. Listen to him. We've been learning in all of Mark about Jesus wanting us to listen to him.

He's said it numerous times. Let me go back. Go back. Hold on a second. Mark 4, verse 9.

[26 : 02] I don't have a slide for that. It's the parable of the sower. Remember we had the parable of the sower? I think J.J. was here preaching on that. He said, whoever has ears to hear, let them hear.

Mark 7, 14. Jesus says, listen to me, everyone, and understand this. There's many, many more things we've been learning about what God wants us to hear and listen to.

We have an unbelievable opportunity to hear God's voice, and through the Scriptures we can hear Him freely. We just need to listen. Listen to what the Scriptures teach us.

ponder them. Talk about them. We have to hear them. What's one of the things that the disciples needed to hear that they are having trouble with?

Chapter 8, verse 31, He needed to suffer. Peter had a hard time with that. Jesus needed to suffer. You know, the truth is, we're going to have some suffering.

[27 : 06] We learn that from 8, let's look at it. Mark 8, 34. The verse, you just have to know this verse.

It's so important. Mark 8, 34. And He summoned the crowd with the disciples and said to them, If anyone wishes to come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross and follow me.

Huge, very important piece of Scripture. It's tough to do sometimes, right? Relationships are tough. Things happen. Sin gets in the way. It says in Hebrews, The sin that so easily entangles. I've been thinking about that. Boy, does that happen so fast. Does it not?

Sin kind of creep in and say the wrong thing just like that. I've been down that road way too many times. Mark 9, verse 8.

[28 : 11] Yep. And all at once, when they looked around, they saw no one with them anymore except Jesus alone. They're sitting there.

Two disciples and there's just Jesus all left alone. At once they vanished. In relation to Jesus, Moses and Elijah have no permanent standing.

It's very important that the disciples were there remaining with Jesus. This is a pretty important thought. That he's still there with them.

Scripture's talking an awful lot about him with us. It's not a one-man show. The disciples, as with us, were not meant to go it alone.

We have him, God, and we need him. There's a reason why the Holy Spirit comes to live in with us when we accept Christ as our Savior. The one who calls them and the disciples does not expect them to go alone.

[29 : 21] He is with them and he's with us. We just have to let that continue to remember that. And experiencing that more and more is with our family.

Going to these baptisms. Coming to church. Worshiping together. Praying together. Just sit down and relax. Read some scripture. Do it alone.

Do it with somebody. The Word of God is just so powerful. Ever since I, I don't know, God just helped me.

I've been reading the Word nearly every day since I became a Christian and I look back and I think at times like, doesn't seem like nothing's happened. Ever feel that way? Nothing's going on.

But then I look back at my life and I think, thank you, God. Thank you that you let me read the Word because it did some, lots of things I didn't realize it was doing. It's way more powerful than I ever thought. Boy, did I need to read the Word of God when I raised my family.

[30 : 26] It's such an important thing. I'd have been dead without it. I don't know how people can do it. I'm not going to comment a lot about it.

We're going to have a little closing but the next four or five verses here let's just read them and just kind of see how He speaks to you. Then we're going to come back to another verse here.

So verse 9 and 10, And as they were coming down from the mountain He gave them orders not to recount to anyone what they had seen until the Son of Man rose from the dead. And they seized upon that statement arguing with one another what rising from the dead meant.

Again, struggling with this. What's going to happen to Jesus? And then verse 9 is another it perhaps is the first conditional command of God about not telling people because He often said that don't tell anybody.

You know, last time they did anyway. There's a conditional one. You can tell them when I rise from the dead then you can tell everyone about what happened here at the transfiguration.

[31 : 37] 11 to 13. And they began asking Him saying, Why is it that the scribes say that Elijah must come first?

And He said to them, Elijah does come first and restore all things. And yet, how is it written that the Son of Man that He will suffer many things and be treated with contempt? There it is again.

The suffering that they need to know about and understand. But I say to you that Elijah has indeed come and they did to him whatever they wished just as written of him.

So I want to go back to verse 7. Verse 7. Verse 7. Let me get that back up here again.

Then a cloud formed overshadowing them and a voice came out of the cloud. This is my beloved Son.

[32 : 40] Listen to Him. Listen to Him. Oh, that's powerful. It's understandable how the disciples struggle to understand Jesus.

And to listen to Jesus and obey Jesus because we all have the same problem. We're all humans. We're all humans. We struggle in the same way I think as the disciples did.

Trying to understand God. We fight hard to learn. You know, I want to learn the truths of the scriptures and how they apply and how it affects my life and other people's lives.

When I see someone struggle and sin, it troubles me. I want them to learn the truth. I bet you feel the same way. I know we feel that way about our children. They sin all the time and parents, we want to help them.

That's the right thing to do. You know, it's interesting. It's really not until the book of Acts after Jesus' death, burial, and resurrection, and then He ascends to heaven that we really start to see the work of the disciples.

[33 : 57] And when Jesus leaves, you see all the amazing work. Peter gets bold and he stands up and preaches after he's gone through all them trials of denying Jesus three times. Peter becomes a great evangelist and a minister of people.

And so I was just thinking in my own life, you know, God's back up. We have the Holy Spirit. We have the same opportunities as the disciples do, the same kind of work they did, differently, of course, different ways to minister to people, to help people, connect with people.

I try and meet with people, have a coffee, talk about life, talk about struggles.

That's how we grow and help one another. That's how we have an impact people. It's helping other people so they can help people. You know, the old story where, you know, you just can't help everyone because you need to help someone else to help someone else.

Really important things. Listen to Him. Listen to God. We have to open up the Word. I know you hear that a lot, but it's just so true.

[35 : 09] I just, I can't make it without this and listening to Him. Struggling with it. Fighting to understand what it says.

That's an amazing verse, isn't it? That's an amazing piece of Scripture. God's speaking to us. I hope He's speaking to you this morning with this. My beloved Son, listen to Him.

Let's pray. Father, I want to say thank you and for your greatness and goodness, truth of this Scripture, the transfiguration, Lord.

Lord, you, once I rise, you can tell everyone they did. We get to hear it. We get to read about it.

Thank you so much for that, Lord. The truth of understanding that you're God. You're showing us that through the Scriptures. Help us remember that. Experience that.

[36 : 14] Really, God, living in us in the Holy Spirit. Thank you so much that we got your help to do the work. We praise you for that, Lord.

Amen. Amen. Just... More time. Yeah. I'm supposed to reiterate the picnic. Don't stay here too long. Get out there so we can eat 1230. Have our wonderful family baptism. Amen.