

Theme: What Does this Text REVEAL About Jesus? – Jesus’ Transfiguration

Mark 9:2-10 (EHV)

² After six days Jesus took Peter, James, and John with him and led them up a high mountain where they were alone by themselves. There he was transfigured in front of them. ³ His clothes became radiant, dazzling white, whiter than anyone on earth could bleach them. ⁴ And Elijah appeared to them together with Moses, and they were talking with Jesus. ⁵ Peter said to Jesus, “Rabbi, it is good for us to be here. Let us make three tents: one for you, one for Moses, and one for Elijah.” ⁶ He did not know what to say because they were terrified. ⁷ A cloud appeared and overshadowed them, and a voice came from the cloud, saying, “This is my Son, whom I love. Listen to him.” ⁸ Suddenly, when they looked around, they no longer saw anyone with them except Jesus alone. ⁹ As they were coming down the mountain, Jesus commanded them not to tell anyone what they had seen until the Son of Man had risen from the dead. ¹⁰ They kept the matter to themselves, discussing with one another what this “rising from the dead” meant.

During this Epiphany season we have been looking at various accounts from the Gospels and asking the question, “**What does this text REVEAL about Jesus?**” We’ve been reminded of various truths and characteristics of Jesus over the past six weeks: His power, His compassion, His generosity, His love, His ability to heal us in every way, and His unending commitment to only do what is truly good for us spiritually. What today’s text **reveals** about Jesus is pretty obvious since it was kind of the whole purpose of His Transfiguration: **1) It REVEALS without a doubt that Jesus is true God!**

In fact, there are in the Bible there are very few “proofs” for Jesus being true God that are as obvious and rock solid as His transfiguration. I would say that aside from His resurrection from the dead, the transfiguration of Jesus was the definitive *Epiphany*—the ultimate “revealing”—of the fact that He is true God. Think about it:

- ✚ In this incident we have the visible proof that Jesus is true God as He claimed to be: Our text says, **“There he was transfigured in front of them. His clothes became radiant, dazzling white, whiter than anyone on earth could bleach them” (v. 2-3).** Matthew’s account of Jesus’ Transfiguration tells us that also, **“His face shone like the sun, and His clothes became as white as the light” (Matthew 17:2).**
- ✚ In Jesus’ Transfiguration we also have the audible proof that Jesus is true God as He claimed to be: We see and hear the approval of Jesus given God the Father Himself, **A cloud appeared and overshadowed them, and a voice came from the cloud, saying, “This is my Son, whom I love. Listen to him.” (v. 7).**

Yes, Jesus’ transfiguration **reveals without a doubt that Jesus is true God.** Think of how important this was to strengthen and confirm the faith of His disciples—especially Peter, James, and John—who saw Him transfigured on the mountain that day. Think of how important this account is to confirm and strengthen our faith. Jesus really is who He claimed to be: True God. And we hear God the Father Himself confirm it!

That much is obvious from our text. However, let’s look a little closer and consider something else—something maybe a little less obvious—that this account of Jesus’ Transfiguration **reveals** about Jesus. In all the brightness and the dazzling display of Jesus’ Godhead that this text **reveals** to us it can be pretty easy to overlook the fact that this text also **2) REVEALS that Jesus came to suffer, die, and rise again!**

Why didn’t Jesus just stay on that mountain in all His resplendent glory? That’s what Peter wanted to do, and can we blame him? **Peter said to Jesus, “Rabbi, it is good for us to be here. Let us make three tents: one for you, one for Moses, and one for Elijah” (v. 5).** It would have been incredible to have been there and seen that sight, to be wrapped in the cloud and hear God the Father’s voice confirm that

Jesus was His Son, and on top of that you've got the two greatest prophets from the Old Testament showing up as well! Wow! I'm with Peter, let's just build some tents and stay there in that scene!

But Jesus couldn't stay on that mountain, could He? He had work to do. He had a mission He had to accomplish or we would all be lost. In fact, His upcoming suffering and death was what He was discussing with Moses and Elijah (**v. 4**). Luke tells us in his account that they, “**spoke of His departure (“decease” – NKJV) which He was about to accomplish at Jerusalem**” (**Luke 9:31**). No doubt these were words of encouragement and even anticipation from Moses and Elijah. Jesus knew that He had to do this.

He had even told His disciples that this was His true mission as the Messiah, the Savior of the world. In the previous chapter of Mark Jesus tried to explain the necessity of His sacrifice to His disciples, “**And He began to teach them that the Son of Man must suffer many things, and be rejected by the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and after three days rise again. He spoke this word openly**” (**Mark 8:31-32a**). Jesus knew that this “un-glorious,” “ugly” aspect of being the Son of God was just as important and necessary as the glorious brightness and almighty power that was His.

In fact, this “ugly” side of His work, His humiliation and suffering for the sins of all people, was in a sense even *more* glorious than His radiant revealing of His Godhead here at the Transfiguration! After all, His suffering and sacrifice of His life for our sins earned mankind the eternal, unending glorious brightness of heaven itself—a place free from sin, a place that has no “ugly” side!

As we enter this Wednesday (Ash Wednesday) into another season of Lent, do we sort of “dread” getting back into the “ugly” side of Jesus' life here on earth? Maybe we would we rather stay on the mountain of His transfiguration and bask in His glorious brightness as true God? What we need to realize and remember then, is that the glory and the humiliation are all a part of who Jesus is—Son of God *and* Son of Man. We also need to remember that Jesus may have shown Himself to be true God by the glorious brightness of His Transfiguration, but He showed His true *glory*—the glory of His immeasurable love—by His cross!

During this upcoming Lenten season let this image of Jesus' glorious brightness at His Transfiguration burn into our minds and hearts. Draw encouragement and strength from it as we again go through the “dark” and “ugly” days of His suffering and death. Remember, what the Transfiguration **reveals** to us about Jesus: **1) It REVEALS without a doubt that Jesus is true God!** And this glimpse of His glory also gives us a “glimpse” of the glories of heaven that await us when this life is over. The glories that Jesus won for us because He did not stay on the Mount of Transfiguration, but finished His mission on top of a different mountain: Mt. Calvary! Never forget that this account also **2) REVEALS that Jesus came to suffer, die, AND rise again!**

Let that be the “light at the end of the tunnel” of this often dark and difficult life. When we “come down from the mountain” of Jesus' glorious Transfiguration today and get on with our everyday lives let us remember the true glory of Jesus:

- ✝ Those wounds and stripes He took for us bring us healing.
- ✝ The shame of that “ugly” chunk of wood He hung upon won us the beauty and brightness of heaven.
- ✝ That cross shows the true glory of Christ's love.
- ✝ That cross gives us true joy—the joy of forgiveness and salvation!
- ✝ That cross—is no longer where Jesus is! He is risen! And because of that we know that we too will rise!

Yes, in the brightness of His Transfiguration we see the glory of Jesus' Godhead; but in His cross and His empty tomb we truly see our “Beautiful Savior!” Amen.