

This Is My Beloved Son, Listen to Him

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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, and his clothes became radiant, intensely white, as no one on earth could bleach them. And there appeared to them Elijah with Moses, and they were talking with Jesus.

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. For he did not know what to say, for they were terrified, and a cloud overshadowed them. And a voice came out from the cloud, This is my beloved son, listen to him. And suddenly, looking around, they no longer saw anyone with them.

But Jesus only, 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. So they kept the matter to themselves, questioning what this rising from the dead might mean. And they asked Him, Why did the scribes say that first Elijah must come?

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? But I tell you that Elijah has come and they did to him whatever they pleased as it is written of him. So as we return to the passage this morning, we recall the context of the passage.

Of course, this follows closely on the heels of Uh, the preceding episode in which there was this great declaration. Who do you say that I am? We say that you're the Christ. You are the anointed one of God. Upon which Jesus then answers with these words, blessed are you, Simon Bar Jonah, for flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but your Father who is in heaven has revealed this to you.

And then Jesus will then go from there. to begin explaining to Simon Peter, who has just made this great declaration, what it means that he is the Christ and why he has come and what he has come to do. He's come to suffer. He's come to be arrested and abused and mistreated and eventually executed. To which Peter then rebukes our Lord to say to Him, this will never happen to you.

We will not let this such a thing as this happen to you. Then upon that, Jesus rebukes Peter, You adversary, you Satan, get behind me, for you are between me and the cross. And anyone who would come between me and the cross is an adversarial. So get behind me, you adversaries. Get behind me, Satan. Four, then Jesus goes on to describe the follower of Christ, the follower of his, to his called-out people, to his chosen people.

He says these words. If you would come after me, if God has placed this desire in your heart to belong to me, you must deny yourself. Take up your cross, follow me. For what would it benefit you to gain the whole world? If you try to save your life, to save your soul, you'll lose it. And what will that benefit you to gain even the whole world if you lose your eternal soul?

So in this description of this follower of Christ, Jesus then gives his followers, his chosen people, Some of the most hardest, some of the most difficult directives found in all of the Christian life, which is to deny self and take up a cross and follow him. Jesus then encourages them to say, That there are some standing here who won't taste death until you see the Son of the Kingdom of God come in power, referring, therefore, to the giving of the Spirit who would empower His people to do just that, to lay down their life, to take up the cross, to deny self, and to follow Him.

But then, right upon the heels of that, we are then given this one Out of only two occasions in all of Mark's Gospel, this time reference after six days, or on the seventh day, thereby alerting us that the connection between this passage and the previous one, the theological connection here, is strong. And Mark wants us to equate what happens here with what happened a week prior, with the rebuke of Jesus, and then the rebuke of Peter, and then the description of a follower of Christ.

On the heels of that, we're told seven days later, they go up the mountain. And on the mountain there, Jesus is transfigured before them. His clothes become dazzlingly white. Matthew and Luke will both speak of the brightness of his face. Mark focuses on the brightness of his clothing. We talked last week about all the connections between Elijah and Moses.

And we've talked about the connections between the dazzling clothes, the new linens, the color of the clothing, how that's associated with divine beings in the Old Testament, angelic beings. And then when we get to the New Testament, that becomes closely associated with us, His people. And so all those connections that we saw is that Jesus is revealing Himself, or rather we should say that the Father is revealing the nature of Christ to His disciples.

The Father is not creating anything new. injecting anything new into the Messiah. Instead, he is, if you will, pulling back the curtain to allow his disciples to see the other nature of Christ. He, in his full humanity, is all they've seen on the outside. But now, the Father says, let me show you this other nature, this divine nature.

And as we finished last week, we talked about the purpose or the significance. What was the father doing by transfiguring Christ in this way before the disciples? What was he accomplishing? And so we said that the first thing that we would look at was what this, what was the significance? What was the purpose of the meaning for the Christ?

And so we looked at the father's purpose in the son's work. We looked at Old Testament passages like Isaiah 42, when we're told that the father says. I will uphold my servant in his work of redemption. And so we saw that that is what the father is doing. He is upholding the son. He's encouraging the son.

He is edifying the son because his son has just now turned his face on this final leg of this final journey to Jerusalem. And the weight of what will happen in Jerusalem, the weight of not just the physical torture and death, but especially the. spiritual agony as he is made to be the sins of his people.

The weight of that is beginning to weigh heavily on Jesus. Meanwhile, he's surrounded by followers who don't get it, who don't understand. They aren't listening to his words when he's saying to them about his coming suffering and his coming death. And so to encourage, to hold up, to uphold the son, the father, then takes them up the mountain, and does this transfiguring to the Son to encourage or uphold the Son in three ways we saw last week. First of all, He encourages the

Son by letting His followers see this glimpse of His glory. As Peter and James and John look upon the transfigured Christ, and their faces are, are themselves transformed in worship and in awe, this is encouraging to the Son.

The Son knows of His glory that He left behind. He says that much. In John 17, he remembers, he's aware of the glory that he left behind, and he expresses a desire to the father that that glory would return to him. The father, in this moment of encouragement, pulls back the curtain, if you will, to show the glory to his disciples so that the son will be encouraged by this revealing of his glory.

Secondly, the father upholds the son by giving the son this little brief bit of conversation. between himself and these saints who understand. Moses and Elijah appear there and they're talking with Jesus. We saw the topic of conversation from Luke chapter 9 was the topic of His coming death, His sacrificial vicarious death on the part of His people.

And so Moses and Elijah, having left this world of sin, now no longer the taint of sin is covering their eyes, they now see and they understand the coming suffering and the sacrifice of the Christ, which none of His disciples do. And so Jesus is bearing this tremendous weight, this tremendous purpose that nobody understands but Him.

And so it's encouraging for Jesus to have just a moment of fellowship, a moment of conversation with those who understand His purpose of what He's come to do. And so they are talking with Jesus about His coming suffering. Thirdly, this encourages the Son. By this declaration of the Father's delight and love for the Son, the Father's approval for the Son.

So we were careful last week to make note of the fact that Jesus, the divine Son of God, of course, being God, needs no encouragement or upholding. However, the human Jesus, the fully human Jesus, is upheld by the Father in this moment. Here on the mountain. So that was the significance for the Christ that we saw last week. We said that this week we would then look to the purpose or the significance for those disciples who are looking on. What does this what purpose does this serve for them?

What significance for them? Does this hold also by connection? What significance does this hold for us? So with that brief review? Let's now return back to our text and picking up from verse will start with verse 4 and there appeared to them Elijah with Moses, and they were talking with Jesus. 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. So the question that we begin by asking is what in the world was Peter thinking by sort of babbling on about making these three tents or tabernacles, one for Jesus, one for Moses, one for Elijah. What in the world was he thinking?

Well, the next verse lets us know what he was thinking. The next verse lets us know that he wasn't thinking. He was talking without thinking because he didn't know what to say because we're told he was terrified. We'll get to that in just a moment. But he was so terrified that he is just babbling on. So there are, as we probably are familiar with this, there are different people, different kinds of people in the world.

There are some kinds of people that when you don't know what to say, you don't say anything. Not knowing what to say, you keep your mouth shut. A lot of people are like that. Other people are not

that way, not knowing what to say or not being sure what to say. They might try to say some things, and that's another category of people.

Peter falls into the third category. No matter what the situation, he's got something to say. He's never at a loss for words. And so, not ever being at a loss for words, out comes these words, Why don't we prepare three tents? One for you, one for Moses, one for Elijah. So not really knowing what he's saying, he's just sort of babbling on.

Which, by the way, is a response that we would have totally expected. We would totally expect a response such as this. If this is an account written by men, then we would expect some sort of response from Peter, like something more appropriate. Lord, we are here to worship you and behold your glory.

Something like that. But this is not an account written by men. This is an account written by men. God. And so the fact of the matter is that the scriptures show us again and again that when people come into contact with sinless beings, particularly when they come in contact with the visible Christ, they oftentimes stumble over their words or stumble over their actions and they're not sure what to do.

Think of Peter's instance, Peter's experience himself in Luke chapter 5. In this episode, this was when there was the, they were out fishing all night, and, and then Jesus the next morning says, put the net on the other side of the boat, and they sort of mockingly, sarcastically say, well, okay, and they do that, and then they can't pull the, the nets in because of the fish, and Peter, not knowing what else to say, depart from me.

From a sinful man reminds us of course of Isaiah. In Isaiah chapter six and verse five, when he sees the vision of the Lord high and lifted up and he says, woe is me for, I'm in a man of sinful lips and I'm surrounded by people of sinful lips. So oftentimes that is the type of experience that we see. We see, for example, the apo, the Apostle John twice in the Revelation.

Fall down before an angel to worship the angel. And twice he has to be rebuked to say, don't do that for I am just like you. We worship him. So this is a response that's consistent on the part of, on the part of Peter. He is not sure what to say. So out comes this. So what is it that's, what's behind these words about building a tabernacle or three tabernacles or three tents?

Well, we're not told, but we can speculate just a little bit about what Peter May have been thinking of. Perhaps he was making a connection to what's known as the Festival of Booths, or the Festival of Tabernacles. It's a festival that was a recurring festival each year for the Jewish people. It is commanded in Leviticus 25.

And the Festival of Tabernacles is a week-long festival. It's a joyous occasion, but it's a week-long festival in which what they're commemorating is the exodus from slavery of the Jewish people. So there may be a connection here because what was Moses talking to Jesus about? He was talking about His exodus, his exodus of the people, but Moses himself was the one who led the first exodus.

So perhaps Peter's making a connection. Here's Moses. Oh, Let's connect this with the festival of booths of the festival of tabernacles Because part of the festival of tabernacles was that for one

week the people would live in these sort of makeshift tents or these makeshift booths. It was like a week-long camping trip.

It was a joyful time for them. And so perhaps Peter's making a connection. Here's Moses. They're talking about the exodus. Let's make booths and celebrate the festival of tabernacles. Perhaps that's the connection that he's making. Or perhaps maybe Peter is thinking We're here on this mountain. Here's Moses.

Here's Elijah. Let's just set up sort of a messianic headquarters here. Let's just make these booths or these tabernacles, these tents for all three of you. And this can kind of be a messianic headquarters for us, a center of operations for the Messiah. Perhaps that's what he's thinking. Or perhaps he's thinking more along the lines of, you know, this is an absolutely breathtaking moment.

Let's do something to keep Elijah and Moses here because I don't want them to leave. This is a wonderful moment. Here's all three of you. Let's just make these tabernacles so that nobody has to leave. Perhaps he's thinking, I just don't want this to end. Or perhaps it's some combination of all the above.

We don't know because we're not told. But what we are told is that his response was wrong. We're told that in the following when the voice comes out of the cloud and there comes that voice that says this is my beloved son in Matthew's account in whom I'm well pleased and then God says Listen to him.

Do you hear a little bit of rebuke in there? Do you hear a little bit of the father saying shut up Peter? Just stop talking. This is not a time to talk This is a time to listen So a little bit of a rebuke there for Peter Which by the way puts Peter in a very special category of people because Peter has now been rebuked In the eternal, never ending words of Scripture by God Himself twice in the span of a week.

So He puts Him in a very special category of people. You might feel like that, you might feel like that. You ever feel like that God just has nothing but rebukes for you? That every time you go to His Word and you open His Word, it just seems that every time it's addressing Something in your life that you know that you need to deal with and you just feel like that that's got what God has for you.

If you ever feel like that, I think all Christians do feel like that from time to time. If you ever feel like that, then you're in pretty good company because Peter himself must have felt really rebuked by this point. So this is the words of the Father to Peter. Peter, stop talking. That's not what we need to do right now.

Listen to my son. We'll come back around to that a little bit later. So there's this response from Peter that is in some way expected, but then there is another part of this response that is, I would say, unexpected or should be unexpected. Look at his words once again in verse five. And Peter said to Jesus, Rabbi.

Now, wait a minute. That's the first time we've read this word in Mark's gospel. Rabbi. Nobody has called Jesus Rabbi in Mark's gospel yet. And no one will call him rabbi again, except for two other

occasions. Peter will call him rabbi once again in chapter 11. And then, well, let's look at that one first. In chapter 11, Mark chapter 11, verse 21 in your notes.

Here's the next occasion that Jesus is called rabbi. And notice the context. Peter, remembering, said to him, Rabbi, look, the fig tree that you cursed has withered and died. You see the context there? You see the context of Peter saying to Jesus, Hey, Jesus, what you said yesterday has actually happened. Can you believe that?

You cursed this fig tree yesterday and it actually withered and died. What do you know? Do you see the context of unbelief? You see the context of miscomprehension? And the failure to comprehend? So then this word will come once again. Jesus will once again be called Rabbi in chapter 14. Notice the context here.

And when he, meaning Judas Iscariot, came, he went up to him at once and said, Rabbi, and kissed him. You see, in Mark's gospel, Jesus is only called Rabbi in context of unbelief and traitor being, being, uh, turned over. Only in context of unbelief and disbelief is Jesus called Rabbi. Now, couple that together with the fact that Peter just called Jesus the Christ.

And so we should ask, Peter, hang on, you just called him the anointed Christ of God. And now you've reverted to rabbi? Why now the rabbi thing? Now, rabbi was a title of respect in this culture. And Matthew will use that word, he will, he will. Narrate instances of followers of Jesus calling him rabbi in which the intended meaning is this meaning of respect and honoring.

For example, think of Mary when she discovers the empty tomb and then she discovers Jesus and she says rabbi. But Matthew's writing to a different audience, he's writing to a Jewish audience. Mark here reserves the word rabbi for those instances of particular unbelief and particular misconception. And so he says, Rabbi, it is good that we're here.

Let us make three tents, one for you, one for Moses, one for Elijah. So we'll circle back around to the Moses, Elijah thing, verse six. Now, for he did not know what to say for they were terrified. So right there in that statement, they were terrified. They were struck with terror. They were filled with terror.

Let's make special note of that. And the reason that we want to make note of this is just, let's just remind ourselves. Peter, James, and John, why are they here? Are they here? Are they witnessing what's going on between the father and the son? Are they witnessing this because they're looking upon something they're not supposed to see?

Are they sort of like peering over the wall or looking around the corner, trying to get an eyeful of something that they're not supposed to see? They are here because Jesus invited them here. They are here because Jesus took them up the mountain, because the father wanted them to see this. And upon seeing this, they are struck with terror.

So the point here is not that Peter, James, and John are terrified of what they see because they're enemies of God. Because they are standing before God as people that are out of favor with God or something of that nature. They are not terrified of God because they're terrified that they're witnessing something they're not supposed to witness.

They are terrified, they are struck with terror because they're in the presence. They're in the presence of sinlessness, and that strikes terror into their hearts. So let's make a good note of this because this runs completely counter to much of our modern perception of what it will be like to be in the presence of God.

We have found it to be something of a popular idea today. To think of that day when we're in God's presence for eternity as something along the lines of, I heard it described this way a couple weeks ago, something along the lines of hanging out with Jesus for eternity. That sort of way of thinking, of being in the presence of God.

In such a trivial, nonchalant manner. When the scriptures show us over and over that when we are in the presence of God, we will be struck with a type of terror. And I don't mean terror in the sense of dread. I don't mean terror in the sense of being terrified for one's life. I mean terror in the sense of being in the presence of a holy God.

We will spend eternity with hearts that are filled with a type of love and satisfaction in the one whom we are with. But that love and that satisfaction and that deep affection will be mingled together with a type of sinless terror that will keep us in awe for all eternity of the one in whose presence we are.

And we see an example of this as Peter, James, and John, who were invited up the mountain. Who are Jesus's three closest followers, they are struck with terror to be in his presence. And that is indicative of a human being in the presence of our maker, our Lord and our God. We will not be in any way trivial or nonchalant in his presence.

I often hear people talk in that manner. In fact, I read not too long ago a blog written by an atheist in which these are his words. He said that when he meets the Christian God, the Christian God will have a lot of explaining to do. He went on to say, if this Christian God is going to judge me, then, well, I'm going to judge him too.

And if I'm going to spend eternity with him, he's got a lot of explaining to do. And that is indicative of the thought patterns of a lot of people who don't understand the holiness of the God that the Scriptures speak to us of. We will not We will not explain ourselves in front of Him. We will not ask Him to explain Himself.

We will not judge Him. In His presence, we will keep our mouths shut, and we will fall on our face. This is the consistent testimony of Scripture. And so, let us make three tents. One for you, one for Moses, and one for Elijah. Here we see as God's going to rebuke him, listen to my son. Stop talking Peter, listen to my son.

What we see is Peter still is not yet grasping what Jesus wants him to grasp. Because in building these three tents, so to speak, in essence, what he's still proposing is to deter Christ from the cross. To deter him from his journey to the cross. Let's stay here a while. Let's sort of set up camp here for a while, whether it's the festival of tabernacles or whether it's just a desire to remain here with Moses and Elijah.

Either way, this is a deterrence from the cross, and the Father will have nothing to do with that, neither will the Son. Nothing will deter Christ from the cross. So he says, we don't know what to

say for they were terrified. Now, verse seven, and a cloud overshadowed them and a voice came out of the cloud.

This is my beloved son. Listen to him. So first of all, the cloud, this cloud that comes over them, we read in scripture quite a lot about clouds. I don't know if you've ever made note of sort of a mental note as you're reading through the scriptures of just how often we read about clouds. They're all over the place, Old Testament and new, and it's interesting to me to sort of follow, if you will, a theology or a doctrine of the clouds in the scripture, because we could actually trace that and we could see Oftentimes, what God is doing with clouds in the scripture in the Old Testament, there's, there's lots of purposes that God performs through clouds.

Clouds in the Old Testament, sometimes they represent the presence of God. Sometimes they represent the protection of God. Sometimes they represent the authority of God. God will sometimes speak out of the cloud in an authoritative manner. God will sometimes use the cloud or a type of cloud to protect His people.

Sometimes they represent a barrier between mankind and God. Sometimes they represent God's abode. Sometimes they represent the transcendence of God. So they, they represent a lot of things in the Old Testament. But when we come to the New Testament, we find just as many clouds. But we find in the New Testament that now the significance has all become one.

Because in the New Testament, the presence of clouds always signifies the return of Christ. Clouds always mean the return of Christ in the New Testament. Now I know just a little bit ago we sang that song that we all love. The unclouded day. And I love that song. It's a great song. I chose it for this message.

But, in a sense, that does sort of miss the purpose, doesn't it? Because we're not waiting for an unclouded day. If we understand how the scriptures use clouds Specifically, the New Testament to teach us of that day in which he will return for his people and how that is always associated with clouds. Then I tell you, I'm looking for a cloudy day because it's a cloudy day on which he will return for us.

So this cloud, the idea of this cloud overshadowing them. Now, let's think for just a minute about this word, overshadowed them. This is the word *epikiazo*. It's a very, very rare word in the scriptures. overshadowed them. It comes from the root word *skia* in the Greek, which means shadow or shade. So *episkiazo*, means to cast a shadow over or to cast shade over.

Now, when this word is used outside the Bible, it always means something negative, meaning to cast sort of a negative shadow. And you can sort of follow the meaning there, right? to cast a shadow over something. Like, for example, you and some friends go out for a nice dinner and you're having a nice time but then somebody brings up some unpleasant topic and it casts a shadow over the whole time.

That's the typical meaning. However, the writers of scripture take this word and they use it very rarely but they use it not negatively but positively to cast a shadow or to overshadow. So it's found a total of only four times in all the scriptures. Four times in all the Bible. It's found twice in the Greek translation of the Old Testament, the Septuagint.

And in both of those instances, it's found in the same context. It's found in Exodus, in which we're told that the tabernacle or the tent of meeting was filled or overshadowed with the presence of God as God came and met with Moses. We find it again in 1 Kings. In the same context, only now it's the temple.

And the same thing, the Spirit of God overshadowed the temple, or filled the temple, same word. And in both those instances, it's God casting His shadow over His people, over this meeting place, casting His shadow to come and to fill the place of meeting and to meet with His people. So that's the two times we find it in the Old Testament.

Then we come to the New Testament, we find the same word, of course, here, this overshadowing cloud, this cloud that overshadowed them, or cast God's shadow over them. But then we also find it one other place in Luke chapter 1. In Luke chapter 1, the angel comes to Mary and says, Mary, you will conceive in your womb and you will bring forth a son, you will call his name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sin.

And Mary says, I believe, but how can these things be for I'm a virgin? I've not known a man. How are these things going to be? And then the angel explains to her that the power of God will come upon her, will over shadow her. Same word. So Mary will be overshadowed. God will cast his shadow upon Mary. And the overcasting of God's shadow upon here, upon her, will result in the Son of God coming to live in her, in her womb.

Coming to her, coming to his people through her womb. And so it's a powerful, powerful word that speaks of God coming and meeting with his people in such a way that the meeting results. In life, think of the life of the Savior that's brought to his people. Think of the life of that's, that's saved through the Savior on the cross.

Think of this instance, think of the Old Testament tabernacle, think of the temple. And so in each instance, it speaks of a powerful meeting with God in which God comes and he fills his people and by filling his people, they know him. And that's the significance of the word that Peter is speaking to us here.

Or in Mark, when Mark is speaking to us through Peter here. So this shadow, it overshadowed them. We'll come back to that a little bit later. And a voice came out of the cloud. This is my beloved son. In Matthew's account, with whom I am well pleased, listen to him and verse eight. And suddenly looking around, they no longer saw anyone with them, but Jesus only.

So as quickly as it started, it was over. They look around. Next thing they knew this incredible experience that just began perhaps a few moments ago, this incredible experience is now over. So, we'll end right there for now, and we'll just take a break there, and we will now ask ourselves the question, what do we see in this passage?

In terms of significance and meaning for the three disciples who are there present. What does this mean for them? What sort of meaning are they gathering from this? Remember last week we saw the meaning or the significance of this for the Son of God, for Jesus Christ. Now let's ask our question, what about those disciples?

What significance are they to gain from this? Now in order to see this, the first thing that we need to see here is a theme that Mark has, has, pronounced to us since early in chapter one. It's the

same theme. We've talked about this all often. It's the same theme of Mark saying to us that there is a spiritual understanding.

There's a spiritual comprehension that only comes by way of connection to Jesus. So you remember this theme? We've talked about it frequently. It's the theme that spiritual understanding, spiritual comprehension comes to no one outside of connection to the Messiah. So, think back with me to chapter 4, the parable of the soils.

We had the four types of soils. We had the hard soil that the seed or the word just fell upon and did nothing. It was snatched away. Then we had the rocky soil. So the seed falls or the word falls on that and there is some type of springing to life. But that life It doesn't penetrate, there's no root, because there's hardness underneath.

And so the root can't penetrate that heart, and so that seed soon dies. Then there is the thorny soil. There's also the seed that falls on that, springs up to some life. But then there is the cares and the concerns of the world, which choke out the Word. But then there's the good soil. The good soil though, that the sun comes out and the heat of the day comes out.

Nevertheless, there is root that grows down in the soil and there's spiritual comprehension and there's life that comes from that. And then Jesus, after that parable, he then says to you, has been given the secret of the kingdom of God to you, has been given to know these things. So Jesus' point there is that.

Your heart is the good soil, and to you has been given this gift of understanding the things of God. Now, as we looked at that passage, one of the things that was just so prominent, so undeniable in that passage, is that Jesus says to them, To you has been given the ability to understand these spiritual truths, yet, what do they not do?

Understand these spiritual truths. They continue to be misperceiving in their perception of Jesus and the things that He's teaching. We see that even in the passage today. And that misunderstanding will continue. Just a few verses later, they're going to come down the mountain. And what are they talking about as they come down the mountain?

What's this resurrection thing that he's talking about? What does he mean by resurrection? Oh, and Elijah? What's the whole deal with Elijah? You see, the misperception continues. And so what Jesus was saying, To you has been given the secret to know the kingdoms, the secrets of things of God. To you has been given this precious gift to understand.

What he's saying is not that you have received this gift of spiritual comprehension, now go and have fun with it. What he's saying is, By your connection to me, by your relation to me, through me, you will understand the things of the kingdom of God. Now, they're on the mountain. And who are they on the mountain with?

Christ. And what's being shown to them? You see the same thing. The same thing. Attentiveness to Christ. Listening to Christ. By virtue of that comes spiritual understanding. Comes spiritual comprehension. One of the things that we didn't ask last week, I saved this question for this week, but one of the things that we didn't ponder last week was Elijah and Moses in the sense of how do they know him?

Have you ever thought that? How did they know that that was Moses and Elijah? They didn't follow them on social media. They didn't watch all their Moses's posts on Instagram. They didn't know what they look like. They had no images or pictures of Moses, neither of Elijah. So how did they know it was Moses and Elijah?

Well, there's a very important word. Did you notice it? There appeared. Did you notice that word? Appeared. In other words, the text does not require us to believe that Moses and Elijah were there physically. The text doesn't require that of us. Because they appeared with Christ. Alright? Now, Elijah didn't die.

Remember that story? But Moses did. So Moses died, his body was put in the grave. Where's Moses resurrection body? He doesn't have it yet, because the resurrection hasn't occurred yet. So doesn't that make sense that Moses and Elijah aren't physically there, but they appear to them, almost like a vision.

Jesus is real. Jesus, the incarnate Son of God, He's there in flesh and blood. But there appeared Moses and Elijah, and so kind of like a dream sort of state, you ever have those dreams where you know some piece of information, or you know some person, and you don't quite know how you know that? You ever experience those dreams where you maybe try to remember it later, you're thinking back through it later, or you're trying to tell it to someone?

And you're saying, oh yeah, so and so was there, but it didn't look like them and it didn't, they weren't dressed like them or, but it was them. And so somehow you knew it was them, but you're not quite sure how you knew it was them. I think that's what's happening here is that there is an understanding that is passed to these three disciples of who they are.

And that understanding came to them by way of Christ. And isn't that a fundamental theme of Mark's Gospel? Only in connection to Messiah do we perceive these things. Only in relation to Messiah do we have spiritual perception. And right here on the mountain, here are these two figures that appear to them and somehow they know.

That's Moses and Elijah there. And so this theme of attentiveness to Christ and His words. And isn't that what the Father says? Listen to Him. He has the words of life. Listen to His words because it is only in listening to His words that you will have spiritual understanding which leads to spiritual life.

This episode will make a dramatic impact on Peter's life. And Peter will return to this episode later to write about it in his second epistle, 2 Peter 1. This is in your notes. Let's take a look at this together. So in 2 Peter 1, here's what Peter says, For we did not follow cleverly devised myths when we made known to you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

In other words, Peter's not saying, we didn't come to you. He's writing to the churches, and he says, we didn't come to you telling you these clever myths and stuff. We told you what we experienced. We told you what we saw. We told you what we experienced in our life. And here's what we experienced. We were eyewitnesses of his majesty.

Now he's going to go on and explain or refer to this instance. Verse 17. For when he received honor and glory from God the Father, and the voice was born to him by the majestic glory, see this

is this experience. And here's the words, this is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased. So he's referring to this experience, verse 18.

We ourselves heard this very voice born from heaven, for we were with Him on the holy mountain. So he's saying to these churches that he's writing to, Listen, we had this experience on the mountain where we encountered God Almighty in a way that no human being has ever encountered God Almighty. Do you know that this mountaintop experience of Peter, James, and John There is no instance in all of human history in which people have encountered God in such a tangible way as this.

The burning bush. God speaks out of the bush. Profound experience doesn't compare to this one. The filling of the temple. The filling of the tabernacle. Profound experiences don't compare to this one. Any of the experiences of humankind, nothing compares to this experience of having God the Father reach down and pull back the curtain and say, Gaze upon the deity of my Son, and now listen to my words as I cast my shadow over you.

Listen to my words. This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased. Listen to Him. No human experience can compare to that. I have read of so many instances in which believers have had profound experiences with God. My mind goes to a well-known instance, probably many of us have heard of this instance, in which Dwight Moody was in a hotel room and experienced an outpouring of the love of God that was so profound that he writes that eventually, as this progressed on through the night in the hotel room, he finally had to pray and ask God to stay his hand because he couldn't take it anymore.

It was literally overwhelming for him. What an incredible experience of the love of God or the experience that another one comes to mind the wife of Jonathan Edwards Jonathan Edwards that that famous theologian the best theologian that the that United States has ever produced Jonathan Edwards his wife had an experience of Encountering the love of God that was so tangible and so weighty that literally she fell on her face in the aisle of the church and laid there for an hour, unable to move.

Profound experiences of the love of God. Nothing, nothing compares with this one. And so Peter is saying, listen, we three people, these three people experienced God in such a powerful way. Nothing else in all of human experience can compare to this. But see, there's one problem with experiences. They end.

They don't go on forever. And so now Peter comes to his point. His point is, picking up in verse 18, I'm sorry, verse 19, and we have the prophetic word more fully confirmed to which you will do well to pay attention. Do you hear echoes there of—listen to him? Peter got it. Peter profoundly didn't get it on the mountain.

But just as profoundly, Peter now got it. What he's saying is this. Nobody has had an experience with God like we did. Yet even that experience is not as reliable, is not as fully confirmed as what we have in the pages of our Bible, in the pages of our Scripture. Because what we have is more fully confirmed.

How is it more fully confirmed? How is it? How could anything be more fully confirmed than seeing the deity of Christ? Because as Peter himself will say in one Peter chapter one, the word of

God is never ending. Flowers will fade, grass will die. The word of the God or the Word of God will remain forever.

And so this is what he says to his people. He says, listen, we had this experience and experiences are incredible. So, experiences of God are something we should desire. For a long time, I felt guilty about desiring experiences with God. I felt guilty about that. I felt like, you know, I should just be satisfied with just the Word, because the Word itself says that the Word is better.

So why can't I just be satisfied with just the Word? But finally realized, no, we are right. We are right to desire experiences with God. Yet, at the same time, Peter himself, the one who experienced above all human experiences of God, says to us, You've got something more solid. You've got something better.

You have the written Word. Peter got this. He understood in attentiveness to Christ, in hearing His words, is how I gain perception, how I gain understanding. So, out of this, what did Peter gain? What did Peter, James, and John, what did they see? Four things that they saw. Four things that they saw. First of all, they saw submission.

They saw the need for submission. So Peter says to, in his babbling words here, he says, Why don't we make these three tents for Moses, Elijah, and for, for you, Jesus. We'll make these three tents. We'll make them kind of nice, you know. Um, I saw some nice sticks laying over there by the trail. There's some palm branches.

We can get some palm branches. We can make you a pretty nice little tent right here. What do you say to that, Jesus? In other words, what Peter is trying to do Listen carefully. He's trying to establish Jesus. He's trying to say to Jesus, Jesus, here's what I can do. Here's what I will do. I will build you this tent.

What do you think of that, Jesus? My resources, my time, my ingenuity, you know, I can build a pretty good tent. In other words, Peter is saying to Jesus, Jesus, why don't I take what I have and invest it into your kingdom? Here, let me establish you by this. And the father's rebuke to Peter is as if it's saying, listen, Peter, you don't establish Jesus.

He establishes you. My son is not going around needing your tent. He's not going around needing your resources. You don't establish Him. He establishes you. And this is why I think that Moses and Elijah, part of the reason why they are there, notice that they're there, and then they're gone. Did you notice who didn't speak?

Moses and Elijah didn't have a word to say to anybody but Jesus. They had nothing to say to Peter, James, or John. And so the point that I think the father's making is you don't establish my son. You submit to my son. You listen to him. That is the takeaway that Peter must grasp. He must grasp his own place because you see what Peter is still trying to do.

He's still trying to take Jesus and make Him king by force. Do you remember that passage from back from the first miraculous feeding? In John's Gospel where we're told that they wanted to take Jesus and make Him king by force. In other words, we'll put Him king over us, but we're really the ones in charge.

Isn't that Peter, what Peter is still trying to do? We'll make you these tents, Jesus, and you'll be nice and comfortable, and so we'll be in control, we'll be in charge. And what the Father is saying is stop. Stop trying to plan His agenda. Stop trying to plan what He's going to do. Stop trying to make tents for Him.

Stop and submit to Him. It reminds me of Psalm 46 and verse 10, probably the most misunderstood passage in all the Old Testament. Psalm 46 and verse 10. We all know it. Be still and know that I'm God. We've all heard that. And how is it always presented? All the memes and refrigerator magnets always present it as be still and know that I'm God.

In other words, meditate. Get out of your busyness. Just slow down, quiet everything down in your life and know that I'm God. Is that biblical? Is that true? Absolutely, that's true. Absolutely, we need to separate ourselves from busyness and remind ourselves that He's God and meditate upon that. But that's not what that passage is about.

Read the psalm. Read Psalm 46, and it is loud and clear what the context of the psalm is. Because the psalm is all about Warring mankind against God, how God, how man battles against God, man will not submit to God. And so man takes up arms against God and God says, put down your arms, put them down. Be still and know that I am God.

This is what God is saying to Peter. Be still, stop with all your tip building suggestions. Be still and look to Him. Listen to Him. He's all you need. Submit to Him. Submission is the first thing that we see. Do you need to hear that this morning? Do you need to hear that all you must do is submit? God doesn't need your resources.

He doesn't need your time. He doesn't need your money. He desires your submission. And He invites your submission. And He invites you to come along with Him. In his mission plan. Secondly, he sees, first of all, submission. Secondly, he sees glory. He sees glory. This passage is nothing if it's not about the glory of Christ revealed to Peter and the others.

John 17 in verse 24, here's the words of. Jesus, as he prays to the Father, Father, I desire that they also whom you have given me may be with me where I am to see my glory that you have given me to see my glory. So the glory of Christ is revealed to Peter, James and John in such a breathtakingly spectacular way.

As we said before, no human has observed the glory of God in such a way, unless it might be the Apostle Paul when he was stoned to death. outside of Lystra. And in that, those, those moments, we don't know how long, but in that time in which Paul's life, his soul had left him, he was, as he says in 2 Corinthians 12, taken into the eternal state, taken to heaven to see things which he was forbidden to talk about.

Only that might compare to the glory that Peter and the others are shown here in seeing this glory of Christ. Listen, we read this passage earlier from Revelation 19. It's worth reading again. Listen to this description of the glory of the one who will return for his people. Then I saw heaven open, and behold, a white horse.

The one sitting on it is called Faithful and True. And in righteousness he judges and makes war. His eyes are like a fire. And on his head are many diadems. And he has a name written that no one

knows but himself. He is clothed in a robe, dipped in blood, and the name by which he is called is the Word of God.

Does that remind you of John's prologue? The Word became flesh and dwelt among us. And the armies of heaven, arrayed in fine linen, white and pure were following him on white horses. From his mouth comes a sharp sword with which to strike down the nations, and he will rule them with the rod of iron, and he will tread the winepress of the fury of the wrath of God the Almighty.

On his robe and on his thigh he has a name written, King of kings and Lord of lords. Do you see the glory of Christ in that picture? Do you see the absolute Splendor of Christ in that picture? Compare that to the picture that we are often shown of this 'sissy-fied' Jesus, of this feminized Jesus that we see in paintings that go back into the medieval age but are still pervasive today.

Paintings or descriptions of Jesus, depictions of Jesus in which He has an appearance that's much like Oh, I don't know. A European female with pale white skin and curly hair that's all shampooed, nice and smooth and slick, hands that never saw a day's work in their life. Pale blue eyes. How does that compare to the Christ that was shown here?

Now, Christ, make no mistake, He is the embodiment of compassion and mercy. But He is also glorious and majestic and splendid. and terrific in his appearance. Also, think with me of the eternality of Jesus. Here's Christ standing here speaking with Moses and Elijah. So imagine if you will, imagine Peter and James and John as they see Christ speaking with Moses and Elijah.

If I could make a comparison. Most of y'all, I mean y'all, you know me. You know what I'm about, you know who I am, you know I'm not a very, I don't, I don't think I try to put on airs or, anything of that nature. So you kind of know, what you see is what you get. Um, and so knowing me, imagine this, imagine that you were to go to the, maybe the food line down here in Jonesville.

And you go into that food line and you walk back into the, the meat section, you go back there and you see, Um, and here I'm so disconnected from popular culture out, throw out a name of somebody that everybody would recognize if you saw him, I don't know, Tom Brady. So imagine, did that, did that work? Is that a name?

Everybody saw it. Okay. Didn't work. Okay. Well, in what, imagine someone that you just, just seeing that you would say, I know who that person is. So you walk back to the back of food and you see that person, Tom Brady. Seven-time Super Bowl champion. You see him, and he's talking with somebody. And the somebody he's talking to has got their back turned.

And you say, that's Tom Brady. That's Tom Brady right there. So you walk over there, and he's talking to somebody, and you expect the person he's talking to maybe is standing there waiting for an autograph or something. And you get close, and you see it's me. And you say, he's talking to Pastor Jason. And you're like, wow, Pastor Jason must be getting an autograph.

And you go up there, and what you find is that's not the case at all. In fact, we're back there talking and we're not talking about his Super Bowl rings or we're not talking about his time with the Patriots or whatever. He's talking to me. And he's enthralled. Pastor Jason, I listened to that message from last week.

That was awesome. By the way, listen to what Tom Brady said. But that was awesome. Or that one from the week before. That was incredible. Do you see something of the disparity, something of the surprise when you expect there to be this person and well, this, this other person that we know sort of is a satellite revolving around them and you find it's the other way around.

Now let's take that analogy if we can, and I want to push it a little bit further. Let's say for example, it wasn't. 12 degrees outside. Let's say it was a nice 65 degree spring day. And let's say you were hiking on Stone Mountain Trail. And you took this nice little hike up to the top of Stone Mountain Trail there, and you get up to the top, and you're looking out and you're enjoying the vista and everything, and you look over there and you see a couple people.

Over there by the edge, and you sort of look, and you see me. Only it's not me like you see now. I'm glowing. I'm radiantly glowing and then you get a little closer and you say he's talking to two people look who he's talking to Is that Winston Churchill and is the other one Abraham Lincoln? Abraham Lincoln and Winston Churchill are talking to Pastor Jason and You come a little bit closer, and you say well surely I'm going to hear Winston Churchill Saying to Abraham Lincoln, you know, Mr.

Lincoln, the way that you saved the union back in the 19th century, that was an, that was a really incredible thing that you did. It was very difficult, but I can really appreciate what you did. You kept the union together, the greatest nation in the world. You kept them together. And Mr. Lincoln replies, Well, Mr.

Churchill, thank you for saying that. But you know what? What you did in World War II, that, that, you saved the free world in World War II. You alone, no other person, is as responsible for saving the free world as you in World War II. And that's what you would expect. And then there's me, listening, wow. But you get closer, and that's not what's taking place at all.

Instead, you get closer, and you find both of them They could care less about each other. They only care about you. Tell us, Pastor Jason, tell us this, tell us that. As you behold that, suddenly, in your spirit, you realize I have completely misunderstood who he is. How does Winston Churchill know him? Winston Churchill died 50 years ago, or 40 years ago.

How does he know him? Abraham Lincoln? How does he know Pastor Jason? And why are they so interested in him? I've completely misunderstood. In a sense, this is validating Jesus words in John's Gospel. Remember in John's Gospel where Jesus says, tell me this, in the Bush passage, why does God say, I am the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob?

Not, I was the God. And Jesus point is, that Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob still live. And so they're not deceased and gone. They still exist, and God is still their God. And he goes on to say, and God is the God of the living, not the dead. So he's validating his point here. Here are Moses and Elijah, and they know Him.

The eternity of Christ. The fact that people who lived centuries ago know Him. And are interested in only talking about him. The glory that they saw was like nothing else. But now quickly, let's move on to number three, the suffering. Because this passage. If anything, what this passage invites us to do is to meld together in our thinking the glory of Christ and the suffering of Christ.

Because those two things are right here together. I know this passage seems to be all about His glory, but it is equally about His coming suffering. Look with me in your notes just real quickly. We could spend Lots of time talking about this, but I just want to just observe all of the parallels, all of the connections between the transfiguration and the cross.

Look with me. The transfiguration, for example, the transfiguration, this was a private epiphany, but there is coming another mountain, the mountain of Golgotha, in which it's not a private epiphany, but it's a public spectacle. This mountain, Jesus is accompanied by two prophets. On the next mountain, he'll be accompanied by two thieves.

On this mountain, this is a demonstration of His glory. The next mountain will be a demonstration of His humility. On this mountain, Jesus goes up the mountain to pray. On that mountain, He goes up the mountain carrying His cross to die. In this mountain, Jesus engages in a conversation with His disciples about His exodus.

On that one, His exodus is what He achieves. The salvation that results from His exodus. The disciples here are told to wait at the foot of the mountain. There the disciples have ran and hidden in fear. This event is preceded by Jesus rebuke of Satan. The next mountain is preceded by Satan's indwelling of Judas.

On this mountain, Jesus clothes are supernaturally made radiant. On that mountain, His clothes are, are gambled over and sorted out and divided among them as a demonstration of His humility. On this mountain, three male disciples view His glory up close. On that mountain, three female disciples will view His shame from afar.

On this mountain, a cloud of glory envelops Jesus and the disciples. On that mountain, darkness will cover all the land in God's judgment. On this mountain, the disciples see and hear men who have died. On that mountain, Jesus Himself will die and after that, many of those who have died will come out of the graves and talk to people.

On this mountain, the identity of Jesus is declared by the Father from heaven. On that mountain, His identity is declared by His executioner. On this mountain, the father affirms his love for his son. On that mountain, the son cries out, why have you forsaken me? On this mountain, the question of Elijah is raised.

What is this thing about Elijah coming first? On that mountain, the question of Elijah is raised again. Quick, quick, don't do anything. Let's see if Elijah comes and rescues him. On this mountain, the disciples are commanded to silence. On that one, they're commanded to take this news to all the world. And then finally, on this mountain, this followed by a conversation among the disciples trying to understand what they saw.

On that mountain, it's followed by a conversation on between the disciples on the road to Emmaus trying to comprehend what they saw. You see the connections between the Transfiguration Mountain and the Mountain of the Cross are too many and too close to ignore. Clearly God wants us to see the cross looming strong and large.

over the mountain of transfiguration. So this is all about his suffering. So in the same way that his glory is far more glorious than anyone recognized, so also his coming suffering is far worse than

anyone recognizes. Now lastly, quickly, we'll move on to the last thing. This is about submission. This is about his glory.

This is also about his suffering. But lastly, this is about love. The voice from heaven declares, This is my son, my beloved son. Reminds us of Genesis 22. Isaac. He's being carried up the mountain. Abraham is taking his son up the mountain. God says, take your son, the one whom you love, take him up there and sacrifice him.

So that reminds us of this instance. This we're reminded of God's love for his son. He says, this is my son, my beloved son. Now that word beloved is a word that's It's easy to pass over. It's easy to just sort of see that word and keep going and just think of it as some sort of word we see in scripture all the time or some sort of title, like putting Mr.

before somebody's name. But instead, pause for just a minute and recognize what that word is saying. Beloved. This is the loved one. This is the object of my love. I am declaring that this, my son, he is the object of my love. One of the things that John brings out. Over and over in his gospel is the love of the father for the son and the love of the son for the father the Father's love for the son is the most profound Love that the universe has ever known the father's love for the son is sinless It is perfect, it is infinite, it is never beginning, and it is never ending.

The Father's love for the Son is a love that transcends all description. So the Father says, this is my beloved Son, the one who is the object of my love. Then, he says, we read in the text, that this cloud overshadowed them. So here's the last thing to see. As this cloud overshadows them and the voice declares, this is my beloved son.

We don't understand the father declaring his love for the son as if to say, that's him, so stay away. Y'all listen to him, do what he says, quit giving him a hard time, fall in line. That's not what the father's saying. The father is not declaring his love for the son. In such a way as to exclude the disciples from that love to say, you know, no, no, stay away from him.

Don't bother him. Kind of like the, uh, the husband who, um, has what I would say is a healthy biblical love for the wife. And he says, this is my beloved wife. I don't want other men looking at her. I don't want other men lusting for my wife. That's not what the father's saying here. Instead, what the father is saying.

This is my beloved son, in whom my love for him also invites you to enter in. So here's where we return to the overshadowing. When God overshadows Mary, that is an impregnating, overshadowing, and what it does is it takes Mary and brings her into this unique relationship in which she is the mother of God.

The same thing we see in the tabernacle, the same thing we see in the temple. In other words, when the cloud overshadows them and God declares, this is my son, my beloved one, what he's saying is, this love that we have is the love that you are invited into. One of the most profound truths of scripture is that we're told that the Father's love for the Son is the same love he has for his people.

Look with me in John chapters 15, Jesus says, As the Father has loved me, so I love you. John 17, I in them and them in me, that they may become perfectly one, so that the world may know that you sent me and love them even as you loved me. Brothers and sisters, this is, I think, the most If

there's a more staggering truth in scripture, I don't know what it is and the staggering the the staggering truth is this for eternity God will not have a special category of love for his son That's different than his love for his people by being placed in Christ We are the same objects of love for the father as the son and that's a stunning, stunning reality And so as the cloud overshadows them, and the voice speaks, it's not saying, Here is a wonderful, eternal love that I have for my, my son.

Now stand back and behold it. Stand back and just be taken, taken, uh, uh, uh, taken, um, by surprise. At the depth, at the profound depth of love that I have for my son. That's not what God is saying. God's saying, this is my beloved son, and by being his followers, by being his called-out people, you too are called into the same relationship of love that I have for my son.

That's the most profound truth I think that the passage points out. The indescribable love is the same love secured for us by the son and into which we are invited by the spirit.