

**Prayer of the Day:**

Lord God, before the suffering and death of your one and only Son, you revealed his glory on the holy mountain. Grant that we who bear his cross on earth may behold by faith the light of his heavenly glory and so be changed into his likeness; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

**Verse of the Day:**

Alleluia. A voice came from the cloud: "this is my Son, whom I love. Listen to him." Alleluia. (Mark 9:7b cf. NIV)

**Sermon Text:**

There is a commercial on TV right now. A young boy and his father are at Yosemite national park. As they drive along, of course in their Subaru (the whole reason we are seeing this play out), it becomes apparent that the boy is hearing impaired. Eventually, the father stops and the two walk a short distance to a large waterfall. As they stand and peer at the sight, the young boy drenched in spray signs, "Dad can you feel that?" It's the reason the dad brought the boy. The father had brought him here that the concussion of the water might serve as a stand-in for the ears which couldn't hear the roar of the fall. He had brought him here that he might feel the majesty of nature.

Today we do not stand at a waterfall, though it is a watershed moment in history. There is no concussion of cascading water to captivate our attention. But our heavenly Father has brought us here for an even more meaningful moment. In the season of Epiphany, we have been seeing and beholding who Jesus is. Now at the end of this short season of the church year, we stand on the precipice of Lent and before it begins, God would envelop our senses, allowing us to see and hear, yes experience once more who Jesus is before he completes the work He has come to do. So, today join me as we stand in awe and wonder with Peter, James, and John and behold a **GLORY WORTH GAWKING AT**.

Consider the sight that Peter, James, and John behold. *There he (Jesus) was transfigured before them.* <sup>3</sup> *His clothes became dazzling white, whiter than anyone in the world could bleach them.* <sup>4</sup> *And there appeared before them Elijah and Moses, who were talking with Jesus.* I don't, think it takes years of education and a degree in theology to figure out what Jesus is demonstrating here. Majesty unlike any other is on display. It overcomes the sight in dazzling white. It fills the ears with conversation more high and lofty than anything we could imagine as they discuss Jesus departure after the salvation of the world. It even overwhelms the emotions as Peter and the others are terrified at the sight, inspired at the glory before them.

Peter will later say, <sup>16</sup> *We did not follow cleverly invented stories when we told you about the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but we were eyewitnesses of his majesty.* <sup>17</sup> *For he received honor and glory from God the Father when the voice came to him from the Majestic Glory, saying, "This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased."* <sup>18</sup> *We ourselves heard this voice that came from heaven when we were with him on the sacred mountain* (2 Peter 1:16-18). John will record, *The Word*

**TEXT: Mark 9:2-9**

<sup>2</sup> After six days Jesus took Peter, James and John with him and led them up a high mountain, where they were all alone. There he was transfigured before them. <sup>3</sup> His clothes became dazzling white, whiter than anyone in the world could bleach them. <sup>4</sup> And there appeared before them Elijah and Moses, who were talking with Jesus.

<sup>5</sup> Peter said to Jesus, "Rabbi, it is good for us to be here. Let us put up three shelters—one for you, one for Moses and one for Elijah." <sup>6</sup> (He did not know what to say, they were so frightened.)

<sup>7</sup> Then a cloud appeared and enveloped them, and a voice came from the cloud: "This is my Son, whom I love. Listen to him!"

<sup>8</sup> Suddenly, when they looked around, they no longer saw anyone with them except Jesus.

<sup>9</sup> As they were coming down the mountain, Jesus gave them orders not to tell anyone what they had seen until the Son of Man had risen from the dead.

*became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the One and Only, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth (John 1:14).*

But it's interesting, amazing even how consistent the Holy Scripture really is. Why does Jesus do miracles? It's always tempting to focus on the law and reply because he wants me to (fill in the blank): love the hurting, heal the sick, comfort the afflicted, etc. And while those are true to a degree, the primary purpose rings through, to prove that He is everything He says He is. And so it is with this majestic glory on the mountaintop. So Peter says, "You can believe in what we say, we didn't make it up but actually saw it." John emphasizes the glory of the Word, yes, Jesus who came for us as he says "We saw that He was who He claimed to be."

But it's so easy to want to pump the brakes here, isn't it? Peter, finds himself firing off the ill thought words. *"Rabbi, it is good for us to be here. Let us put up three shelters—one for you, one for Moses and one for Elijah."* God has Mark bring us back on point with a parenthetical remark, *(He did not know what to say, they were so frightened.)* But there have often been times where I stopped to wonder, "What was so weird about what Peter said?" The answer is in everything we just finished with isn't it? He didn't come for this, He already had it. He came for the conversation which Elijah and Moses were having with Jesus. He came for us. So, *then a cloud appeared and enveloped them, and a voice came from the cloud: "This is my Son, whom I love. Listen to him!"* And just like that everything was back to normal.

You see, Peter was trying to hold onto the glory too. Oh, I can't fault him for that. I'm pretty sure that given the same set of circumstances if I even could have spoken in the face of such glory and perfection I would have said far dumber things than to ask for this glory to remain. But all that glory is again only a part of the picture of our Savior as He reveals Himself to us. The glory of this One, is actually heightened by the fact that He will sheath His might again and do the unexpected, even though centuries of God's prophets had foretold it.

This glory put on display, will bring to fulfillment the picture of the suffering servant. Jesus has not exploded with light in order to set up shop on an earthly throne and depose kings and magistrates who stand in the way. He comes to cover the glory with humility, divinity in flesh. He comes that He might leave. Peter tries to stand in the way of that again the voice reminds him not to and <sup>8</sup> *Suddenly, when they looked around, they no longer saw anyone with them except Jesus.* <sup>9</sup> *As they were coming down the mountain, Jesus gave them orders not to tell anyone what they had seen until the Son of Man had risen from the dead.*

This is why Jesus came. As we stand perched at the end of Epiphany having watched him as He preformed miracles and wonders in one gospel lesson after another, Jesus reminds us He did not come to be a one-man ICU or some pay-per-view demon wrestler. Instead, He came to live and to die, that we might have glory too. So the writer of the book of Hebrews announces, *"For this reason he had to be made like his brothers in every way, in order that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in service to God, and that he might make atonement for the sins of the people (Hebrews 2:17)."* John announces, *"But you know that he appeared so that he might take away our sins. And in him is no sin (1 John 3:5)."*

Brothers and sisters, we didn't get there in a Subaru, nor was it as pultry as waterfall. No today, God gives you a glimpse of His glory that you might know that this is what heads down the mountain to save you. God wants you to gawk at the glory that you might stand in awe of the cross that you might be overcome with joy at the price of your salvation at Easter and into eternity. Amen.