



Growth Group Questions
March 2, 2025
“No Linger on the Mountain”

CONTEXT

Though it is uncertain which mountain Jesus climbed in Mark 9, it is important to remember that high mountains were often the place of revelation in the Bible. Think about Moses at Mt Sinai (Exodus 19) and Elijah at Mt. Carmel (1 Kings 18). The word transfigured is related to the English word metamorphosis. On the mountaintop, Jesus’ appearance was temporarily changed from an ordinary human being to his divine being in all his glory.

Moses and Elijah are usually seen as representatives of the law and prophets. Their appearance with Jesus reminds us that the law and the prophets bore witness to him and that he is the fulfillment of the ancient Scriptures. Mark does not tell us what the three of them were talking about, but Luke 9:31 says they were discussing Jesus’ departure or exodus. They were talking about his suffering and death.

Peter suggests building three shelters or literally tabernacles. Peter wants to memorialize this moment and make it permanent. The transfiguration pointed to the eventual glory of Jesus, but things would not end on this mountaintop. Suffering had to come first and keeping Jesus on the mountain was not an option. As the gospel of John reminds us, Jesus came to dwell/tabernacle amongst his people, not to stay on a mountain away from them.

The cloud reminds us of the shekinah glory of the Lord from the Old Testament and the tent of meeting where Moses would meet with God. In the Old Testament clouds symbolize God’s presence, protection, and authority, and in the New Testament they are associated with the return of Christ.

Verse 9 is the last time in the gospel of Mark that Jesus will tell people to keep silent about what they have seen. Why does Jesus so often tell people not to say anything? The reason is that until Jesus has been crucified, dead and buried and then raised from the dead, his true identity and significance cannot be known or understood. Only after his resurrection could his truth be proclaimed and fully understood.

SCRIPTURE

Mark 9:2-13

² 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. ³ His clothes became dazzling white, whiter than anyone in the world could bleach them. ⁴ And there appeared before them Elijah and Moses, who were talking with Jesus. ⁵ 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.” ⁶ (He did not know what to say, they were so frightened.) ⁷ Then a cloud appeared and covered them, and a voice came from the cloud: “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. ⁹ 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. ¹⁰ They kept the matter to themselves, discussing what “rising from the dead” meant. ¹¹ And they asked him, “Why do the teachers of the law say that Elijah must come first?” ¹² Jesus replied, “To be sure, Elijah does come first, and restores all things. Why then is it written that the Son of Man must suffer much and be rejected? ¹³ But I tell you, Elijah has come, and they have done to him everything they wished, just as it is written about him.”

Hebrews 1:1-3

¹ In the past God spoke to our ancestors through the prophets at many times and in various ways, ² but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, and through whom also he made the universe. ³ The Son is the radiance of God’s glory and the exact representation of his being, sustaining all things by his powerful word. After he had provided purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty in heaven.

Malachi 4:4-6

⁴ “Remember the law of my servant Moses, the decrees and laws I gave him at Horeb for all Israel. ⁵ “See, I will send the prophet Elijah to you before that great and dreadful day of the LORD comes. ⁶ He will turn the hearts of the parents to their children, and the hearts of the children to their parents; or else I will come and strike the land with total destruction.”

Isaiah 53:3

³ He was despised and rejected by mankind,
a man of suffering, and familiar with pain.
Like one from whom people hide their faces
he was despised, and we held him in low esteem.

Mark 9:23-24

²³ “If you can?” said Jesus. “Everything is possible for one who believes.” ²⁴ Immediately the boy’s father exclaimed, “I do believe; help me overcome my unbelief!”

QUESTIONS

1. The transfiguration of Jesus in Mark 9:2-8 is also found in Matthew 17:1-8 and Luke 9:28-36. Read all three accounts and identify the similarities and any differences in the accounts. What sticks out most to you about the different accounts?

2. As we read Mark 9:2-13, what can we learn about Jesus that can help us to trust in Him more fully?
3. In Mark 9:7, God speaks from the cloud saying: “This is my Son whom I love. Listen to Him!” What do you think God was really saying to us with that one simple sentence?
4. The author of Hebrews clearly describes Jesus’ divine nature. What other Bible passages help you to see and to understand Jesus as the “exact representation” of God?
5. In Mark 9:24, the father of the demon-possessed boy told Jesus: “I do believe; help me overcome my unbelief.” What do you think he meant by that statement? What can we learn from this man’s example?
6. How does the dialogue between Jesus and the father of the demon-possessed boy encourage you when you find your faith to be weak?
7. Pastor Paul said that one day we will linger at the table of Jesus because He didn’t linger on the mountain. How does this thought help you as you find yourself in times of suffering?
8. This week’s sermon focused on Mark 9:2-13 and Mark 9:23-24. As you read through the entire chapter during the week, was there anything else in Chapter 9 that particularly spoke to you?

SERMON QUESTIONS:

1. Is there a situation in your life that you need to “intentionally” bring to Jesus?
2. How does the suffering that Jesus endured help you in your own times of struggle and suffering?