

On the Mountain for a Correct View of Christ

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Preacher: Pastor Dave Thompson

[0 : 00] Please turn with me to Luke chapter 9. Luke chapter 9.

If you've noticed, there have been many opportunities as we've gone through these last several messages where the question has come up and where I have made note of the phrase or the question rather, who is this?

And several people asked this. Jesus even asked this at one point. And we'll talk about that more in just a minute. But most notably, not that he's more famous than Jesus, but most notably, because he was talked about several times, was Herod. And he's the one, the context in which the question was initially asked.

Of course, each of them answered, and most of them answered basically in the same way. The crowd suggested that John the Baptist or Elijah or one of the prophets was who this was.

Herod had a problem with that because he had killed John the Baptist and wasn't sure that that really could be true. But still, it's one of the persons that he said.

[1 : 21] And as Jesus did different miracles, that was the thought that was going through people's minds. Who is this? And we looked at a passage just a little bit ago where the Twelve had the correct answer.

When Jesus himself asked, who is this? They had the correct answer, but they had the wrong interpretation.

They took a popular view of the Messiah that said that the Messiah would throw off Rome and set up his kingdom. You'll note as we go further through the book of Luke, you can see it in the other Gospels.

The Twelve kept this thinking right to the end. Even to the point of saying, Psst, Jesus, will you do what I ask for you?

Oh, what is that? When you come into your kingdom, will you give it that I can sit on your right and my brother can sit on your left? But they were thinking of the traditional Messiah interpretation that was true of those days.

[2 : 25] But Jesus, after they had asked and they admitted that he was the Christ of God, Jesus quickly explained that as Messiah, he must suffer many things and be rejected by the elders, chief priests, and scribes, and be killed.

And on the third day, be raised. So he's pushing them towards that proper interpretation. And we're going to see today that Jesus is laying more groundwork, that they get that proper interpretation in mind.

This is so foreign to what the Jews expected. It was so foreign that even the disciples could not believe that suffering would be in store for the Messiah.

And even for all those, as Jesus talked about in our last message, all those who would follow the Messiah must be willing to take up their cross and follow him. Let's go to Luke chapter 9.

I want to read verses 28 to 36. We see this in most of our Bibles. It has the heading, says the transfiguration.

[3 : 46] We're going to see not only Jesus transfigured, but some amazing things that he says while that is going on. Starting in verse 28.

Now about eight days after these sayings, he took with him Peter and John and James and went up on the mountain to pray.

And as he was praying, the appearance of his face was altered, and his clothing became dazzling white. And behold, two men were talking with him, Moses and Elijah, who appeared in glory and spoke of his departure, which he was about to accomplish at Jerusalem.

Now Peter and those who were with him were heavy with sleep. But when they became fully awake, they saw his glory and the two men who stood with him.

And as the men were parting from him, Peter said to Jesus, Master, it's good that we're here. Let us make three tents, one for you and one for Moses and one for Elijah, not knowing what he said.

[5 : 01] And as he was saying these things, a cloud came and overshadowed them. And they were afraid as they entered the cloud. And a voice came out of the cloud saying, this is my son, my chosen one.

Listen to him. And when the voice had spoken, Jesus was found alone. And they kept silent and told no one in those days anything of what they had seen.

Let's pray together. Father, I pray that you would be with us this day. Father, we're not after novelty. We're not after sensationalism. We're after the truth that you give us in this passage. Lord, we need this truth.

We need what we see in this passage. And I pray that you would be with us, that you would help us to understand it. Be with me. Help me to be able to speak it plainly, clearly.

[6 : 09] And I pray that you would bless, that our understanding of Jesus, the understanding of what God had planned, what he's done for us, will be clearer as we finish looking today at these verses.

We pray in Jesus' name. Amen. Amen. So we come to an interesting situation. Not many days had passed since Jesus had asked them who he was and they had confessed that he was the Christ. Not many days had passed and he had warned them about their need to be willing to suffer. They were seeing a Messiah who was going to overthrow Rome and set up his own throne there in Jerusalem and ruled the world.

And they were already thinking in their minds, hey, we're going to be heads of state. We're going to be important people. But Jesus is, oh no, you need to be thinking. Those who follow me need to be willing to take up their cross.

They need to be willing to suffer. They need to follow me. And your life will be forfeit. And those who follow Christ are those who live their lives for him and not for themselves.

[7 : 21] And this is all so foreign. And so just a few days later, they are somewhere. And we're not exactly sure at this point where this is.

There's talk about where they go for this. But that's not important. They go to a high mountain. And Jesus only takes Peter, John, and James.

Now these are the three that he often takes with him to an inner circle of confidence. These are the same three that will go with him in the garden further off from the other 12 or the rest of the 12.

And they are charged to pray and keep watch with him. And of course, they struggle there with sleepiness as they do here. But Jesus takes these three and goes up onto the mountain to pray. And it seems as though he's gone in the evening. We're not sure. And he prays much of the night. We're not sure of that either. We're not sure if this takes place in the middle of the night or during the brightness of the day.

[8 : 21] None of that is evident. But it is evident that Jesus goes and he's going to spend the time in prayer. And during that time, these three men, who may have begun spending their time in prayer, they fall asleep.

And it's interesting what happens sometimes when you fall asleep. They fell asleep and awaken to an amazing situation.

As Jesus was praying in verse 29, it says, the appearance of his face was altered and his clothing become dazzling white.

Jesus there on the mountain began to allow some of his glory to be seen in his face and shining through his clothes.

His glory was revealed. This scene harkens back to some of the things that are pointing to, not specifically pointing to this particular situation, but pointing to the kind of thing that's happening here.

[9 : 34] This points back to a situation where glory is revealed, but not so openly in a person. We think back to the Mount Sinai and Moses is up on the Mount of Sinai and he's been up there.

He's gotten tablets, gone back down as Israel sinned. He's thrown the tablets down and they break because they've been just horrendous lawbreakers. And he goes back up the second time and he goes into a cloud and that cloud is filled with the glory of the Lord.

But here Jesus, as he's praying, his face is transformed and that glory is now coming out from him. You begin to see him in the glory that is revealed.

Some of the passages in Revelation speak of that kind of, they speak of him having white hair and just burnished bronze and his feet and his face being bright as the sun.

His glory being radiating out from him. Now, we talked about how some things point to this.

[10:44] We think of Moses on the mountain and Moses was different. Moses didn't have any glory radiating out of him. When he came back down from the mountain, people thought he was having glory radiate from him, but it wasn't his glory.

It was like he got a glory suntan. And as he came down from the mountain, the glory radiated back off from him, but it wasn't his glory. It was the glory of God that shone upon him and had an effect on him.

And as he came down, it radiated from his face. It was a result of him being in the presence of God's glory. It was reflected glory.

Jesus is not reflecting glory. The glory is coming from himself. And this is pointing to the fact that he does not need glory to come from someone else because he himself is divine.

And as these three men are on that mountain seeing this situation, waking up, I'm sure confused for moments as they rub the sleep from their eye, they're looking at Jesus and, you know, things are bright, it's hard to look anyway, but now you're looking at a being that's radiating glory.

[12:04] One of the words that is used here of his clothes was like the flash of a lightning. I mean, it's that brilliant white, white brightness.

And as they looked at Jesus, they could see that his glory was shining from him in bold and brilliant brightness.

darkness. But as they stood there trying to understand the situation, they recognized that there were two other people, Moses and Elijah.

And I, frankly, one of the questions I asked myself this week was how did they know it was Moses and Elijah? And I have no answer.

None at all. I mean, I'm going to list in a minute some things that were characteristics of Moses and Elijah that someone might tie to them, but I cannot picture them in the moment being able to say, oh yeah, that scripture, that must be Moses and that scripture, that must be Elijah.

[13:15] I just, I can't see any. But my firm conviction is if they knew it was Moses and Elijah, Jesus made sure they knew it was Moses and Elijah, I think, in that very moment, because they wouldn't have understood what he was trying to teach them if they didn't know it was Moses and Elijah.

Now, why Moses and Elijah? Well, a couple of thoughts. Some interesting things. Both had an unusual departure. Moses went up onto the mountain and died because God said, you're going to go to the top of the mountain and die, and he did, and scripture says that God buried him.

Later, in the book of Jude, there was dispute about the body of Moses where it was buried. We don't know all the ifs, ands, and buts about that, but he had an unusual departure.

And, of course, Elijah was the one that God said, I'm taking you to heaven today, and after walking with Elijah for a while, at one point, the chariots of Israel came down, flaming horses, flaming chariots, and they swoop down and they pick up Elijah and they take him alive into heaven.

And so, he had an unusual departure. And it's interesting also, you can go to Exodus chapters 25 to 31 and find out that there was the point at which Moses said, show me your glory.

[14:54] God says, I can't show you my glory. You would die. But I'll pass by and I'll cover your face and I'll let you see the glow that's left afterwards.

And that's what God did. And then, in 1 Kings 19, 8 to 19, Elijah had been super discouraged because he'd faced the prophets on the Mount Carmel situation and he had ended up killing those prophets and shown that the Lord was God and yet Israel would not turn and would not repent and serve God.

And so, he began to run and he ran until he got clear down to the end of Israel and God sent an angel with bread and water and fed him three times and he slept for a good long time and he got up and he ran for four, I don't know how long it took, but he went on the strength of that food for 40 days and 40 nights without food or water, met God on Mount Sinai and remember, he heard the winds and the rocks rent and all this, he went out and he had to wrap his face in a mantle, he had the opportunity in a sense to see the glory of God.

And so, he too was in that situation. And I'm sure that these three men understood those things and it played into this, into what they were to understand.

But why Moses and Elijah, I think the biggest thing is that when people thought of the Old Testament, they thought of Moses and the law and Elijah and the prophets.

[16:51] And most would say that summed up the Old Testament in a great majority of its teaching. And so, as Moses and Elijah met Jesus there on the mountain, I think they represented the thinking of the Old Testament.

And I think that was important because of what was about to go on. But they represented the fact that all of the Old Testament was pointing to what Jesus was about to do.

And it's sad. The same thing happens today. People focus on some parts of Scripture and ignore on other parts of Scripture. Sometimes we're just blind to it.

People have end-time interpretations. And I'm not making fun of anybody's end-time interpretation.

Well, most of them I'm not making fun of. But there are valid interpretations and we look at things.

But there were so many things that they didn't see when Jesus came that were plain and right in front of them. And when he said it, they're like, we didn't even see that. But all of the Old Testament, the Jews didn't see this.

[18:04] They saw Jesus later messiahship where he would come back. And that's still later for us when he will come back and conquer all the nations and rule and reign for all eternity.

That's all they saw in the Old Testament. They didn't see the Messiah that Jesus had come to be now. And I think Moses and Elijah, especially as we get into what they're going to talk about, are there to represent that some understood that the Old Testament was pointing to exactly what Jesus was about to do.

And they were also mentioning that Jesus, or they were representing that Jesus' statement in Luke 9, 22. You remember the statement that says the Son of Man must suffer, he must die, and he must be killed, and he must raise from the dead.

That statement was not in contradiction to what Moses and Elijah believed and preached. I think their presence was testimony to that.

But it's interesting, Luke says that they were discussing something. Moses and Elijah and Jesus were discussing something. I want you to see that.

[19:28] verse 30, And behold, two men were talking with Moses and Elijah who appeared in glory and spoke of his departure, which he was about to accomplish at Jerusalem.

There is some odd wording there. You and I would think they would say, yeah, they're talking about the next few days or the next few weeks, what Jesus would do.

they use specific words. The ESV uses the word departure. But the Greek word that's there for that is the word in the Septuagint, the Greek version of the Old Testament, is the word for Exodus.

It's the word for Exodus. So they spoke of Jesus' Exodus. Now, what does he mean by that? Well, Peter, himself, used this word at one point in his epistle.

2 Peter 1.15, he says, and I will make every effort so that after my departure, or Exodus, you may be able at any time to recall these things.

[20:41] So he uses that word. And it's pretty evident that he's talking about his death. I'm saying these things so that after I die, you will remember.

Now, Peter's death was not just a, you know, he laid in bed and fell asleep and didn't wake up. Peter was crucified, upside down for our Lord.

And there was kind of a scene of it. But this word can mean the idea of just dying or leaving this world. And so, here in Luke, Moses and Elijah and Jesus were certainly speaking of the coming death of Jesus, Jesus.

But it's interesting because the interesting words go on. I think this, because of what we'll get to in a second, I think this word Exodus, not only just speaking about his death, but I think it's used to allude to the Old Testament event from which we think of Exodus.

And that would have meant a lot to the Jews at the time. in the Jewish mind, whenever people were suffering oppression, there were two reference points that were huge in their mind.

[21:57] If they lived before the captivity in Babylon, whenever they thought about God delivering them, they thought about Exodus, Pharaoh, the plagues, and all this.

After the deportation, their captivity, they would think of how God miraculously delivered them from Babylon.

And so they have these reference points. And I think Jesus and Moses and Elijah are referring to the Exodus on purpose because a confluence of several things.

Thinking of the Exodus, what did the Exodus involve? Well, the Exodus involved what God did to provide deliverance for his people. There were the plagues, they plundered the enemy, but that's where the Passover was instituted.

A meal that was eaten in readiness. A lamb was killed and its blood was sprinkled with hyssop on the top and the two sides of the door. And anyone in that house was protected from the curse of the death angel, primarily the firstborn, man or beast.

[23 : 22] The animal was in that house where the blood was sprinkled, was protected and passed over. They did not die. The lamb died in their stead.

dead. So, that was instituted to that point and because of that the whole nation was released from slavery and allowed to leave Egypt.

And even more than that as they went out of Egypt and the Egyptians says, that was stupid, why did we let them go? And they began to chase Israel and caught up with them at the Red Sea and God then miraculously opened the Red Sea and they walked through on dry ground and as Egypt went into the sea, God closed the sea upon them and killed all the Egyptians.

When the Jews talked of the Exodus, they thought of all those things. They thought of all those things. Now, notice, remember I said, I read that verse, it says they were discussing his Exodus, which he was about to accomplish in Jerusalem.

They didn't say, yeah, Jesus is going to die in Jerusalem. The Exodus he was about to accomplish in Jerusalem.

[24 : 54] I think we can certainly keep in mind what Jesus has said in Luke 9 22, the Son of Man must suffer many things and be rejected by the elders and chief priests and scribes and be killed and on the third day be raised.

The Exodus that he was about to accomplish in Jerusalem. After this took place, after Jesus died, very shortly afterwards. The disciples, he died and was buried and rose again and ascended. The disciples were gathered together and remember the tongues fell on people, people were looking on those who were saved, those who were trusting Christ, and people were looking around and saying, this is weird, are these people drunk?

And Peter stands up to preach a sermon saying, these people aren't drunk, this is a fulfillment of Joel's prophecy. And then he goes on to say this, men of Israel, hear these words, Jesus of Nazareth, a man attested to you by God with mighty works and wonders and signs that God did through him in your midst, as you yourselves know, this Jesus delivered up according to the definite plan and foreknowledge of God, you crucified and killed by the hands of lawless men.

God raised him up, loosing the pains of death because it was not possible for him to be held by it. The exodus he was about to accomplish in Jerusalem.

[26 : 41] And just before we talk more about this, the exodus that he was about to accomplish in Jerusalem, took place at the beginning of the feast of Passover.

And Jesus was known as the Passover Lamb, the true Passover Lamb, dying instead of and sparing the lives of all those who are his.

And Jesus would be going to Jerusalem to die at that Passover time, and in doing that he would free his people from the bondage and captivity to sin.

And in doing that he would also permanently deliver his people from all their enemies, even the last enemy which is death. And just like Israel, when it was done, when they had made it through the Red Sea, he talked about them being his people and he being their God.

And so Jesus, having gone to Jerusalem to accomplish the Exodus there, would be making those people that are his, his people, and then bringing them into a place of rest for all eternity.

[28 : 10] Israel didn't make it, they made it to the promised land eventually, but because of their sin it wasn't a place of rest. Joshua spoke of another place of rest. The writer of the book of Hebrews picked that up and said if Joshua had believed that the land of promise was the land of real rest, he wouldn't have spoken of another rest to come.

And the writer of the book of Hebrews talks about what Jesus provides for his people. Moses and Elijah and Jesus were talking about not how Jesus would go to Jerusalem, look Herod in the face and say get off from that throne, that's mine.

They're talking about how Jesus would go to Jerusalem and would suffer at the hands of the scribes and the Pharisees and the chief priests because he must do that.

They were talking about how he would go to Jerusalem and those people who made him suffer would end up killing him. He must do that. And they would bury him and on the third day he would be raised.

He must do that. I think there's so many things going on here. I think Jesus is building into these three a theology that was rock solid once they understood it and they didn't understand it here and they won't understand it until after Jesus dies and rises from the dead.

[29 : 43] But God gave them the truth here and we know from scripture that Jesus says I'm telling you these things so that when it happens you will understand. And so one of the things that he's getting them to understand is that Jesus was going to Jerusalem to give them their exodus.

The great deliverance what they needed to be released from their captivity and that's the exodus Jesus was about to accomplish.

So if you're here today trusting Christ Moses and Elijah and Jesus were talking about how he was going down to do what they Moses and Elijah and you and I needed.

He wasn't going to throw Herod off the throne. That'll come later. He was going to meet your need.

He was going to make it so that the death angel can pass over you.

he was going to make you his. And he knew that from the very beginning. Peter didn't know it.

[31 : 02] James didn't know it. John didn't know it. Peter didn't know what to do. I mean he's like something's going on here.

I don't want it to end. I don't know what's going on here. I don't understand. But anytime you see and not lightly that this happens all the time.

This is the only time this happened. But anytime you see Jesus in at least partial glory let's stay here. Anytime you get to talk with Moses and Elijah let's stay here. How about we make tabernacles.

Tents. And we all just stay here. And Luke I love how it's in the other gospels also but Luke just says it as as a narrator's comment. He didn't know what he was talking about.

He just didn't understand the situation. They will but not for a while. Well how could the situation get any better?

[32 : 03] Peter's I don't know what to do. Luke has carried this question for many verses now.

Who is this? And people have conjectured. The disciples have conjectured. Jesus asked them and they gave an answer that was correct but not interpreted properly.

Jesus is revealing who he is. He's the son of God. He is very God of very God. He doesn't need someone else's glory to shine upon him.

He is God. He has his own glory. And he has veiled that in flesh. The things that you can think about. This revealed to the disciples that Jesus had all that in him.

And it was veiled because of his need to go to Jerusalem. But all that. Who is this? Who is this? Who is this?

[33 : 09] And now we've gotten to this point where Jesus' own glory is radiating out. And Moses and Elijah are talking about what he's about to do. And a cloud appears. And that cloud begins to envelop them.

And soon you can't see Jesus nor Moses or Elijah and there's all kinds of discrepancy whether the cloud covered Peter, James, and John or not. Some gospels sounds like he does.

Sometimes it sounds like it doesn't. It doesn't matter. But the cloud appears. And the cloud is like that cloud that filled the tabernacle after it was completed and sanctified.

No one could stand to be in it. The cloud was the same kind of cloud like when the temple was sanctified. Filled the temple, no one could be in it.

The cloud was like the cloud that Moses was able to be in and see the glory of God. And the question had been asked over and over and over again.

[34 : 25] Who is this? And a voice from the cloud says, this is my son. Psalm 2-7 I will tell of the decree the Lord said to me you are my son today I have begotten you.

God the Father is saying that Jesus is divine. That he and the Father are one. This is my son. He's not just a prophet.

He's the son of God. And he goes on to say not only is he my son but he's the chosen one.

And this is where I think Isaiah just shines because it's probably an allusion to Isaiah 42 and let me read a few verses from the first nine verses.

Behold my servant whom I uphold my chosen in whom my soul delights I have put my spirit upon him he will bring forth justice to the nations he will not cry aloud or lift up his voice or make it hurt in the streets a bruised reed he will not break and a faintly burning wick he will not quench he will faithfully bring forth justice and he will not grow faint or be discouraged till he has established justice in the earth and the coastlands wait for his law thus says God the Lord who created the heavens and stretched them out who spread out the earth and what comes from it who gives breath to the peoples on it and spirit to those who walk in it I am the Lord I have called you in righteousness [36 : 27] I will take you by the hand and keep you I will give you as a covenant for the people a light for the nations to open the eyes that are blind to bring out the prisoners from the dungeon from the prison those who sit in darkness I am the Lord that is my name my glory I give to no other nor my praise to carved images or idols behold the former things have come to pass and new things I now declare before they spring forth I tell you of them God says this is my chosen and yes there are echoes of far away what we will see at the end but there are echoes now of this Messiah who had come that had to go to Jerusalem that had to suffer that had to die and be buried and was raised again that was

God's servant what Jesus was doing was not an anomaly it was not something unusual it was not an unexpected plan it was God's plan from the beginning of the earth he says this is my son my chosen my chosen one listen to him we read it last week but I'm going to read it again because the idea of his chosen one fits so beautifully with Isaiah behold my servant shall act wisely he shall be high and lifted up and shall be exalted as many were astonished at you his appearance was so marred beyond human semblance and his form beyond that of the children of mankind so shall he sprinkle many nations doesn't that sound like that hyssop over the door as he goes to be the Passover lamb kings shall shut their mouths because of him for that which has not been told they see them they see and that which had they had not heard they understand who has believed what he has heard from us and to whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed for he grew up before him like a young plant and like a root out of dry ground he had no form or majesty that we should look at him and no a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief and is one from whom men hid their faces he was despised and we esteemed him not surely he has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows yet we esteemed him stricken smitten by God and afflicted but he was pierced for our transgressions he was crushed for our iniquities upon him was the chastisement that brought peace and with the iniquity of us all he was oppressed and he was afflicted yet he opened not his mouth like a lamb that is led to the slaughter and like a sheep that before his shearers is silent so he opened not his mouth by oppression and judgment he was taken away and as for his generation who considered that he was cut off out of the land of the living stricken for the transgression of my people he made his grave with the wicked and with the rich man in his death although he had done no violence and there was no deceit in his mouth yet it was the will of the Lord to crush him he has put him to grief when his soul makes an offering for guilt he shall see his offspring he shall prolong his days the will soul he shall see and be satisfied by his knowledge shall the righteous one my servant make many to be accounted righteous and he shall bear their iniquities therefore I will divide him a portion with the many and he shall divide the spoil of the strong because he poured out his soul to death and was numbered with the transgressors yet he bore the sin of many many and made intercession for transgressors I must go to Jerusalem I must suffer at the hands of the scribes and Pharisees and chief priests I must be killed I will be buried and I will be raised on the third day why because he was going to Jerusalem for the exodus that he was to accomplish for his people so witnessed by Jesus so witnessed by the father this is my son my chosen one listen to him let's pray thank you father thank you for the beautiful picture of Jesus thank you that men on earth got to see him in partial glory at least thank you that we heard through these men the words of Christ and what he said he must do and that how doing that was him accomplishing the exodus for his people that he must accomplish I thank you father for the work of

[42 : 29] Christ that has paid for our sin thank you that he was willing to do it even that it was at great cost I pray that you would be with us help us to be mindful of the wonder of what Christ has done all the time I pray that it would never escape our minds!

And Lord I pray that you would draw those who call upon the name of the Lord we thank you for your goodness and your grace to us in Jesus name Amen Let's close by singing 239 239 we often sing this in relation to the Lord's Supper but I love this contrast that's here in this hymn who is this so weak and helpless child of lowly Hebrew made and it puts that contrast there all along something that the disciples didn't see until he had completed his work in Jerusalem and we don't see until God opens our eyes so let's stand and sing praise to the Lord who is this so we can help us 239 can us any
Hebrew name Amen. Amen.
Amen.