

Mark 9:1-13

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[0 : 00] So join me as I read to you Mark chapter 9 verses 1 through 13. 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 of 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 do 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?

[1 : 29] But I tell you that Elijah has come, and they did to him whatever they pleased, as it is written of him. This is God's word to us. It was written for his glory and for our good.

We would all do well to listen to it in order to believe its promises and obey its commands. Let's pray together. Father God, we are always at all times in desperate need of you.

But Father, it's in times like this that I feel that most. And I need you. I desperately need you to come and to help me preach the word of God accurately and poignantly this day.

And Father, we all need you to work by your Spirit to apply your word to us to our hearts, that they might be changed from one degree of glory to another.

Father, this day do not neglect your people. Make us in greater degrees into the image of Christ that we might glorify your name. And we pray this in Jesus Christ's name.

[2 : 39] Amen. So, we've come to a rather exciting part of Mark's Gospel account. In fact, the beginning of eight and a half chapters really kind of seem to be an introduction to where we've arrived so far as we came to verse 29, excuse me, yep, 29, where Jesus asks the question of the disciples, but who do you say that I am?

And Peter answers him with this massive proclamation, you are the Christ, the anointed one of God, the prophet, priest, and king who reigns forever.

But we see very quickly that he had a misunderstanding. In fact, we're going to see a couple of other passion predictions on Jesus' part. We find those in the following, verse 31 and verse 32. And there's always a misunderstanding response on the behalf of the disciples. But we begin the great teaching period as Jesus is making his journey toward Jerusalem.

We're about six months out from the crucifixion at this point, and he's spent quite a few years now with the disciples. And they're just now starting to grasp who he is and what the kingdom of God will look like.

[3 : 56] We see the misunderstanding on Peter's part in verse 32 as he takes him aside and rebukes him to say to him, how could it possibly be that you are the Christ and that you will suffer and die?

May it never be. Peter had yet to understand what the kingdom was really going to look like, that was coming in spirit for now, not in the physical realm, but in the spiritual realm for this period of time.

And Jesus' response to him is a scathing one. He says to him, get behind me, Satan, for you are not setting your mind on the things of God, but on the things of man.

And he goes on, as we spoke last week, to raise the bar for what discipleship would look like. He says to them, if anyone would come after me, let him deny himself, take up his cross, and follow

me.

That is, deny himself, set aside his self-governing, his very being, in order to follow Jesus. Verse 35, whoever would save his life, will lose it.

[4 : 58] Whatever loses his life for my sake and the gospels, will save it. He's beginning to explain to the disciples, and I hope that we're seeing very clearly, the way in which he came to serve the world.

This apparent paradox that seems to exist, that he would come and reign by first becoming a servant, by emptying himself, and dying on behalf of the church.

It's incredible. Absolutely incredible. And we see on the heels of Peter's great proclamation, you are the Christ. We have not followed you in vain.

You are the anointed one. You are going to come, and you are going to reign. And then Jesus says to him, but first, I'm going to die. And if you want to follow me, you're going to do the same. You're also going to suffer and die.

Jesus, in his great compassion, brings along a beautiful encouragement to the disciples. And he says this to them in verse 1 of chapter 9.

[6 : 00] Truly I say to you, there are some standing here, those who he was speaking to, who will not taste death until they see the kingdom of God after it has come with power.

And there's a lot of different opinions about what Jesus meant. All of them, save the right opinion, seem crazy to me. Because then, something happens.

Immediately following this statement, six days later, but after this, the record is, the transfiguration occurred. So he's saying to the disciples, some of you, who are standing here, are going to get to see me transfigured.

You're going to get to get a glimpse of my glory. You're going to get to see the kingdom in its power before you die. This was a great act of encouragement to them.

To take some of the disciples up onto the mountain and say, see, it's worth following me. I am God's visible glory. Watch this.

[7 : 03] He's said things to them now. Now he's going to show them something. Something that they can hold on to and they can take through the next six months and the years that would follow to their very own deaths in pursuit of the gospel of the kingdom of God.

It's a beautiful, precious thing that Jesus does for them there in this incredible miracle. This is by far the greatest miracle he's performed so far and you probably will never see this in a list of Jesus' miracles but the transfiguration is amazing.

Next to only maybe the resurrection itself, this is the greatest, it could be argued, of miracles. But before we get into the particulars of the transfiguration itself, I first want to deal with verses 11, 12, and 13.

So if you'll allow me, we're going to jump to the end of our text for the day, look at 11, 12, and 13 and we'll back back up to verse 2. So they're coming down the mountain having seen this miraculous transfiguration, this conversation that takes place between Jesus, Elijah, and Moses, having God cover them with a cloud and speak out of heaven to them.

And they're coming down the mountain and they say, why do the scribes say that first Elijah must come? And then Jesus gives explanation to that. He gives some explanation to the fact that Elijah has in fact come.

[8 : 32] Rightly, the scribes, which were the religious elite, the studious religious of that day, say that Elijah must come first and they get this from Malachi chapter 4, the last of the prophets before God goes silent for 400 years.

Malachi said in chapter 4, verse 5 and 6, Behold, I will send you Elijah, the prophet, before the great and awesome day of the Lord comes. And he will turn the hearts of fathers to their children and the hearts of children to their fathers, lest I come and strike the land with the decree of utter destruction. So they believed that Elijah was going to come incarnate. He was going to come back to life. In fact, one of the great differences between the Pharisees and the Sadducees is that the Pharisees believed in the resurrection of the dead.

This was part of that reason. They were waiting for Elijah to be resurrected and to come back and do this, be the herald of Jesus, the Lord who would come and reign, the Christ.

Mark records that a number of people thought that Jesus was Elijah, that it was possible that he was the forerunner of the Christ. We see that in Mark 6, 15 and 8, 28. The prophecy that Elijah

would precede Jesus is fulfilled by John the Baptizer.

[9 : 49] Look at Mark's introductory statements concerning John the Baptizer in chapter 1, verse 2 from Isaiah. They're incredibly similar to a previous prophecy of Malachi in chapter 3 where he says, Behold, I send my messenger and he will prepare the way before me.

How do we know for sure that Jesus was saying that John the Baptizer was the predicted Elijah? How can we know that for sure? The Bible tells us for sure.

In the same account, Matthew chapter 17, verse 13, Matthew records, Then the disciples understood that he was speaking to them of John the Baptist.

So John the Baptist is the Elijah that they're speaking of. He is the forerunner. He is the fulfillment of the Old Testament prophecy of Malachi. Therefore, Jesus is the Christ.

Isn't it incredible as we look at the lives of these disciples that they have spent all this time with Jesus, we see his words, we read them, and their response, the faithlessness on their part.

[10 : 58] And I just want to remind you as we walk through these next couple of chapters together, the reason that Mark records the healing of the blind man at Bethsaida, we find that in verse 20 through to 26, is to show us that Jesus is the Lord over spiritual, excuse me, physical sight as well as spiritual sight.

So we saw a miracle where he healed a man of his physical blindness in degrees, and now we're seeing him do the same in degrees with the disciples. It's beyond me.

Sometimes you read this and you go, how could you not get this? How can you not understand?

But the spiritual scales were being lifted from their eyes. It was being unfolded for them. They were getting it in part and they would get it more completely as Jesus' death and resurrection occurs.

So back to verse 2. Jump back up there to verse 2. Now remember that they have traveled from Bethsaida to the region of Caesarea Philippi. There's been some teaching happening here and then there's this statement, truly I say to you, there's some standing here who will not taste death until they see the kingdom of God after it's come with power and then six days.

Six days happens. We don't know exactly where they went to. I'm going to tell you a bit about the high mountain and where I believe they headed off to. But we see a record that six days has passed.

[12 : 20] If you study this further later, you also will note that in Luke, Luke records that eight days have passed. And I don't want you to think at this point that the scripture has failed to be inerrant. It was common in this day to measure time in two different ways.

Here we see in Matthew and in Mark, they started counting on the next day and they counted the days up to the day prior to the transfiguration. Six days. Luke instead counted the day he said it as well as the day the transfiguration happened.

Therefore, eight days. Very common. And interchangeable in that way. So six or eight, whichever way you want to count it. I might even count that as seven personally.

Roughly a week later, they take a bit of a retreat. And he goes away with some closer buddies. This was kind of the inner circle in Jesus' day. In his humanity, he had a limited capacity for personal relationship.

He had his twelve and within his twelve he had three. And we see this consistently. These are the ones that went and prayed with him in the Garden of Gethsemane before his crucifixion. Peter and James and John, the brothers, James and John, the sons of Zebedee.

[13 : 31] And he leads them up onto a high mountain by themselves. Now the high mountain tradition holds that the mountain is Mount Tabor, which is down on the western side of the Sea of Galilee.

Could have been traveled to. A lot of the speculation is because of the days that had passed. They may have been traveling in those days and traveled to Mount Tabor.

Although, the record is that it's a high mountain and Mount Tabor is not all that much taller than the other mountains in the region. It's not really a high mountain. It's just a mountain.

If you look at pictures of it, it looks really more like a hill. It's 1,800 feet above sea level. More likely, I would say to you, that the high mountain is Mount Hermon, which is just north of the region of Caesarea Philippi.

In fact, it would have taken quite some time to climb because it's 9,200 feet above sea level. It has snow on it much of the year in this region. Either way, it doesn't really matter.

[14:34] They're up on a high mountain by themselves and they go up there in order to pray. Luke 9, 28 states that they went up on the mountain to pray.

And in verse 32, it says that they were heavy with sleep. They were heavy with sleep. It's likely in Luke's account that as they went up there to pray together, just like they did in the Garden of Gethsemane, they fell asleep.

And in our Garden of Gethsemane account, they're asleep with sorrow. Have you ever been in such a sorrowful situation, lamenting something that's happened in your life that all you want to do is go to sleep?

I have. Seems to be a bit of a salve for the tender heart. Forget about the troubles of the day and just go to sleep. And so it's likely that as he takes them up onto the mountain that they're sorrowful. They have followed him, they have recognized him to be the Christ, but they have also seen that he's going to suffer and die and that they're going to as well if they're going to continue to follow him. And then we see this miracle.

[15:44] He was transfigured before them. Mark, to this point, has been so brief, so punchy, moved us along so quickly, and I believe that he's doing so to get us to this point, to get us to the last half of chapter 8 and get us into chapter 9.

This is kind of the watershed moment. He's pumped everything up to this point. Now everything flows away from this point in his record here, and he says to us, and he was transfigured before them.

It's a simple, punchy statement. Come on, Mark. It's a little more. What actually happened here? We don't really know. In fact, Matthew and Luke don't give us a lot more detail.

The word transfigured in the Greek is metamorpho. It's where we get metamorphosis from. It means literally changed in figure. His character, his essence, his being didn't change, but the way he looked changed.

The account in Mark is his clothes became radiant, intensely white, as no one on earth could bleach them. There were people in this day that bleached clothing. No one could have accomplished this.

[16:56] It was a supernatural thing. His clothes, radiant, intensely white. Matthew 17, 2 says his face shone like the sun and his clothes became white, as light.

And Luke 9, 22 says the appearance of his face was altered and his clothing became dazzling white. And that's our explanation of what the transfiguration looked like.

But, you have to note these words, radiant, intensely white, whiter than anybody could bleach them, face like the sun, white as light. Clothing became dazzling white.

Jesus' radiance here is very key. The way in which he was transfigured was very key to the encouragement of the disciples because whenever God appears to his people in the Old Testament, he appears in some sort of light phenomenon, some sort of appearance of light. His disciples were Jews. They knew this. They knew their Old Testament. They knew that when God showed up, this was how he showed up. A couple of examples of that. At the initiation of the priestly service in Leviticus 9, God appears as light.

[18:09] In Exodus 24, God appears to Moses as light. In Exodus 40, verses 34 and 35, the tabernacle is completed and God begins to dwell there as light, just above the Ark of the Covenant.

We know this as God's Shekinah glory, which just means dwelling, the Shekinah glory of God. It dwelt in the tabernacle. In Ezekiel, we can see where God's Shekinah glory leaves the temple, travels up to a hill and departs to heaven.

So it's very key that Jesus showed up in light. He transfigures in that way. It was a message to them that he is in fact who he says he was. All the miracles, all the things that he's performed up to this point had yet to give them the faith they needed to persevere.

And here he shows up as God himself. He's radiant with light. Hebrews 1, 3a says he is the radiance of the glory of God.

2 Corinthians 4, 6 Paul writes, God who said let light shine out of darkness has shown in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.

[19:19] Jesus Christ is often called the glory of God. The way that we can witness the glory of God. Moses asked to see God's glory as they were in the desert and God showed him his back.

We get to behold Jesus, the Christ. We get to see him fully for who he is. We have record and account and we get to hold this in our hands. They got to stand on the mountain with him and see him transfigured, see him shine as light.

As I said before, the brief account of this is a bit frustrating to me. I believe that the word of God is inspired and therefore it was told this way for this reason. I want more. I want to know a little bit more of what was going on.

We've got a couple of other clues to it. Not much. John in his gospel, chapter 1, verse 4 says, in him was life and the life was the light of men.

2 Peter, chapter 1, verses 16 through 18, Peter records, for we did not follow cleverly devised myths when we made known to you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. But we were witnesses of his majesty.

[20 : 27] He's speaking here of the transfiguration. For when he received honor and glory from God the Father and the voice was born to him by the majestic glory, this is my beloved son with whom I am well pleased, we ourselves heard this very voice born from heaven for we were with him on the holy mountain.

And those are the accounts that we get of this amazing thing that happened in history. And it seems to me that they tend to relegate the miracle in order to exalt the person.

That they wanted to set aside the fact that he was this shiny being, that he becomes something different in vision in order to exalt him and the message that he came to preach.

Remember Mark, chapter 1, verse 15, Jesus says, the time is fulfilled and the kingdom of God is at hand. Repent and believe in the gospel.

And here we see, rather than becoming very mystical and focusing on this amazing thing, it must have been incredible to witness, they want to drive us back to the message.

[21 : 34] Repent and believe in the gospel. Jesus is who he says he is. He is the son of God, the one who's come to take away the sins of the world, the one who's come to make remission of sins for many.

Repent and believe in the gospel. So they relegate the miracle in order to exalt the person and the message. In addition to him transfiguring, we see some other people show up in glory.

They are Elijah and Moses. We see this in verse 4. And they were talking with Jesus. And why do you suppose they showed up?

Why do we need a couple of people to show up? Let me say to you it's because, consistently through the scriptures, two or three witnesses were necessary to give credence to something, to make something final and true.

Deuteronomy 19.15, the second half, says only on the evidence of two witnesses or of three witnesses shall a charge be established. Matthew 18.16 says that dealing with sins in the church, that we should do so with two or three witnesses.

[22 : 43] Paul tells the church at Corinth in his second letter that he will bring charges by the evidence of two or three witnesses. 1 Timothy 5.19 says, Do not admit to charge against an elder except on the evidence of two or three witnesses.

This was very common of the day. This was the way in which you brought charges against or for an individual. And so Jesus is joined by two great witnesses, Moses and Elijah.

Moses was, arguably, I believe, Israel's greatest leader. Led them out of captivity, away from this symbolic captivity to sin, out of Egypt, and into, eventually, with all the obstacles that came in the way, at least to the border of the promised land.

It was Moses who gave the law. He was the arbiter of that. God gave it to him and he gave it to Israel. Elijah, again, arguably, but Elijah, I think, was Israel's greatest prophet.

As Moses gave the law, Elijah guarded the law. Elijah said to the people of God over and over and over again, keep the commandments of God.

[24 : 01] And now they're in a conversation with Jesus who came and fulfilled the law. They were talking with Jesus. What were they talking about? What were they talking about?

They were talking about the crucifixion. Again, how do we know this? The Bible tells us what they were talking about. In a different account, Luke chapter 9, verse 30 and 31, 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. This is what they were talking about. They were talking about the very thing that Jesus had said was going to happen. They're giving witness to the fact that as he's appearing, transfigured, he is the visible glory of God.

The disciples can see this. They're having a conversation about the fact that he was going to suffer and die at the hands of the scribes and the Pharisees. They're giving account to the fact that what

Jesus said was going to happen is going to happen.

Elijah and Moses join with him in affirming this great reality. And then Peter butts in. If Jesus and Elijah and Moses showed up today, please don't interrupt the conversation that they're having.

[25 : 21] Peter, always the spokesman, says to Jesus, Rabbi, it's good that we are here. Let us make three tents, one for you and one for Moses, one for Elijah, for he did not know what to say, for they were terrified.

A good record that you shouldn't say anything at all. At all. However, Peter was, even though he was a simple man, he had his theology right.

He had his theology right. The transfiguration happened in the month of Tishri, which as I've said before, was six months before Passover. And there was something happening at the very time in Jerusalem that they're up on the mountain and this is happening.

There was something happening. It's called the Feast of Tabernacles. And it was a feast that came and happened to commemorate the Exodus. Being led out of one kingdom to be free in another kingdom.

This was the very thing that they were doing. But Peter's desire to build for them Tabernacles was to celebrate that. He's now seeing Christ exalted, transfigured, shining in glory.

[26 : 34] And Moses and Elijah are there and he's saying it's time. It's time to go. It's time to get out of this world and go to the next world. It's time for the kingdom to come.

Can't you see the misunderstanding on this part? It was not yet the time. Peter, James, and John wanted to exit the world. They wanted to be spared the suffering that Jesus had talked about.

They said, we have the Christ, we have Moses, we have Elijah. Let's get the glorious kingdom started. They wanted glory without suffering. They wanted exaltation without humiliation. They wanted Jesus to be crowned king without the cross.

This is not something that could happen. God's ordained plan go all the way back to the end of verse 33. For you are not setting your mind on the things of God but on the things of man.

The plan of God was for Jesus to go to the cross. I'm glad he did it. I hope you are too. And as they say this, a theologically informed but wrong statement, as they say this, a third witness shows up.

[27 : 46] Elijah and Moses, one and two witnesses. And now look who shows up. A cloud overshadows them and a voice came out of the cloud. This is my beloved son.

Listen to him. The almighty shows up and combines in chorus with Elijah and with Moses to give account to the things that Jesus has said. I love the record of it in Matthew chapter 17 verses 5 and 6.

It says, verse 5, speaking of Peter, he was still speaking. So I love that because Peter's still talking and then God comes and shuts him down. He's interrupted by the divine.

When, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them. Again, you see the bright cloud overshadowed them. Shows up in a light phenomenon. And a voice from the cloud said, this is my beloved son with whom I am well pleased.

Listen to him. And I love verse 6. When the disciples heard this, they fell on their faces and were terrified. You better be when you're interrupted by the divine and corrected.

[28 : 51] The very thing that happened. Jesus has spoken to you. He has told you what will come to pass. And now you're trying to establish a kingdom by another way? This is my beloved son. Listen to him.

Right? He knows the way of God. Follow him in that way. Even if it leads to your own death. Take up your cross. Follow him. And then suddenly, verse 8, suddenly, looking around, the whole scene vanished.

The kingdom preview, this glimpse they got of the coming glory of God was gone. And then plain old Jesus Christ was standing before them once again.

And he charged them to tell no one what they had seen, verse 9, until the Son of Man had been risen from the dead. And here we see again they just don't seem to get it. So they kept the matter to themselves. Until they recorded it later for all of us to read.

Questioning what this rising from the dead might mean. They just didn't get it. The light is dawning in their hearts and minds.

[29 : 58] But it's yet to fully arrive. They're starting to get it. And they certainly would one day.

We're going to see them come to a greater realization of this. They would one day preach Christ crucified and risen in their messages.

Think of Peter's sermon on the day of Pentecost found in Acts chapter 2 verse 23 and 24. He says, 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 pangs of death because it was not possible for him to be held by it. Christ crucified and risen. John devotes all of chapter 19 and the first half of chapter 20 of his gospel account to the death and resurrection of Christ.

Later stating in chapter 20 verse 30 and 31, Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of the disciples which are not written in this book, but these are written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.

They preached Christ, crucified and risen. What happened to James? James was the first martyr. He was martyred in 44 AD. He was pierced with swords for preaching Christ crucified and raised by Herod.

[31 : 17] These men would someday come to fully understand what the transfiguration meant for them. But what does it mean for us? Three men privy to this vision.

We didn't get to see it. We get a kind of a paltry record of it. Not a lot of detail going on here. What does it mean for us? And so three lessons for today quickly as we close.

Number one, life is found in the power of the cross. Life is found in the power of the cross. Mark 8.35, For whoever would save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake and the gospels will save it.

And this is following him talking about his death and resurrection. His death on the cross, his resurrection three days later. This apparent paradox that we must follow him in the same way in order to gain our lives.

1 Corinthians 1.18-24, Paul says, For the word of the cross is folly to those who are perishing. But to us who are being saved, it is the power of God.

[32 : 22] For it is written, this is Isaiah 29.14, I will destroy the wisdom of the wise and the discernment of the discerning I will thwart. Where is the one who is wise? Where is the scribe?

Where is the debater of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of the world? For since in the wisdom of God the world did not know God through wisdom, it pleased God through the folly of what we preach to save those who believe.

The folly being that a king came to reign by suffering and dying. Verse 22, For Jews demand signs and Greeks seek wisdom, but we preach Christ crucified, a stumbling block to Jews and folly to Gentiles, but to those who are called both Jews and Greeks, Christ, the power of God and the wisdom of God.

1 Corinthians 2, 1-2 Paul says, And I, when I came to you, brothers, did not come proclaiming to you the testimony of God with lofty speech or wisdom, for I decided to do nothing among you except Jesus Christ and Him crucified.

Life is found in the power of the cross. Secondly, the power of the cross is transmitted to us by the Scriptures. The power of the cross is transmitted to us by the Scriptures.

[33 : 42] Beloved, do you realize how precious the book you hold in your laps is? This language inspired by God translated for us into our English language, the one in which we have so many copies of, both physical and digital, that we have so many resources.

We can search it and we can search it and we can know it. There is unending resources at our fingertips to know the Word of God to us. It is the way in which the power of the cross comes to us.

2 Peter 1, 16-21, I read to you the first three verses. I'm going to read those again and then read the rest of what Peter has to say. This blows my mind.

First time I read this, I just, I wanted to fall down. I didn't, but I wanted to. For we did not follow cleverly devised myths when we made known to you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but we were eyewitnesses of His majesty.

Would you like to have been in their shoes, been there on the mountain? For when He received honor and glory from God the Father and the voice was born to Him by the majestic glory, this is my beloved Son with whom I am well pleased, we ourselves heard this very voice born from heaven, for we were with Him on the holy mountain.

[34 : 55] Oh, to have been there. How great that would have been. But listen to what Peter says to us. Verse 19, And we have the prophetic word more fully confirmed.

Catch that? It's better to have this. It's more fully confirmed. We have seen the promises of God carried out from the scriptures.

We have it. It's more sure. It's a thing that we can trust. It's greater than being present at the transfiguration. To which you will do well to pay attention as to a lamp shining in a dark place that we see light again until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts.

Knowing this first of all, that no prophecy of scripture comes from someone's own interpretation, for no prophecy was ever produced by the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit.

This book is precious. The power of the cross is transmitted to us by it. Beloved, we are a people of words.

[36 : 03] Words have power. Thirdly, we are to be transformed by the power of the cross. We're not to stay the same.

We're to be transformed. This is this imagery he's giving us. If we would follow him, we have to deny ourselves. Stop being you. Pick up your cross and follow me. Become me.

Look to me. I'm your example. Paul writes, Galatians 2.20, I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me.

In the life I now live in the flesh, I live by faith in the Son of God who loved me and gave himself for me. We operate from faith to look like Christ, to pursue him in all that we are.

The derogatory phrase given to us, Christian, means little Christ. What a far gap there is between the way we live and the way Christ lived. Beloved, pursue, pursue the example given to us by him.

[37 : 08] Hear me. we hold the sovereignty of God so precious here. It's in our closed fist. Oh, God is sovereign over all things. He ordains all things.

He stands over all things. But beloved, grace is not an enemy of effort. Grace fuels our effort. Grace is only an enemy of any merit earned by our effort.

We are to work out our salvation with fear and trembling for it's God who works in us to will and to work for his good pleasure. Get busy following Christ.

You have been given the power of the cross if you've believed in him. This great verse in 2 Corinthians 3.18 Paul says, And we all with unveiled face, beholding the glory of the Lord, are being transformed to the same image from one degree of glory to another.

For this comes from the Lord who is the Spirit. So what do we learn from the transfiguration, from beholding this? Jesus is the Christ and we must, if he is, if we believe that he is, we must follow him.

[38 : 16] We must follow him to the point of death as all of the apostles did, all except for John who died in exile of old age. They all followed him to the point of death. Believe the words, follow him.

Life is found in the power of the cross. The power of the cross is transmitted to us by the scriptures and we are to be transformed by the power of the cross. Let's pray together. Amen.