

Peter: Everybody's favourite

And in Mark 8 we discovered him at both his best, when he declared that Jesus was the Christ, and also at his worst, as he then rebuke Jesus for even suggesting that the role of the Messiah was to suffer and to die. **Poor old Pete.** Keen as mustard. Full of energy. Good intentioned, but so easily used by Satan because he thought his way and not God's way. So much like many of us. It's no wonder that we love him so!!!

And by the end of Mk 8 I'm sure Peter was feeling depressed

Been thoroughly rebuked by Jesus and probably still wasn't really sure what he had done wrong. Then when Jesus said, as recorded in 9:1

"I tell you the truth, some who are standing here will not taste death before they see the kingdom of God come with power."

I can imagine Peter thinking...Well I've blown that for a start. Whoever will get chosen to see the kingdom of God come in power, it won't be me!

But just 6 days later we read in 9:2 that Jesus went up a high mountain in order

to reveal hat the kingdom had already come with power in Him.....To expose Himself

And He took with Him Peter, James, and John

For every believer who has ever made a terrible mistake, this is just so encouraging. Jesus took Peter. Can you sense what that would have meant for him that day ?????

But lets leave Peter for a moment, and think about Jesus

Think about what actually happened on that mountain top

9:3-4 *"His clothes became dazzling white, whiter than anyone in the world could bleach them. And there appeared before them Elijah and Moses, who were talking with Jesus."*

Matthew says that His face shone like the sun, and His clothes became as white as the light. Luke says that the appearance of His face changed, and His clothes became as bright as a flash of lightning.

I'm reading The Case For A Creator and it has so increased my awe of God, Father Son and Holy Spirit.

For instance in the Astrology section I read how our planet is exactly positioned in the universe and protected in such a way that it can be inhabited by humans, whereas no other is. But also placed in the best position for observing the rest of space. **That the cosmos was designed for Discovery**

"If God so precisely and carefully and lovingly and amazingly constructed a mind-boggling habitat for His creatures, then it would be natural for Him to want them to explore it, to measure it, to investigate it, to appreciate it, to be inspired by it—and ultimately, and most importantly, to find Him through it."

That's so Biblical; Know that God has revealed Himself thro Nature: through His Word; And especially through His Son: Yet while on earth.....The revelation of Jesus as Godhidden

Except on the Mount of Transfiguration

On this sole occasion prior to His death and resurrection, He pulls back the curtain of His humanity, and they see His glory. He shows Himself, still in a fashion that they can recognize, but He shows something of His utter magnificence as God!

(Allo, allo !>>>Le Clerc)

What happened to Jesus was no small thing—It was an amazing Transformation

The word Mark uses in 9: 2 → transfigured is Metamorphothe....μετεμορφοθη from which we get our English term → Metamorphosis which we use for the way a caterpillar changes into a butterfly.

It made a lasting impact on those three guys, and no wonder

John was to write later:-

“The Word 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

And Peter, looking back to this occasion wrote:-

“We were eyewitnesses of His majesty. For He received honour 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.” We ourselves heard this voice that came from heaven when we were with Him on the sacred mountain.”

2 Peter 1:17-18

This impact was even greater because of the presence of Moses & Elijah

They were mighty figures from the past....Representing both the law and the prophets, yet they are secondary to Jesus. Matthew tells us that they spoke to Him about His exodus. His going out. Both these men had passed into God's presence without dying. Yet God the Son would die for the whole world.

This was what Peter and the others had found so hard to accept. And even here Peter forgets the future plan that Jesus had outlined. Instead He wants to build 3 Tabernacles where the 3 can be worshipped. Even then he makes Jesus equal to the two Old testament heroes.

But then note what happened next:

9:7 *“Then a cloud appeared and en-veloped them, and a voice came from the cloud:
‘This is my Son, whom I love. Listen to Him!’”*

Is it any wonder that they were so frightened!

Not just Jesus as they had never seen Him before. Not just Moses & Elijah. But the voice of God
And note what God said: Listen to Him! When He speaks about His death and resurrection. Listen

And straight after in v9 and then in v12 we find Jesus telling them again about His coming death and resurrection:::::::LISTEN TO HIM

The Glory that they had seen on the mountain.....Precursor **But life with its battles, suffering, pain & death was still ahead for Jesus**

That's why I've called this message: The Glory and the Grind

For immediately they come down from the mountain Jesus enters the battleground. A large crowd has gathered to witness His disciples arguing with the teachers of the law. The people are overwhelmed with wonder when they see Jesus, because His face is no doubt still shining, and they run to Him

Jesus asks...The father of.....answers with, no doubt, a lot of pain and frustration
His son is dangerously controlled by an evil spirit and he had trusted Jesus' disciples for healing, and they had let him down

After being on the mountaintop the grind of dealing with

.weighs heavily upon Jesus, and I'm sure many of us can understand His anguish as He says:

9:19 *“O unbelieving generation, how long shall I stay with you? How long shall I put up with you? Bring the boy to me.”*

Once again He is up against slowness of the disciples. The stubborn unbelief of the religious leaders. The evil of the demonic powers. The lack of faith of one who had tried and failed to get help.

Yet Jesus does the Grind of ministry so well

He uses the healing to Teach about Faith

He challenges the father's faith....What do you mean? If I Can. Do you believe or don't you. And from the man comes the most encouraging statement ever about faith. I do believe; help me overcome my unbelief! I believe but am not certain of it

That answer so thrills my heart.....Because it was sufficient

Too often that's all the faith I have.....Yet when I bring it to Jesus, it does not receive a rebuke from Him. He simply makes it sufficient.

This lesson about Faith dovetails with the lesson He taught His Disciples

A Lesson about Prayer and total dependency

Those disciples had cast out demons before. When Jesus had sent them out. Now they wanted to know why they had failed. The answer was simple. The first time they had gone with utter dependency on Jesus. This time they had thought that they could do it themselves

Note in v28: “*Why couldn't we drive it out ?*” His answer “*This kind can come out only by prayer*”

What is Prayer but total dependency on God's power and not our own

How important it is that we pray.....For once we stop praying.....we stop relying.

There is so much more I could say
But I want to finish by contrasting... Transfiguration... Crucifixion

**the Mountain
the glory is private
Surrounded by two Heroes
Garments shine in His glory
God announces His Son**

**the Cross
the suffering is public
By two thieves
Garments removed
A Centurion acclaims Him as
the Son of God**

The Glory and The Sacrifice

Surely could anyone see that.....and yet not love Him !!