

Luke 9:28-36

In today's sermon, we're going to take a **walk** with Peter, James, and John, to the Mount of **Transfiguration**. On this mountain, we can learn a lot of things about our God - who He **is**, and what He **does**. On this mountain we can find **The Hidden God Revealed**. But before we hike up the **mountain**, we need to spend some time with these disciples on the **plain**. Our text this morning begins, "*About eight days after he said **these words** ...*" What **was** it that Jesus had said to His disciples, that was so **important**? The account of the **transfiguration** comes right on the heels of a **private** discussion which Jesus had with His disciples. At that time, **Peter** had made a wonderful confession of his **faith** that Jesus truly was the **Christ**, the Son of the living **God**. It was just **moments** later when Jesus dropped a **bombshell** on His disciples. He said, "*The Son of Man must **suffer** many things and be **rejected** by the elders, chief priests and experts in the law. He must be **killed** and be **raised** on the third day.*"

We can only imagine the **shock** and **dismay** those followers of Jesus must have felt when they heard those words. They had been soaring **high - confident** that they had found the **Messiah - confident** that they had found the One who would **restore** the earthly kingdom of Israel to **glory**. But here Jesus told them that He had come to the earth to **suffer** and **die**, and that raised a lot of **questions** in their minds. How could that **be**? Was He really the **Christ**? Where was He **leading** them? What was about to **happen**?

For the next eight days or so, these **doubts** and **uncertainties** swirled around in the minds of the disciples, as Jesus unfolded for them the true meaning of His **mission** on the earth. It was in the middle of this uncertainty and disillusionment that Jesus led His disciples to the base of the **mountain** in our text. In spite of any **mixed** feelings they might have had, when Jesus asked Peter, James and John to hike up the mountain **with** Him, they went **along**. And it was a **good** thing that they **did**, because on that mountain, Jesus, whose true identity seemed to be somewhat **cloudy** and **hidden** at this time, would make Himself **known** in a **spectacular** way.

Do you ever feel as though you are following a **hidden** God - a God whose ways don't always seem to make **sense** to you? You wouldn't be the **first** person to ever feel that way. Even the Prophet **Isaiah** once marveled: "*Indeed, you are a God who **hides** himself.*" More often than not, this feeling comes when we're in the middle of **suffering**, or when we're experiencing some kind of **problem** in life. It's

hard to understand how God could allow someone who is very **close** to us to be **taken away** before we feel that we're **ready**. What kind of a God allows a **wife** to be taken away from her **husband** and young **children**? What kind of a God allows **thousands** of people to perish in events like those of September 11, 2001? Why does God keep Himself **hidden**? Why don't His ways always make **sense** to us?

It would be **great** if everything always made **sense**. It would be **great** if God showed up here today, and **answered** all of our **questions**. It would be **great** if God would **show** Himself more visibly in the **world**, so we could be **more certain** that we're still on the **right track**. Maybe He could even work a **miracle** or **two** to drive some of the **questions** and **doubts** out of our minds. But He doesn't **do** that, and He **won't** do that, because that's **not** who He **is**. And although that may be **upsetting**, and we may get **frustrated** with God at times, the root problem lies with **us** - **not** with God. It's our own **sinful** and **selfish** desire to have God **reveal** Himself in the ways **we** want, rather than simply being **content** and to **appreciate** the way God **does** reveal Himself - through His **Son**, and in His **Word**.

Listen again to what the disciples experienced on the Mount of Transfiguration: "*While (Jesus) was praying, the appearance of his face **changed**, and his clothing became dazzling **white**. Just then, two men, **Moses** and **Elijah**, were talking with him! They appeared in **glory** and were talking about his **departure**, which he was going to bring to **fulfillment** in Jerusalem. Peter and those with him were weighed down with **sleep**, but when they were completely **awake**, they saw his **glory** and the two men standing with him.*" What an **amazing** sight the Lord allowed these disciples to see. There before them were **Moses** and **Elijah** - two men whom they had only read about in the **Scriptures** - and they were talking with **Jesus**. All **three** of them appeared in **glory** - glory which went far **beyond** anything they had seen before. I think it's interesting to note the **role** which Moses and Elijah played in **God's** salvation history. **Moses** actually wrote the first **five** books of the Bible - and he represented God's holy **law** - while **Elijah** represented the Old Testament **prophets**. These two prominent men were talking with **Jesus** about his upcoming **suffering** and **death** which would bring all of the things they had **foretold** to **fulfillment**. And Peter, James, and John were allowed to **listen in** on some of this miraculous conversation.

But, this fantastic experience wasn't going to **last** for very long, because it wasn't the Lord's **purpose** to have these disciples **basking** in His **glory** on that mountain. That becomes **clear** as our text **continues**: "*As the men were leaving Jesus, Peter said to him, 'Master, it is **good** for us to **be** here. Let's make three*

*tents: one for you, one for Moses, and one for Elijah.* 'He did not **realize** what he was saying. While he was saying these things, a **cloud** came and **overshadowed** them. They were **afraid** as they went into the cloud. Then a **voice** came out of the cloud, saying, 'This is my **Son**, whom I love. **Listen to him!**'" That was the **main point** which the disciples were supposed to take away from this experience. **Listen to Jesus**. No matter how **difficult** His teachings might sound - no matter how His words might **clash** with their own **expectations** - they needed to **listen to Jesus**. He is God's **Son**, sent from heaven to **suffer** and **die** to pay for the sins of the world. Jesus wanted His disciples to be **content** with that message - a message which they had received from **Moses** and the **prophets**, and now also from **God Himself**.

We **also** need to be content with the message which God has revealed to **us**. Everything we need to know about our **Savior** and the **salvation** which He brings, has been **revealed** to us in God's **Word**. In that Word, God has provided **us** with a way to hear Moses and the prophets **speak**. In that Word, God enables **us** to see **Jesus** in all His **glory**, and to hear Him **speak** about His suffering, death and resurrection. Sometimes, we'd like to see and hear even **more**, as if what we **have** just isn't **enough**. But it's important for us to **appreciate** how **generous** our God has been with us, in making known to us in the pages of the Bible our **Savior** and His plan of **salvation**.

Without God's Word, we wouldn't know the joy of **forgiveness**, and we would be left trying to **please God** and earn His **favor** by doing good works - none of which would accomplish **anything**. But with God's Word, we can be **certain** that God is **pleased** with us - **not** because of anything **we** have done, but because of the work of His Son, **Jesus**. God's Word reveals to us Jesus' mission of **love** - His innocent **suffering** - His sacrificial **death** - and His glorious **resurrection**. And God's Word reveals to us what this mission of love **means** to us. Through Jesus we have **forgiveness** for our sins, **peace** with our Heavenly Father, and the **certainty** of eternal life in heaven.

This is the message which **satisfies** our deepest needs, and it is **enough**. As long as we're on **this** side of heaven, we'll never know **everything** there is to know about our God and His ways - nor should we **expect** to. For **now**, our God **chooses** to remain **hidden**, because nothing **impure** is able to **endure** His full glory. But He enables us to get a **glimpse** of that glory through His **Son**, whom He has **revealed** in His Word. In **Jesus** we have **The Hidden God Revealed** to us, and for **now**, we need to be content with that. But, the day is coming when we will finally arrive at

our home in **heaven**, and then we know God **fully** even as we are fully **known** by Him. So until then, let's be **satisfied** with the grace which God has shown to us, and let's cling to what we **know** - to what we have **seen** and **heard** about our God and His love in the **Scriptures**. Let's **rejoice** in the **miracles** that we can witness - miracles of **faith**, and **hope**, and **peace**. And let's **thank** our God for revealing Himself to us as our **Savior**, because that knowledge provides us with **everything** we need. Amen.