

## Self Denial, Suffering & the Glory of God

Aim: As the Christ, Jesus is the Son of God who must suffer and die before he is glorified. We should therefore listen to him and be depend on him in faith and prayer

1. Jesus is the glorious Son of God, so listen to him (v2-8)
2. Jesus is the risen Lord, so proclaim him (v9-13)
3. Jesus is the powerful Saviour, so trust him (V14-29)

### 1. Intro & Context

- Peter and the disciples have finally realised that Jesus is the Christ
  - Although at this stage, like the blind man they still don't see clearly
  - They still think that as the Christ Jesus is going to conquer the Romans, become the king and restore Israel to its glory days like King David did
  - They think that at his disciples they will be there for the road to victory and bask in glory with him
  - So Jesus needs correct their understanding
  - Needs to re-set their idea of
    - what it means for Jesus to be the Christ
    - what it means for them to be disciples of the Christ
- 8:31-9:1 Jesus does that immediately
  - As the Christ he must suffer and die and rise again
  - As disciples of the Christ ... they must be willing to deny themselves, take up their cross and follow him
- In other words, the cross is central to the mission of Jesus AND it's central to being a disciple of Jesus
- The entire journey from Galilee to Jerusalem ... Jesus is going to be reiterating these truths over and over

### 2. Jesus is the glorious Son of God, so listen to him (v2-8)

- So Jesus has this big deep and meaningful with the disciples
  - What it means to be the Christ
  - What it means to be a disciple of the Christ
- 9:1 – *I tell you truth, some of you who are standing here will not taste death until you see the KOG come with power*
- Then ... very next thing we are told ...

- *After six days Jesus took Peter, James and John with him and led them up a high mountain, where they were all alone.*
- So Jesus and three of his closest disciples go up a mountain
- v3 – Jesus is transfigured > his clothes become dazzling white
  - Literally = metamorphosed > ‘transformed’
  - In OT glory of God was often revealed as shining brilliance or bright light
  - In other words ... Jesus humanity was put aside and his divine majesty was revealed
  - Points to Jesus divinity > his God-ness
  - This is about to be a unique moment of divine revelation for the disciples
- **Illustration – Movie Trailer**
- Go to movies > see a trailer > just a taste of what the movie is like
  - Finishes > Coming Soon
- This is like what is happening here on the mountain for the the disciples
  - They were getting a glimpse of Jesus future glory
  - His divine glory he will have when resurrected from the grave and ascended to heaven
- Not only is Jesus momentarily transformed in glorious majesty ...
  - But two of the greatest prophets of the OT appear in Moses and Elijah
    - Moses > lead Israel out of Egypt > through Red Sea > Desert > Land
    - Elijah > Main prophet of Israel during time of the Kings
    - Big boys of OT > and they are there with Jesus!
- v7 told a cloud appeared and enveloped them and God the Father spoke to them
  - Just like he had done at Jesus baptism in 1:11
    - *"You are my Son, whom I love; with you I am well pleased."*
  - Here he says
    - *"This is my Son, whom I love. Listen to him!"*
- On both occasions, the Father affirms Jesus status as son whom he loves
- However, there is a difference ...
  - 1:11 – the Father speaks to the Son
  - 9:7 – the he speaks to the disciples
    - Adding the exhortation to the disciples to **listen to him**

- v8 ... Moses and Elijah disappear ... leaving the disciples alone with Jesus and somewhat bewildered and blown away!
- As you would have realised from our first reading this episode is very reminiscent of Moses and Joshua in the OT going up Mt Sinai in Exodus 24
  - In both instances
    - Six days of waiting is followed by a special revelation of God
    - The revelation by God occurs on a high mountain
    - During that time, God's glory is revealed
    - God speaks out of the cloud
- On Mt Sinai ... God's special revelation was the word of God written on two tablets > the 10 commandments
- Here God's special revelation is the word of God himself > Jesus
  - Rather than having two tablets to read and follow
  - Here the disciples are told to listen to the words of Jesus
- This is a new 'Sinai' experience ... only this time it is Jesus as the central figure
- Clearly Peter and the disciples are blown away and didn't quite get what was going on
  - So in v5 Peter blurts out - "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."
  - The word for shelter literally means 'tent' or 'tabernacle'
  - In the OT when Israel was wandering around the desert, the tent of meeting / tabernacle was where Moses would go and meet with God
    - Cloud would descend over the tent to symbolise that God was present with Moses
    - In the tent of meeting was where God spoke with Moses
- Here Peter wants to erect tents so these 'prophets' can receive a revelation from God
  - What he doesn't understand is that the revelation is with them ... and it's Jesus
    - Jesus is the new tabernacle
    - Jesus is where we meet with God
    - Through Jesus that God supremely reveals himself to us
    - It's in Jesus that God's glory is fully revealed
- Which is why God says ... *here is my son, listen to him*

- **Implications**

- What's the point of all this? What's the significance?
- We need to note that the whole experience is geared towards the disciples
  - 9:2 – Jesus transformed **before them**
  - 9:4 – Moses and Elijah appeared **before them**
  - 9:7 – God tells them to **listen to him**
- This is all for their benefit > not Jesus > he knows who he is
- It's meant to show the disciples that Jesus is the glorious Son of God, and so they need to listen to him
- So what is it they need to listen to from the divine Son of God?
  - They need to listen to his message about what it means for him to be the Christ and what it means for them to follow him as his disciples
- They need to listen what Jesus has been telling them already
  - That as the Christ ... he **MUST** suffer, die and rise again
  - As his disciples ... they **MIST** deny themselves, take up their cross and follow Jesus
- And they will need to **continue** listening to Jesus all the way to Jerusalem as he continues to teach them more and more about him as the Christ and what it means to a disciple

- **Application**

- We need to listen to what Jesus has to say about himself as the Christ and what it means to follow him as the Christ
- Like the disciples we can have a misplaced understanding of Jesus
  - Christadelphians at Riverwood Festival > don't believe Jesus is God
  - But not just them ... us too > such as

- **NRMA Jesus**

- Jesus is like the NRMA man ... you only call on him in an emergency
- Life is going well you ... no need for Jesus > put him on the shelf
- Hit a rough patch > lose your job, rough time with illness or kids
  - "Hey Jesus ... I really need you > Help me!"
- Just bring him out when you need him

- **Piñata Jesus**

- The idea that Jesus is some kind of piñata, and Christianity is the stick.

- It's not about what you can do for Jesus ... it's about what you can get from him or out of him.
- The Piñata Jesus tells you that you can "pray to him to get some stuff"
  - big screen TV > healing from sickness > winning lotto numbers > happy life > well behaved kids
- You just need to come to Jesus and out pops all the things you need for a happy life
  
- **Moral Jesus**
- Moral Jesus is the Jesus we look to for our morals
  - Good teacher > without sin > taught us to love our neighbour
  - This is the Jesus non-Christian parents send their kids to scripture to hear about > want them to learn some morals so they behave well at home
  - He's the Jesus of the WWJD wrist bands
  - Jesus we're in danger of focusing on when we parent our children
  - He's just a moral example for us to follow
  
- No doubt many alternative views of Jesus
  
- But friends these are pathetic, anemic and insulting views of Jesus
  - We need to listen to what Jesus is teaching us about himself as the Christ and what it means for us to be his disciples
  - Our view of Jesus must be centred around the fact that he is the glorious Son of God ...
    - who came into the world to suffer
    - by going to the cross and die for the forgiveness of our sins
  - And he calls on us as disciples to ...
    - Deny yourself > take up your cross and follow me
  
- It's one thing to recognise Jesus as God's promised Christ
  - But we must recognise him as the Christ Jesus came to be ... not the Christ we want him to be
  - He came to suffer and die ... so you and I might be saved for eternal life
  - And he calls you and I to follow him
  
- Jesus is the glorious Son of God, so let's listen to him

### 3. Jesus is the risen Lord, so proclaim him (v9-13)

- Moses and Elijah have gone and Jesus and the disciples start coming back down the mountain
  - Jesus tells them - *not to tell anyone what they had seen until the Son of Man had risen from the dead.*
  
- They had just witnessed an amazing moment
  - Just seen Jesus transformed in divine majesty and glory
  - Just heard the Father affirm Jesus as his own son whom he loves
- But Jesus says ... you can't go and tell anyone about this until I have risen from the dead
  - He again reiterates his coming death and resurrection
  
- But the disciples need to witness his death and resurrection before they can go proclaiming the Jesus as the glorious Christ and Son of God
  - They cannot glorify the Christ before he has undergone his suffering
  - Because the way to glory has got be via the cross
  
- In v10 we see the disciples are still not seeing clearly
  - They're like the blind man
  - Still didn't understand what rising from the dead meant
  
- In v11 we see they're earlier encounter with Elijah prompts them to ask Jesus a question "why do the TOL say that Elijah must come first?"
- Background to this questions comes from
  - Malachi 4:5-6 <sup>5</sup> "See, I will send you the prophet Elijah before that great and dreadful day of the LORD comes. <sup>6</sup> He will turn the hearts of the fathers to their children, and the hearts of the children to their fathers;
  
- The Jews expected 'Elijah' to come before the 'great day of the Lord' when the Christ who would come and usher in the KOG and restore all things
  - And now they had just seen Elijah on the mountain ... but Jesus had preceded him
  - So they're wondering ... what's going on?
  - Is this the time of restoration and KOG or what?
  
- Jesus affirms ... "Yes it is."
  - He says ... the promise of Malachi has been fulfilled ... Elijah has come and they have done to him everything they intended

- He agrees that Elijah has to come before Jesus and the KOG, but corrects their understanding of Elijah
- Jesus speaking of Elijah is referring to John the Baptist
  - In Luke 1:17 states this specifically ...
    - *And he (JTB) will go on before the Lord, in the spirit and power of Elijah, to turn the hearts of the fathers to their children and the disobedient to the wisdom of the righteous-- to make ready a people prepared for the Lord."*
    - Direct quote from Malachi 4
- JTB was not Elijah ... but he was an Elijah type figure
  - Both were prophets of God
  - Both wore garments of hair and wore a leather belt<sup>1</sup>
  - Both ate food from the wild<sup>2</sup>
  - Both lived out in the wilderness near the Jordan River<sup>3</sup>
- So Jesus is saying JTB is the Elijah figure of Malachi 4
  - He's already come ...
  - JTB is the one who restores all things by preparing Israel for the coming of the Lord (Jesus) and
  - He did that by calling on the ppl to repent of their sins and turn back to the Lord in readiness / preparation for Jesus coming
    - and the message he would proclaim
    - and the KOG he will inaugurate
- v12-13 Jesus goes onto say that in the same way that Elijah / JTB suffered... so too must the Son of Man suffer
  - In the day of Elijah ... he suffered persecution at the hands of the wicked king Ahab and his wife Jezebel
  - In the same way ... JTB suffered persecution at the hands of another wicked king - Herod and his wife Herodias<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> 2 Kings 1:8 – They replied, "He was a man with a garment of hair and with a leather belt around his waist." AND Mark 1:6 – John wore clothing made of camel's hair, with a leather belt around his waist

<sup>2</sup> Mark 1:6 – John ... he ate locusts and wild honey. AND 1 Kings 17:6 – The ravens brought him bread and meat in the morning and bread and meat in the evening, and he drank from the brook.

<sup>3</sup> 1 Kings 17:3-5 – "Leave here, turn eastward and hide in the Kerith Ravine, east of the Jordan ... So he did what the LORD had told him. He went to the Kerith Ravine, east of the Jordan, and stayed there. AND Matthew 3:1-6 – In those days John the Baptist came, preaching in the Desert of Judea. People went out to him ... they were baptized by him in the Jordan River.

<sup>4</sup> Mark 6:14-28

- Jesus point here is that ... if the scripture has been fulfilled with regard to the coming of Elijah / JTB ... then there remains only one thing left to happen before the end
  - the SoM has to suffer
  - then the time of restoration & the KOG will come
- **Application**
- Jesus is affirming he is the risen ... Lord
  - Yes he will die ... but he will rise again
  - As the one who follows the Elijah ... he is the saviour of God's ppl who brings restoration and the KOG
- BUT ... the disciples were to be silent about this until Jesus had risen from the dead
- The implication of course is ... once he had risen ... they were to go and proclaim this truth to all the world ...
  
- Now that Jesus has risen ... and we stand this side of the cross ... we share that commission to proclaim Jesus to the world around us
- It's what we do as his disciples ... its what we do as a church
  - Engage our Community & Evangelise our Contacts
  - Proclaiming Jesus the risen Lord who brings restoration and the KOG
  
- **Examples**
- Lynne and her neighbour
  - *Had another chance to talk of Jesus with a neighbour this morning as I worked out which way to walk down the steps – it's bad to go to hell, good to go to heaven? Right? So I use my bad leg first on the way down, and the good leg on the way up. Right? The fellow replies – they say we'll find out one day and my reply – but we know, Jesus knows and told us. And away I went praying for my neighbour.*
- Bryon inviting Erin to church
- Riverwood Festival > read through TWTL with Jack
  - I need to do this more
  
- Jesus is the risen Lord ... let's proclaim him

#### **4. Jesus is the powerful Saviour, so trust him (v14-29)**

- Jesus and the disciples come down the mountain and immediately they're confronted with the reality of a fallen world in need of saving
  - Ppl who lack faith in Jesus



- A demon possessed boy
  - This is the world Jesus came to restore through the inauguration of the KOG
- v16-18 we find a boy who is possessed by an evil spirit which makes him mute
  - More than that ... it throws him to ground > causing him to gnash his teeth > foam at mouth > become rigid
- May be thinking ...
  - "Ahhh this isn't an evil spirit ... there's a very simple explanation for this ... he's having an epileptic fit?"
  - "These primitive farmers are attributing demon possession to what we now know is a medical condition
- No that's not the case
  - When Jesus is confronted with a medical condition he heals the person
  - When he's confronted with demon possession he casts out the demon
  - He doesn't treat them the same, because they are not the same
- It's clear that Jesus is frustrated with the disciples and the crowd at their lack of faith / unbelief
- But the boy's father is desperate for his son to be healed so he says to Jesus
  - *"If you can do anything, take pity on us and help us"*
- Jesus replies is indignant > "If you can?"
  - Jesus is saying ...
    - *"Of course I can > my disciples may not ... but I can"*
    - *"How can you doubt me"*
    - *"Everything is possible for him who believes"*
- To which the man replies ...
  - *"I do believe, help me overcome my unbelief"*
- And so Jesus casts the unclean / evil spirit out of the boy and heals him
- **Implication**
- Jesus encounter with the demon possessed boy typifies his ongoing battle with Satan & agents throughout the gospel

- Started after his baptism > goes out into the wilderness and is confronted by Satan
- Continues with
  - the demon possesses man in the synagogue in Capernaum<sup>5</sup>
  - man possessed by a Legion<sup>6</sup>
  - Daughter of the Syro-Phoenician woman<sup>7</sup>
  - Others
- They're all examples of Jesus riddle where he likens the tying up the Strong Man and plundering his house of his ongoing battle and victory over Satan
  - The KOG is at hand and Jesus is the powerful saviour who ushers in the kingdom
  - His restoration of people's humanity is a mark of the restoration of God's rule
- **Application**
- If Jesus is the powerful saviour who ushers in the kingdom ... then we must respond to that
- The way to respond is with faith / with belief
- Jesus emphasises this in v23
  - "all things are possible for one who believes [in me]."
- In these verses we see the contrast between
  - the lack of faith of the disciples who have been unable to exorcise the demon (v18-19)
  - And the growing faith of the boy's father (v24)
- On the one hand
  - The disciples exemplify a 'faithless generation' (v19) who don't depend on Jesus
  - Whereas the man exemplifies a total dependence on Jesus
- If we understand Jesus is the powerful saviour who ushers in the kingdom ... then we must respond to him in faith
- **Application**
- But notice how faith in this passage is demonstrated
  - Its demonstrated in prayer

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<sup>5</sup> 1:21

<sup>6</sup> Mark 5:1ff

<sup>7</sup> 7:25

- v28 the disciples want to know why couldn't drive out the demon
  - Jesus replied ... "This kind cannot be driven out by anything but prayer".
  - In v24 the boy's father depends on Jesus in simple prayer
  - However the implication of v29 is that the disciples have not been doing this
  
- When the disciples had tried to cast out the demon they had failed to fully trust God
  - They were tempted to believe the gift they had received in Ch 6:7<sup>8</sup> to cast out demons was in their control and could be exorcised at their disposal
  - Hadn't prayed
  - This is a form of unbelief because they were trusting in themselves and not in God
  
- A mark of our faith ... a mark of our dependence on God is how prayerful we are
- Our prayer life is a mark of our belief that God is powerful to answer our prayers
  - Often lack of prayer is because we think we can do things ourselves and don't need God's help
  - Or we don't pray because we don't believe
    - that God can answer our prayer or
    - that God wants to hear our prayer
  
- A mark of a person's faith is how much they pray
  - You want to grow in faith > pray more
  - It makes me wonder if our monthly prayer meetings are a mark of our faith as a church?
  
- Do you recognise that Jesus is the powerful saviour who ushers in God's kingdom and restores all things?
  - Put your faith in him
- The way to express that faith in him is to pray to him

## 5. Conclusion

- Jesus is the glorious Son of God, so listen to him

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<sup>8</sup> **Mark 6:7** – Calling the Twelve to him, he sent them out two by two and gave them authority over evil spirits.

- Jesus is the risen Lord, so proclaim him
- Jesus is the powerful Saviour, so trust him

**PRAY**