

## The Glory of the King

### 1. Intro

- The latest season of the TV reality show the Voice has just started ... and the initial round of auditions is called the Blinds
  - That's because the judges (Guy, Kelly, Delta and George) sit in chairs with their backs to the contestants ... meaning the way they assess their talent is only by the quality of their voice
  - You can see them listening intently throughout the song in order to decide whether they're worthy of progressing in the competition
- There are many different voices vying for the judge's attention and approval
  
- It's a similar phenomenon that is happening to you and I every single day
- Not that we're the listening judges on the Voice
  - But that we are audience in a world of many voices vying for our attention and listening ear
  
- It's worthwhile pausing to reflect on ... what are the voices that you're listening to?
  - Is it ScoMo or Albo
  - Maybe it's Pauline or Clive
  - Maybe you listen to Alan Jones, or Waleed Aly or Jordan Peterson
  - Maybe it's Scott Pape (Barefoot Investor)
  - Or Kochie, or Fergo on the news
  - Or our culture icons such as
    - Rhianna or Ariana
    - Elon Musk or Kevin Durant
    - Oprah or the Kardashians or Mia Freedman
  - Or Youtubers
    - Pewdiepie or Logan and Jake Paul
  
- There are many voices we can listen to
- What is the voice you listen to the most?
  
- Well in our passage today ... we hear God the Father's voice speaking to us from heaven
  - And he says ... the voice you **must** listen to is Jesus

- And so, this morning as we look at this famous passage of the Transfiguration in Matt 17 ... I want to see two things
  - Why we should listen to Jesus?
  - What does Jesus say that we should listen to?
- Two headings
  - Seeing Jesus glory
  - Hearing Jesus words

## 2. Seeing Jesus Glory

- Jesus and the disciples are in Caesarea Philippi (16:13) > north of Galilee
- v1 tells us Jesus takes Peter James and John up a mountain > probably Mt Hermon
- Something extraordinary happens ... the disciples get a glimpse of Jesus glory
- I want you to see there are three things that are happening there that point to his glory
  - Appearance
  - Attendants
  - Announcement
- Firstly, his appearance ... we're told in v2 Jesus was transfigured
  - Lit – metamorphosed > he changed
- Don't need to guess what that means
  - v2 – *His face shone like the sun,*
  - *and his clothes became as white as the light*
- In OT when Moses came down the mountain or out of the tabernacle ... his face was radiant because he had met with God
- And his clothes were as white as light ... sounds like a washing powder ad!
  - But was like the appearance of angels such as the one who appeared at the Jesus' tomb
- Quite clearly, Jesus humanity was momentarily put aside, and the disciples were given a unique glimpse into Jesus divine glory
- But not only did Jesus appearance point to his glory ... but so do the two attendants who come alongside him in his transfiguration – Moses and Elijah
  - Moses > great OT prophet and leader of Israel
    - Led them out of Egypt, through the Red Sea to the Promised Land

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- Most significantly, he was the one to whom God gave the 10 Commandment and OT Law
  - In other words, God's great OT revelation came via Moses
  - Elijah > another great OT prophet
    - Lived approx. four centuries after Moses when Israel was in the Promised Land, but her kings were wicked and practicing idolatry and leading the people of Israel to do the same
    - Elijah was sent by God to call the kings and the people back to God
  - Moses gave the law and Elijah called the people back to obey the Law
  - Both were prophets who brought revelations of God
  - And there they are talking with Jesus
  
  - But do you notice that after God finishes speaking, the disciples look up, and Moses and Elijah are gone ... and only Jesus remains
    - These two great prophets of the OT have been standing there alongside and talking with the Lord Jesus Christ ...
    - God speaks and says
      - "This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased. Listen to him!"
      - And the others are gone
    - It is clear therefore that not only is it Jesus that God is speaking about
    - But also, that Jesus is greater than even these great ones of the OT
  
  - So we have his appearance and the attendants ...
  - The third thing that happens that points to Jesus glory is the announcement
    - v5 – *While he was still speaking, a bright cloud enveloped them,*
  
  - The cloud is reminiscent of Exodus (19, 24 & 34) when God gave Israel the 10 Commandments and the Law at Mt Sinai and a cloud covered the mountain and God spoke to Moses on the mountain
  - And that's what happens here with the disciples
    - *... a voice from the cloud said, "This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased. Listen to him!"*
  - It's clear to the disciples that God is in their midst and he is speaking to them
  
  - But it's not just the fact that God speaks ... it's also what he says
  - And what does he say?
    - "This is my Son whom I love"
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- OT ... the Son of God is God's chosen king
  - Psalm 2:7 You are my Son; today I have become your Father
  - 2 Samuel 7:14 I will be his father, and he will be my son
- So, when God says to the disciples ... "This is my Son"
  - He is making it clear that Jesus is
    - God's chosen king and ruler ... who will rule for all eternity
    - And to who whom all the nations are commanded to bow in awe, respect and honour
  
- In addition, God also says ... "with him I am well pleased"
  - Which echoes Isaiah 42:1 which says 'Here is my servant, whom I uphold, my chosen one in whom I delight'
  - The 'servant figure' in Isaiah is one who would bear the sins and punishment for God's people in order to bring forgiveness, healing and peace with God<sup>1</sup>
  
- And so as
  - Jesus appears before his disciples in a moment of post-resurrection glory
  - He is attended to by the great OT prophets Moses and Elijah
  - Disciples are surrounded by a cloud from which God speaks
- And God is declaring to the disciples
  - Not only is the one standing before you is the King of kings and Lord and lords
  - He is also the one who must suffer and die for the sins of the world
  
- **Illustration – Movie Trailer**
- And so, what's going on for the disciples here is they are getting a preview into the real nature of the Lord Jesus Christ
- It's a little bit like a C1<sup>st</sup> movie trailer
- Go to movies > see a trailer > just a foretaste of what the movie is like
  - Finishes > "Coming Soon!"
  
- This is like what is happening here on the mountain for 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
  
- **Implication**

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<sup>1</sup> Isaiah 53:5 pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was upon him, and by his wounds we are healed.

- Why do the disciples get this revelation of Jesus?
  - Why the glory and bright light
  - Why the OT attendants, the cloud and the Father's commendation from heaven?
- To understand this, we need to look at the context and go back a chapter to 16:15
  - Jesus asked, "Who do you say I am?"
  - Peter > "You are the Christ"
- Which is correct
  - All Jesus teaching and miracles has been with the aim of getting the disciples to see and understand that he is the Christ ... God's anointed rescuing king
- But at this point they don't understand what it means for him to **be** the Christ
  - They think the Christ will be a military / political ruler who will come with great power and overcome the Romans and reunite Israel
- And Jesus must correct this understanding
- He hasn't come to do that
- And so Jesus says in v21
  - *... that he must go to Jerusalem and suffer many things at the hands of the elders, chief priests and teachers of the law, and that he must be killed and on the third day be raised to life.*
- As the Christ ... he's not going to become their king through political or military power ... he's going to become the king by being crucified on a Roman cross
- This is hard teaching for the disciples to hear
- Think about it!
- The disciples have been following Jesus for the best part of 3 years and now he's telling them he is going to die
- And their worldview is suddenly shattered
- You can imagine what they'd be thinking ...
  - "Jesus is the Christ!"
  - "Yes! We're his best mates ... we're part of his inner circle!"
  - "Jesus is going to rule and we're going to be right there alongside him"
- And now in a single conversation ... it suddenly seems like the last three years have been waste of time and all along they've been following a loser

- And then the very next thing Jesus does is take them up on a mountain so they can see his true glory
- He shows them the reality that lies behind his impending humiliation and crucifixion
- That what might look like weakness and failure from a worldly perspective ... will see him raised to new life in power and glory as the King of kings and Lord of lords who reigns over all the nations for eternity
- God gives them a momentary glimpse of Jesus true nature ... so that they will be encouraged to keep following him despite the tragedy to come
  
- **Application**
- I think this is a very relative message for us today
- In a time when Christianity is coming under increasing pressure and attack from secular culture ...
- It can be very tempting for the Christian to lose heart and think
  - “My skeptical friends, the media and my Facebook feed are just continually attacking my faith ... I’m starting to wonder if Jesus is really worth following?”
  - “It seems like following Jesus means being part of a losing cause”
- Here is a glimpse to you of who Jesus truly is ...
  - the glorious and powerful king
  - who not only has graciously died for your sin
  - but will return in all his splendor and majesty and glory
  - and your trust in him will be vindicated
  - and the skeptics of this world will tremble and fear because of their rejection of him
  
- Or maybe you’ve been a Christian for some time
  - And the enthusiasm and wonder and awe of who Jesus is has stated to wane to the point where you’re now
    - a little jaded in your faith
    - lost your passion
    - Jesus and the gospel have become a bit ho-hum
- Here is a reminder to you of what your Lord and Saviour is truly like
  - He’s not just a man who died on a Roman cross
  - He is the resurrected King of glory who now reigns over all the earth
  - And yet this divine son and eternal ruler willing lay down his life for you and your salvation

- Or maybe you're here this morning and you're still getting your head around Christianity and your idea of Jesus has largely been shaped by images of Jesus in the manger or on the cross or welcoming little children to him
- And maybe as a result you're a little underwhelmed by Jesus
- Here is a window into the future for you to see that the Jesus of C1<sup>st</sup> Palestine ... is the same Jesus who is God's Son
- He's not just a prophet or a good moral teacher
- He's not just one religious guy among many valid options
- He's the King of kings and Lord of lords and who holds your eternal destiny in his hands
- And therefore, this insight that God gives us of Jesus means we must take him seriously
  
- Do you see his glory?

### 3. Hearing Jesus Words

- Having helped the disciples to see Jesus divine glory ... the very next thing God tells them in v 5 is ... "Listen to him"
  
- It does beg the question ... what are we to listen to?
- In one sense we could understand this in a general sense and say that we need to listen to all the words of Jesus ... and that would be true
  
- However, I think God is wanting us to listen to something more particular than that in this context
- To do that we need to look at what precedes this episode and what follows
- We've already looked at what precedes this in Ch 16
  - It's Jesus teaching that he must suffer and die and rise again
  
- We see in 16:22 that Peter doesn't like that idea
  - He thinks it's stupid
    - *Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him. "Never, Lord!" he said. "This shall never happen to you!"*
  - He thinks Jesus has lost the plot
    - What type of king suffers and dies?
    - "You're the Christ, Jesus ... this won't happen to you!"
  
- And Jesus reply to Peter is that any notion that denies or waters down Jesus sacrificial death on the cross is satanic

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- *"Get behind me, Satan! You are a stumbling block to me; you do not have in mind the things of God, but the things of men."*
  - And then Jesus says to them that "if you want to be one of his disciples you must deny yourself take up your cross and follow me"
  - And so, this rarest of rare interventions by God the Father ... speaking of Jesus ... his Son with whom he is well pleased ... comes immediately after Jesus has been telling them he must suffer and die ... and they must deny themselves, take up their cross and follow Jesus if they want to be his disciples
  - Now look at what follows the Father's words to listen to Jesus in 17:9-13
  - The encounter earlier with Elijah prompts the disciples to ask Jesus "why do the TOL say that Elijah must come first?"
  - Background to this question 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 were expecting Elijah to return before the 'great day of the Lord' when the Christ who would come and usher in the KOG and restore all things
    - The disciples have recognised Jesus as the Christ ... but its only now Elijah has appeared
    - So, they're wondering ... what's going on? This is back to front
    - Did Malachi get the order wrong ... or are you not really the Christ
  - Jesus tells them Malachi didn't get the order wrong ... Elijah did come before me ... the prophecy has been fulfilled in John the Baptist
  - JTB was not Elijah ... not the ghost of Elijah ... but he was an Elijah type figure in the sense that
    - Both were prophets of God
    - Both wore garments of hair and wore a leather belt<sup>2</sup>
    - Both ate food from the wild<sup>3</sup>
    - Both lived out in the wilderness near the Jordan River<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>2</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>3</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.



- But here's the crucial bit
- In v12 ... Jesus says ... just as he suffered and was killed
- So too will Jesus suffer and be killed by those who oppose him
- Right at the start of this section in Ch 14 ... Matthew has told us that King Herod had John the Baptist beheaded
- "He suffered and died ... and so will I"
  
- And so, bookending this revelation of Jesus glory and the exhortation from God the Father to the disciples to 'listen to his son' ... is the very clear reminder that Jesus Christ must suffer and die
- That Jesus road to glory is not via a military coup or a political campaign ... but via the cross
- Because it would be through cross that Jesus Christ would fulfill all of God's plans and purposes in dying for sin and bearing the wrath of God for sinful humanity ... that would enable forgiveness, reconciliation and restoration to follow for all who trust in him
- Jesus glory would come through this selfless, humble, self-sacrifice
- And God says ... listen to him
  
- **Application**
- Whether it's your favourite programme, podcast, blog post, author, singer YouTuber or guru ... many of us have different voices that we listen to who speak into our world and thinking
  
- Or it maybe you don't particularly listen to anyone ... and the only voice you listen to is your own?
  - Maybe you've gathered together a hotchpotch of information from family wisdom, parenting books, marriage books, Google searches and the university of life ... that you think is all you need to guide you through life
- And if that is you ... I'd ask ... on what sort of authority do you listen to yourself?
  
- Here in Matt 17 ... God wants us to know ... that the Lord Jesus Christ is the voice we must listen to

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<sup>4</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.

- The Lord Jesus Christ
  - who was revealed in all his divine splendor and glory ...
  - who the Lord of the universe and judge of all mankind ...
  - who is the King of kings and Lord of lords
- The Lord Jesus Christ
  - who is greater than the two greatest voices of the OT
- The Lord Jesus Christ
  - of whom the Father in heaven commends from the cloud of glory that "This is my Son with him I am well pleased"
- He is the one voice we **must** listen to ... over and above all the other voices around us
- It's God's desire that you and I listen to voice of Jesus
  
- Why do we need to hear this reminder?
- Let me give you four reasons
- Firstly ... the world will tell you there are many ways to eternal life and that Jesus is just one to get there
- And it doesn't matter which religious guru you listen to
  - Mohammad
  - Krishna
  - Buddha
  - Ghandi
    - All are valid
- But Matt 17 shows us the one true revelation from God comes in the person of Jesus Christ
  - Moses and Elijah were great ones who were crucial in bringing God's revelation to his people
  - But Jesus is the ultimate revelation
  - He is greater and so is his word
  - For he is the Son ... with whom the Father is well pleased
- When it comes to knowing the way to eternal life ... he is the one
- We need to listen to him
  
- Secondly ... the voices of the world will tell you that truth of the gospel is up for grabs and that we're free to cherry pick the bits of the Bible that we like about Jesus and his teaching and disregard the bits that offend us
- The result is that Jesus becomes a construct of our own desires and preferences, and he becomes a little genie or good luck charm to call upon in times of trouble ... but other than that he's largely ignored

- But the all-powerful, divine son of God is now risen and reigning and seated in glory and he will return as Lord and judge of all
- And cannot just disregard what challenges us and our worldviews
- If we do ... if we ignore him ... we do so at our peril
- We need to listen to him
  
- Thirdly, the voices of the world want to tell us
  - we're all basically good people
  - that hell is not real and
  - that sin doesn't matter and you can live your life doing whatever you want
- The furore surrounding the around the Israel Folau saga was founded in this premise
- But the one who God revealed as his Son and the king of glory tells us
  - No ... I needed to go to the cross to die for you and your sin
  - Hell is real and I experienced hell on the cross to spare you from it
- Jesus suffering and death were absolutely crucial in fulfilling God's plans and purposes for us and this world
- We need to listen to him
  
- Lastly ... our human nature is to not want to follow Jesus and live his way
  - Our nature is to
    - live our way
    - do what we want
    - satisfy our own desires
    - and ignore sin
  - And Jesus makes it clear ... that if you want to be one of my disciples ... you must deny yourself, take up your cross and follow me
  - We need to be reminded of this truth over and over again ... because the voices we hear from the world encourage us to do exactly the opposite
- Our world says
  - love yourself
  - grab all you can and
  - follow your heart
- Jesus says
  - deny yourself
  - grab your cross and
  - follow me
- That's what being a disciple is all about
- We need to listen to him

- Why do we need to listen to him
  - He is the one true revelation of God
  - He is the eternal king who will judge the world
  - He offers us the salvation we need through his suffering death
  - He calls on you and I to cross shaped discipleship
  
- For enthroned in glory is the Son of Man
  - with the nail marks in his hands and his feet
  - who has conquered sin and death for eternity
- Listen to him

**PRAY**