**Will you go …. “The Way of the Cross” – Part 2**

March 14, 2021

Matthew 17:22-23

**“Jesus the King”**

Today we are in **chapter 17 of the gospel of Matthew**.

The chapter begins with a **mountain top experience,** and **ends with Peter catching a fish in order to pay his taxes.** Even in this broad contrast, Matthew proclaims to us that; **“Jesus Christ is the King.”**

**Matthew 17:22-23**

**22** When they came together in Galilee, he said to them, “The Son of Man is going to be delivered into the hands of men. **23** They will kill him, and on the third day he will be raised to life.” And the disciples were filled with grief.

* This is the **second** **recording in Matthew** where Jesus tells this disciples he is going to die.
* So let’s examine what Jesus wants **his disciples and us** **to understand as we travel with Him**, **on the way to the cross**.

When you ***go the way of the cross*** you can’t help but see scene number one which is …

1. **Jesus Glory: (17:1-9)**

After six days Jesus took with him Peter, James and John the brother of James, and led them up a high mountain by themselves. **2** There he was ***transfigured*** before them. His face shone like the sun, and his clothes became as white as the light. **3** Just then there appeared before them Moses and Elijah, talking with Jesus.

**4** Peter said to Jesus, “**Lord,** **it is good for us to be here**. If you wish, I will put up three shelters—one for you, one for Moses and one for Elijah.”

**5** ***While he was still speaking***, a bright cloud covered them, and a **voice** from the cloud said, **“This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased. Listen to him!”**

**6** When the disciples heard this, they fell facedown to the ground, terrified. **7** But Jesus came and touched them. “Get up,” he said. “**Don’t be afraid.**” **8** When they looked up, they saw no one except Jesus.

**9** As they were coming down the mountain, Jesus instructed them, “Don’t tell anyone what you have seen, until the Son of Man has been raised from the dead.”

* This was the **only time that Jesus** allowed his **glory** (that is hidden by human flesh), **to be** **visibly seen**.
* It reminds us of what is written by the Apostle John (who was actually there) in **John 1:14;**

**“… We have seen his glory**, … the glory of the one and only Son, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.”

The word for “**Transfigure**” is the same as our English word; **met-a-mor-ph-osis** and means, “**a change from WITHIN**.”

Jesus glory was an “**inward glory”** and that same word (“transformed”); is used in **Romans 12:2; as Paul describes the change in believers who are “transformed”** - by the **renewing of your mind.”**

**Then Paul uses the same word again in; 2 Corinthians 3:18; describing how believers are; “being transformed into the image of Christ**.”

1. **Who witnessed Jesus glory.**

**There were seven on the mountain**: Christ, Peter, James, John, Moses, Elijah, and God the Father.

* **Peter**, **James**, and **John** had **three special experiences** with **Christ**, and each **occasion had to do with death.**
* **Jesus was teaching these three men He is “victor” over death.** 
  + (He **raised** Jairus’ daughter) (Mark 5:37) and,
  + **Surrendered** to death in the Garden, and raised (26:36–46).
  + The Transfiguration taught them that Jesus will be **glorified in death**.

**B. Peter’s Testimony about this**

* Is found in **2 Peter 1:16;**

**16** … **but we were eyewitnesses of his majesty**. **17** He received honor 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.” **18** **We ourselves heard this voice that came from heaven when we were with him on the sacred mountain.**

**Those who appeared with Jesus were…**

* **Moses** representing the **Law**;
* **Elijah** representing the **prophets** of which,
* **both point to Christ and are fulfilled in Christ.**

**C. Perception can be deceptive**

As Jesus is transformed in Heavenly Glory and Peter, probably in awe of the moment says; **“Lord, it is good for us to be here. If you wish, I will put up three shelters—one for you, one for Moses and one for Elijah.”** (Verse 4)

* **Immediately, God the Father interrupts Peter; (5-6)**

**5** **While he was still speaking**, a bright cloud covered them, **and a voice from the cloud said**, **“This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased. Listen to him!” 6** When the disciples heard this, they fell facedown to the ground, terrified.

* **God the Father** **will not permit** “**His Son”** to be put on the same level as **Moses and Elijah** and this mountaintop experience proves that; “**Jesus is Supreme**, and **His glory,** **is what God wanted Peter and us to see.**

**D. Clearing up the Confusion (Verses 10-13)**

**Summarize**

**10** The disciples asked him, “**Why** then do the teachers of the law say that **Elijah must come first**?” …. **Elijah has already come, and they did not recognize him,** …. **13** **Then the disciples understood that he was talking to them about John the Baptist.**

Jesus points out that….

* The **teachers of the Law** didn’t **recognize** **John** or **listen** to him.
* And, they didn’t **recognize** **Jesus** or **listen** to him either.
* Still yet, Jesus **laid aside His glory, and** came to earth to go “**by the way of the cross**,” **so we can witness** His great sacrifice for our sins and on the third day, **receive His glory back again.**

Last week in Matthew 16; Peter had opposed Jesus going to Jerusalem to die, so **Jesus had to teach Peter and us** that, “**apart from His suffering and death, there can be no glory.”**

* Jesus shows us that “**surrender always leads to glory**.”
* **First suffering, then glory; first the cross, then the crown.**

When you go the way of the cross, you can see in scene number two ..

1. **Jesus Power: (17:14-21)**

We cannot stay on the **mountaintop**; we must come down with Jesus into the **valley of need** where Satan is at work.

Nine disciples were **left behind** at the bottom of the mountain, embarrassed by their failure. **They** **lost their power over demons** **that Christ had given** them in chapter 10:8.

And in the valley of need, we see….

1. **The Disciples Failure**

**Matthew 17:14-16**

**14** When they came to the crowd, a man approached Jesus and knelt before him. **15** “Lord, have mercy on my son,” he said. “He has seizures and is suffering greatly. He often falls into the fire or into the water. **16** I brought him to your disciples, but they could not heal him.”

* Jesus said the disciples failed because of **unbelief.**
* **Mark records a lack of prayer** and **lack** of devotion.
* It makes you wonder if the nine left behind became **jealous** of Peter, James and John who went up to the mount with Jesus.
* **Secret sin** and **unbelief** robs us of power.

Jesus and the three disciples came down the mountain to the **valley of need** **to find a** **distraught father** **with a** **demon possessed son**.

* **The Father begged** the nine disciples to **help his son, but they could not**.
* The **scribes** had **noticed their failure** and were using it as a reason to **argue with them**.
* **While the** **scribes were accusing**, and the **disciples were defending**, **the demon was killing the helpless boy**.
* **The gospel writers all describe the boy somewhat differently;** however, ….
* **The boy was at the mercy of a demon and** the disciples had been **helpless** to do anything, so **the father ran to Jesus’ feet**.

1. **Jesus Response** (verses 17-20)

**17** “You unbelieving and perverse generation,” Jesus replied, “how long shall I stay with you? How long shall I put up with you? Bring the boy here to me.” **18** Jesus rebuked the demon, and it came out of the boy, and he was healed at that moment.

**19** Then the disciples came to Jesus in private and asked, “Why couldn’t we drive it out?”

**20** He replied, “**Because you have so little faith**. Truly I tell you, if you have **faith as small as a mustard seed**, you can say to this mountain, **‘Move from here to there,’ and it will move**. **Nothing will be impossible for you.”**

**Jesus saw his** **embarrassed disciples**, the **arguing scribes**, and the **needy father and son**, and groaned inwardly saying,

**“How long shall I be with you, and put up with you?”** (Luke 9:41)

* **Their unbelief and spiritual weakness were a burden to Him.**
* **What Jesus feel as He looks at powerless believers today?**
* So **Jesus intervened by delivering the boy** and commanded the spirit never to return to him.
* Whether the disciples lost their power over the demons because of **jealousy**, **unbelief** or **lack of prayer**; **when the crisis came, they were unprepared.**
* Like Samson, **they went out to battle without realizing that their power was gone** (Judg. 16:20).

**Our spiritual health is vital** **for our battle against the enemy**. Had the nine disciples been **praying**, **believing**, and **meditating** **on the Word**, they would have been able to cast out the demon and rescue the boy.

* **But the question for us this morning is; “Could you cast him out?”**

**By the way; many believers struggle with verse 20.**

“Because you have so little faith. Truly I tell you, if you have faith as small as a **mustard seed**, **you can say to this mountain**, ‘**Move from here to there,’ and it will move. Nothing will be impossible for you.”**

* The disciples problem was; “**A lack of faith!”**
* Jesus then challenged them and us with this statement; “**Even a small amount of faith can move mountains.** (Assuming of course the ‘move’ is in God’s will).”
* **“The mountain” in this text simply means that “there is no limit to what God can do.” His power is greater than our problem or need.**
* Then, Jesus declares that; **“Nothing is impossible with God,”** but (according to Mark 9) this kind does not go out **except by prayer and fasting**.
* So, this morning; **“How is your faith**?”
* Just remember; **even a** **small amount of faith**, “**CAN MOVE MOUNTAINS**!”
* **The nine** left at the bottom of the mountain were **unprepared to face the demon** trying to kill a helpless boy.
* **Are you prepared to face the next demon you come against?**

When you travel by the way of the cross, you see in scene number three…

1. **Jesus Humility: (17:24–27)**

**24** After Jesus and his disciples arrived in Capernaum, the collectors of the **two-drachma temple tax** came to Peter and asked, “**Doesn’t your teacher pay the temple tax?**” **25** “Yes, he does,” he replied. When Peter came into the house, **Jesus was the first to speak**. “What do you think, Simon?” he asked. “From whom do the kings of the earth collect duty and taxes—from their own children or from others?” **26** “From others,” Peter answered. “**Then the children are exempt**,” Jesus said to him. **27** “But so that we may not cause offense, go to the lake and throw out your line. Take the first fish you catch; open its mouth and you will find a four-drachma coin. Take it and give it to them for my tax and yours.”

**First we notice a paradox:** **The King is too poor to pay His temple taxes!**

**There are four things about this miracle.**

**A**. **It is the only miracle Christ performed to meet His own needs**.

The temple tax of a **half-shekel** was paid by **every Jewish male** (probably about $5 in today’s money; Ex. 30:11ff). Jesus was so poor that He did not have this small amount. (Phil. 2:5–8)

**B. The miracle is recorded only by Matthew; a tax collector.**

**The King (Jesus)** should not have to pay this tax, but **in order not to offend, Jesus proves His Kingship by performing a complicated miracle.**

**A coin had to be lost in the sea, a fish had to take it in its mouth—and then that same fish had to bite on Peter’s hook!**

**C. It is the only miracle using money.**

This tax was a reminder of the **Jews’ redemption from Egyptian slavery.** Although they **were redeemed by the blood of the lamb (Ex. 12), the silver shekel was a token of that redemption.**

**D. It was performed especially for Peter.**

Think about all the miracles Jesus performed for Peter: **healing his mother-in-law**, **helping him walk on the water**, **saving him when he began to sink**, **giving him great catch of fish,** healing Malchus’ ear, and then delivering Peter from prison.

* But, what does this teach us? That; **“Whatever the need, Christ can meet it**.”

No wonder Peter wrote, **“Casting all your care upon Him, for He cares for you” (1 Peter 5:7).**

**If only we would let Jesus “give the directions for our lives,” we will see Him meet our needs, for His glory.**

If we **trust King Jesus**, and go **the way of the cross**, **we will see:**

* Jesus **Glory**, His **Power**, and His **Poverty**.

**Can you see the King in His glory this morning?**

* Listen to Peter on the mountain, **“Lord, it is good for us to be here.”** But remember, we can’t stay on the mountain, **we must come down to face the demons that come against us.**
* When we face the **challenges before us;** we must **“Have the faith of a mustard seed”** **and when we do; “Nothing will be impossible for you!**
* If you look in the gospel of Matthew, you will **see that Jesus is still, the King of Glory.**
* **The question is; “Is He Your King?”**