

**SERIES: GETTING TO KNOW JESUS**

**SUBJECT: HYPOCRITS CAN SAY SOMETHING**

**SCRIPTURE: MARK 9:2-8**

**SERMON NO. 20**

**Introduction**

How do you answer the accusation that Christians are all a bunch of hypocrites?

The Queen Mary was the largest ship to cross the oceans when it was launched in 1936. Through four decades and one World War, that ship served proudly, until she was retired. As you know, she was moved here to the United States, and anchored as a floating hotel in Long Beach. Some of you have stayed on her, there.

What a lot of people don't know, is that during the conversion from a sailing ship to a floating hotel, her three massive smoke-stacks were taken off to be scraped down and repainted. But when those huge stacks were placed on the dock, they crumbled into a heap. That's because there was absolutely nothing left of the 3/4-inch steel plate from which the stacks had been formed. All that remained were the more than thirty coats of paint that had been applied over the years. But the steel had rusted away. It was all looks and no substance.

That's a good picture of what it is to be a hypocrite..all looks and no substance.

And the accusation of being a bunch of hypocrites is what people outside the church use most often for their excuse for not coming to church. *How do you answer that accusation?*

In our study of the Transfiguration this morning, we're going to find out how to answer this criticism of Christians being hypocrites.

If you'll remember, Peter and the disciples were walking with Jesus on the road that led to the town of Caesarea Philippi. On the way, Jesus asked the disciples who people were saying He was. After some discussion, Jesus asked them, "Who do you say I am." And Peter blurted out, "You are the Christ-You are the Anointed One." Well, when they reach the town, Jesus left 9 of the disciples there, and took the remaining three with Him, up into the mountains.

## **I. THE KEY ELEMENTS IN THE TRANSFIGURATION.**

### **1. Power demonstrated in the change that happened (2-3).**

*After six days Jesus taketh with him Peter, and James, and John, and leadeth them up into an high mountain apart by themselves: and he was transfigured before them. And his raiment became shinning, exceeding white as snow; so as no fuller on earth can white them.*

Suddenly, as Jesus and these three disciples were on top of the mountain, Jesus changed. Now, His personality didn't change. His mind didn't change. His size didn't change. None of those things changed. But what did change was His very existence! His clothes changed and became so white, that no bleach or laundry detergent on earth could have made them that white.

**Matthew's account of the transfiguration (Matt. 17: 2b)** says *His face did shine as the sun.* What happened to Jesus was something that was way beyond human capabilities of understanding. What happened to Jesus was that He had gone back

to His pre-human, pre-earth existence. In other words, Jesus had returned to the glorified state that He was in, before time began and before He was born of a woman.

This was the glory that He spoke about in His farewell prayer John 17:5 **And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was.**

**The first element of the Transfiguration tells us is that Jesus did not have to die.** He had no reason to pass through death to reach glory. He could at any time step back across the line from time into eternity without going through death. You and I have to die to get to that destination. Jesus could simply step back into glory at any time He wanted to. And that's what He did, here.

This is the power of Jesus. This is the sufficiency of the Christ. He was not bound by the conventional things that bind us. He was fully a sinless man, and fully God at the same time! He was able to pass between time and eternity as He wished. This is power!

**2. There were two visitors who appeared at the transfiguration with Jesus and the disciples. (9:4). There appeared unto them Elias with Moses: and they were talking with Jesus.** Moses and Elijah were standing there talking with Jesus. And isn't it interesting that the disciples had no difficulty at all recognizing instantly who these men were? Jesus didn't say, "Peter, James, John...I'd like to introduce you to my friends, Moses and Elijah." No, they knew instantly who they were. That gives you an idea of what heaven will be like. No names tags, no introductions will be necessary. We will know everyone.

**Why Moses and Elijah?** There has been a lot of discussion about that over the years by Bible scholars and theologians. But based on my understanding of scripture, this is why I believe God chose Moses and Elijah to meet with Jesus.

**1. It's what these two men represented.** Moses represented the Law and Elijah represented the Prophets; the two great divisions of the Old Testament. And Jesus came to fulfill the writings of both those parts of the Hebrew scriptures.

**2. These two men represented the two ways by which people enter eternity and the glory of God.** Moses entered the conventional way. He died. His body is still lying in some unmarked grave where God buried him. But Elijah was one of two men whom the Bible tells us, was caught up to glory without passing through death.

**2 Kings 2:11** As they were walking along and talking together, suddenly a chariot of fire and horses of fire appeared and separated the two of them, and Elijah went up to heaven in a whirlwind.

Believers in Jesus, normally enter the glory of heaven by passing through death, just like Moses did. But Paul tells us that the generation of Christians who are living on the day of the Lord's return shall not taste death. **1 Thessalonians 4:16-17** 16 For the Lord himself will come down from heaven, with a loud command, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet call of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first. 17 After that, we who are still alive and are left will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And so we will be with the Lord forever.

So, there are the two ways that believers enter the glory of God's presence, both represented by Moses and Elijah. Luke tells us in his account of the Transfiguration, that they talked about how Jesus would leave this earth by way of the cross and the resurrection. That must have been an incredible conversation. Just imagine it...

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Moses talked about how Jesus was the fulfillment of all those sacrifices which the law demanded—all those lambs and calves, and doves, and bulls, and goats—they were all killed, and sacrificed as a picture of what Jesus would do. ...Elijah probably spoke about the longing in the people...the hungering after a leader, a conqueror, and a Savior. He must have talked about the predictions of the prophets about the One who was coming, who would bear our transgressions, enter into our heartaches, and free us from our selfishness and pride. Wow! What a conversation that must have

**4. The Shekinah Glory Cloud.** That's what this cloud that appeared was called in Hebrew. In the Old Testament, during the time of Moses, God appeared in the form of a cloud and hovered over the Tabernacle. This signified the presence of God with the Israelites.

But out of this manifestation of the Shekinah, God spoke. This is one of only three times when God spoke audibly to people during Jesus' ministry. The first was when he spoke at Jesus' baptism. The third time was when God spoke to the crowd just after the

Triumphal Entry. (John 12). But here at this second time, God spoke directly to the disciples to correct their human thinking. "Stop thinking about planning and organizing and building monuments-this is MY SON-the Son of God-Listen to Him!" In other words, the Power of Almighty God is behind Jesus. Jesus and Almighty God are One and the same.

So, the Transfiguration tells us some important things about Jesus. -He is all sufficient; -He has the authority of all of Scripture behind Him, because in Him is found Scripture's fulfillment; -Man's wisdom pales in His presence; -and the Ultimate power of the universe-Almighty God-is one and the same with Him.

## **II. NO ONE EXCEPT JESUS.**

The one answer we can give to people who call us hypocrites. **Mark 9:7-8** *There was a cloud that overshadowed them; and a voice came out of the cloud, saying, This is my beloved Son: hear him. Suddenly, when they had looked around about, they saw no man any more, save Jesus only with themselves.* There's the answer to people who think Christians are a collective group of hypocrites. There is no answer, except Jesus.

Even though all of us should be in a process of being holy and godly, we are all at different points in that spiritual journey. Some of us are farther along than others. But that's by God's design.

**The church is a place full of imperfect people.** We are a hospital for sinners not a museum for Christians. We need the help of the more mature in the faith to shepherd and teach the less mature. Paul says that older men should teach the younger ones, and the older women should teach the younger women. The very design of

the church is that it should be an ever changing group of maturing Christians bringing along the less mature.

The fact is, everyone of us is a sinner, saved by grace, and in need of help to overcome our sinful nature. Not one of us has reached perfection. I am not and you are not. And if you wait until I am sufficient or you are sufficient, you can wait until the end of time, and it still won't happen.

We still have been entrusted with a message. But we're often perceived as hypocrites, so people don't want to listen to our message, which is the whole reason we've been left here on earth. It's to follow the course of action found in Jesus' teaching of his disciples once he came down from this mount of Transfiguration. Right after He cast a demon out of a young boy.

Right after Jesus showed how powerful He was by casting out the demon, He taught His disciples how to tap into the power of God. **Look at verses 28-29** When he had come into the house, his disciples asked him privately, Why could not we cast him out? And he said unto them, This kind can come forth by nothing, but by prayer and fasting. What He means is a lifestyle of prayer-a lifestyle of being in touch with God.

This is where the human Jesus received His power. He was always in touch with the Father. He was always drawing on the Father's power. He always walked in reliance upon God.

The Kingdom of God is a Kingdom of power, authority, truth and goodness. It doesn't need defending. I just needs joining-you join it through getting rid of our self-sufficiency and relying on the power of Jesus Christ through a life of belief and prayer.

The issue is not how perfect we are. It's not how perfect the leaders of the church are. The real issue is we are all sinners and need saving from the eternal consequences of that sin. The only way that happens is through a relationship with God that is established through belief in the death and resurrection Jesus, the Christ. Only He is sufficient to take care of our individual sin problem.