

A Declaration of Those Things Which Are Most Surely Believed Among Us

An Expository Study of **The Gospel According to Luke** **Chapter 9- Luke 9:26-36**

177- The Son of Man Coming in His Kingdom- Part 4

September 9, 2012

Luke 9:26-36

26 "For whoever is ashamed of Me and My words, the Son of Man will be ashamed of him when He comes in His glory, and *the glory of the Father and of the holy angels.*

27 "But I say to you truthfully, there are some of those standing here who will not taste death until they see the kingdom of God."

28 Some eight days after these sayings, He took along Peter and John and James, and went up on the mountain to pray.

29 And while He was praying, the appearance of His face became different, and His clothing *became white and gleaming.*

30 And behold, two men were talking with Him; and they were Moses and Elijah,

31 who, appearing in glory, were speaking of His departure which He was about to accomplish at Jerusalem.

32 Now Peter and his companions had been overcome with sleep; but when they were fully awake, they saw His glory and the two men standing with Him.

33 And as these were leaving Him, Peter said to Jesus, "Master, it is good for us to be here; let us make three tabernacles: one for You, and one for Moses, and one for Elijah" — not realizing what he was saying.

34 While he was saying this, a cloud formed and *began* to overshadow them; and they were afraid as they entered the cloud.

35 Then a voice came out of the cloud, saying, "This is My Son, *My Chosen One*; listen to Him!"

36 And when the voice had spoken, Jesus was found alone. And they kept silent, and reported to no one in those days any of the things which they had seen.

To the Glory of God

Now this event in the Life of Jesus that is generally called, “The Transfiguration” is a very powerful moment that literally changed the lives of these three Apostles as they were there and beheld the Glory of Jesus and it is one that I pray God the Holy Spirit will use to radially and eternally change *our* lives- as we simply read and study it.

This is my fourth attempt at correctly and fully exegeting this portion of God’s Word. And as some of you already know- every time we gather on the Lord’s Day to worship the one, true, living God- the highlight of our Service is an examination of a portion of God’s Word.

And I seek to ask and answer three questions about this and every other part of the Scriptures:

- 1) What did God the Holy Spirit *say* in that verse or passage?
- 2) What did God *mean* by what He said?
- 3) How can we- as believers in the 21st Century- apply this eternal Truth to our lives- to God’s Glory and to our Good?

So we have no desire to be like the people of Ephesus who worshipped an “unknown god”- but we desire to know and to understand what God has revealed about Himself in Scripture- so that we may worship Him aright and that we can give to God the Glory that He is entitled to receive from us.

So we take the position in this Church that the 66 Books of the Holy Bible are true; that they are reliable and trustworthy and that they are the only source on the face of the earth to find Words that are inspired and inerrant and infallible.

Now if there is anything that we need in our day- a day of great compromise and change- it is to hear and to know and to understand what God has said. About 600 years before Jesus was born- the Prophet Jeremiah said this in **Jeremiah 9:23&24:**

**23 Thus says the Lord, "Let not a wise man boast of his wisdom, and let not the mighty man boast of his might, let not a rich man boast of his riches;
24 but let him who boasts boast of this, that he understands and knows Me, that I am the Lord who exercises lovingkindness, justice and righteousness on**

earth; for I delight in these things," declares the Lord.

We want to know God's Word because by knowing the Word of God- we also know the Will and the Way of God. And we also want to tremble at God's Word and be changed by it. Woe to the man who does not know God's Word but an even greater woe is toward that person who knows- but who willfully and continually rebels against it.

And so part of knowing God rightly and fully is to examine this part of God's Word and o understand what Dr. Luke was telling us.

Now we have already covered some very strong and powerful ground thus far and if God is pleased- I should finish the examination of what Dr. Luke meant by what he wrote in this passage in today's message. So next week- I think it wise to go over Peter's own testimony concerning this event from **2Peter 1** and to draw out the conclusion that our own personal experiences with the Lord- as great as they might be- are never on the same level and are not nearly as reliable and trustworthy as the inspired; inerrant; and infallible Holy Scriptures themselves- which are not to be interpreted from a personal perspective. So that is next week.

Now we've already covered a lot of the background that leads up to the actual event itself of Jesus being changed before them and so beginning at verse 29- we come to the Event itself that is commonly called, "The Transfiguration".

It is right here on that mountain on that day to those three men that Jesus manifests the very same Glory that He had with the Father before the world was and the same Glory that He will have with the Father in the Kingdom of God.

And as we found out- Jesus' Glory is revealed here in at least four ways:

1. Through the Son's Transfiguration (**Luke 9:29**)
2. Through the Manifestation of the Personification of The Law and the Prophets- Moses and Elijah (**Luke 9:30&31**)
3. Through the Weakness of Human Flesh (**Luke 9:32-34**)
4. Through the Father's Verification (**Luke 9:34&35**)

Now we have already covered the first two at great depth and we are almost finished with #3 and so I just want to mention where we were

when we stopped last time- so we can move on to the next issue. So let's look again at **Luke 9:32-34**:

32 Now Peter and his companions had been overcome with sleep; but when they were fully awake, they saw His glory and the two men standing with Him.

33 And as these were leaving Him, Peter said to Jesus, "Master, it is good for us to be here; let us make three tabernacles: one for You, and one for Moses, and one for Elijah" — not realizing what he was saying.

34 While he was saying this, a cloud formed and *began* to overshadow them; and they were afraid as they entered the cloud.

Now we need to remember that there was absolutely no degree of disinterest or apathy that led these three Apostles to this sleep here and we know that because of the language of the Greek that Dr. Luke uses here. Look closely again at the beginning of verse 32:

Now Peter and his companions had been overcome with sleep...

Now the Greek word from which we get the English word, "overcome" means: *something that overpowers an individual or something that is not voluntary*. These three men had entered into a sleep that was not voluntary. This is a perfect passive tense in the Greek- so they had entered into a condition, or a state in which they were *bareo*- the verb means: *to be heavy*.

They couldn't stay awake and so they went into sleep, *hypno* from which we get our word- hypnosis. And all of this language shows us that there wasn't some indifference here- there wasn't some personal disinterest in the situation- it wasn't that having been called up into the mountain to pray with Jesus they really just didn't want to participate- because they did. Do not equate these men falling asleep out of their great sorrow with you being sleepy because you played video games all night long- that isn't the correct comparison.

Levi says that these men were overcome with grief and sorrow. They just couldn't help it in their weak flesh. Now remember that these were not office workers- these men were hardened fishermen who were used to fishing all night long. They had spent the majority of their lives

staying up all night long in the employ of their trade. But here they were literally overwhelmed with sleep.

Now some leaders in the modern Church have suggested that this was a Divine Act of God and that God sort of Sovereignly knocked them out- but that isn't true because Jesus woke them up to take in what was going on and in the Garden of Gethsemane- Jesus rebuked them for not praying with Him.

I personally believe that there is some truth to the fact that human flesh is too weak to withstand the intense spiritual manifestation of the Glory of God. And I get that because almost every single time the Shekinah was manifest in the Old Testament- the people who were around- all could not stand. For example in **1Kings 8:11**- the Bible says:

So that the priests could not stand to minister because of the cloud: for the glory of the LORD had filled the house of the LORD .

But now this Biblical Truth about these priests certainly does not justify all of this falling down on the ground that has become so popular in the modern Church. What these men experienced and what some call, "being slain in the Spirit" are not the same thing precisely because most of these OT priests who could not stand before God's Glory were not even saved- they were simply filling in their duty as a priest. So please- do not take this verse out of context to justify weird behavior in the Church- because you simply can't get there from here.

But from the actual words that Luke and Levi used to describe this event on the Mountain with Jesus- the weariness of the Apostles was simply that they were unduly burdened and confused with all that was going on and with all that Jesus said to them and then Levi adds that they were deeply burdened or sorrowful- evidently because Jesus had just told them that He was going to suffer many things and be rejected and killed by the leaders of Israel which had immense implications. So this illustrates the weakness of human flesh.

So in their minds- after waiting for hundreds of years for Messiah to come- now He is going to being killed by the very people He's come to redeem. And who among us at that time- with no knowledge yet of what was coming and what was going to be done would not have thought the very same thing?

And not only have they just heard that Jesus is going to be killed but they had also just been told that if they're going to follow Him- that they too have to take up their own cross which means that they themselves are going to likely end up being killed as well. And so the burden is very heavy on their hearts.

Now this does lead me to believe that Jesus *did* have a physical strength or a stamina that was beyond normal. It wasn't beyond being human- it was just beyond being normal- because His Body was not impacted by sin. It was not a Body that was negatively affected by the Fall. So Jesus had a level of strength and a stamina that the others evidently did not have. But even at that- there were times when even Jesus went to sleep out of extreme weariness- such as on the boat in the Sea of Galilee in the middle of a hurricane.

But for now- Jesus was fully awake and praying and being transfigured and these men were asleep. Now the last part of verse 32 says:

... but when they were fully awake, they saw His glory and the two men standing with Him.

And that phrase, "**When they were fully awake,**" indicates that it took a little time to awaken them. And you can just imagine that when they initially were awakened by Jesus and they saw what they saw- they were busy rubbing their eyes and wondering whether they were in a dream or not because there they see Jesus in this blazing Glory and there they see Moses and Elijah talking with Him.

Now this question always comes up- "*How did these three Apostles know that was Moses and Elijah?*" Did these two Old Testament saints have name tags or badges, or what? Did Moses have the Law in his arms and did Elijah have some prophetic robe that the Apostles recognized?

No, it was simply that God Sovereignly revealed it to them or else Moses and Elijah introduced themselves or that as the Apostles listened to these two Old Testament saints talk with Jesus- their speech gave them away or some combination of all three.

But however they knew who these two men were- it says that when they were fully awake they saw Jesus' Glory- and that was the

main reason for Jesus having them there- to see the Glory of God- the Shekinah of God in the blazing Face of Jesus.

So they saw Jesus' Face like the sun and they saw His Body with what was like lightning coming through the clothing. In other words- these three Apostles saw Jesus Christ as He was with the Father before the world was and they saw Jesus as He will be in His Father's Kingdom. And they saw also the two men standing with Him.

And to them- this was a critical confirmation that Jesus was in fact the Shekinah Glory of God and that was further confirmed by Moses and Elijah- the two greatest Old Testament figures.

So if there was ever any doubt in the mind of these three men Who Jesus was- this glorious scene answered the question. They had seen exactly what the Lord wanted them to see and this short term prophecy being fulfilled right before them gave them great hope about the far away prophecies that have yet to come to pass.

Now we really don't know how long this went on because verse 33 begins with these words:

“And as these were leaving Him...”

... which indicates that there was some kind of time that had passed. Maybe the Apostles engaged Moses and Elijah and Jesus in the discussion- I don't know. Maybe they just listened as Jesus and Elijah and Moses discussed Jesus' future- His departure, and perhaps even His coming again. Dr. Luke simply wrote:

“And as these were leaving Him...”

So this amazing manifestation of revealing of God's Glory was coming to an end. And somehow- we don't know how- Moses and Elijah began to leave. And then Dr. Luke continues his narrative in **Luke 9:33**:

Peter said to Jesus, "Master, it is good for us to be here; let us make three tabernacles: one for You, and one for Moses, and one for Elijah" — not realizing what he was saying.

Now it would be hard to imagine saying anything at this point. The shock of looking at the very Shekinah of God and of hearing Moses

and Elijah talking with Jesus would be more than a human mind could endure. If anything would silence most people- this would. But not Peter. This great man of God had an amazing capacity for brashness and an amazing aggressive character. And for Peter to even speak here is an amazing act of self-confidence.

He is now out of the time/space/dimension, in a sense, he is out of his own world and realm- he is in the eternal Kingdom. And he has just seen the fulfillment of the Promise that Jesus gave them eight days ago and the first thing he wants to do is make suggestions about what should be done? Give me a break.

Levi records that Peter said, "*Kurios*" or "Lord. John Mark records that he said, "*Rabbi*" or Teacher and the good doctor records here in Luke that Peter said, "*Epistata*" or Master. And the way to understand this is not that this is some kind of contradiction but that you simply put all three versions together. So in his amazement- Peter just blurted out,

"Master, Lord, Teacher"

... which shows that even in his utter amazement- Peter had a deep respect for the Lord. And then he said,

... it is good for us to be here...

... which is just another way of saying, "*We like this!*" or "*This is great!*" or "*This is what we've all been waiting for!*" So Peter was saying, "*We've all been waiting for the Kingdom and now we've finally seen it!*" And this had to be all so very confusing to them because either Jesus is God or He isn't and if He is- how does God get killed; and why would God die? And how could God allow sinful men to kill Him? And how is Jesus dying a good thing? And now we see all this Glory and maybe Jesus isn't going to be killed after all?

And as far as Peter and James and John were concerned- everything got a little bit distant and a little bit bleak and then they heard that Jesus was going to be rejected and that He was going to be killed and that they were going to have to deny themselves and take up their crosses and probably all die too and all this sadness and all of this disappointment was so thick- you could cut it with a knife because none

of this was what the original plan in their mind was supposed to be and things weren't going the way they thought, and now here they are and this is everything they have been waiting for. And so in the mixture of his great amazement at seeing Jesus transfigured and standing with two of the most prominent OT figures who had been gone for centuries- and his great sadness and confusion about all that Jesus said combined with what they *thought* was supposed to happen- Peter just blurts out in **Luke 9:33**

... it is good for us to be here...

It is *kalos*- the Greek word for “excellent”; it is “good”; it is the “best”. In other words, Peter was saying, “*We need to be here and we don't need to go back there. This is what we've been looking for.*”

Now I think there was a holy dread here with Peter. I think there was a reverential holy fear in this moment and in these words. But Peter also recognizes that this is the best experience of his entire life and he's right. This is far better than pain and a cross and rejection and murder that Jesus has been talking about lately. And here you have then the testimony of the Apostles that this was the Kingdom of God, this is where they want to stay. But I think there is even more to this.

But what exactly is Peter supposed to say right about now? I mean what would *you* say as you see Jesus shining with the Glory of God and Moses and Elijah talking with Him? We need to know that there is a physical and an emotional phenomenon that happens to people under times of great stress and trauma. Petite little women pick up a full size car that has rolled over their child; People who have never fired a gun in their lives roll off six straight shots that all hit the intruder in dead center mass; and men run faster than the wild animals who are chasing them.

And then there are those hunters who spend all day out in the woods hunting deer but when they finally see the large buck- they get so excited- instead of shooting the buck- they just begin to throw shotgun shells over their shoulder as fast as they can. They call that, “buck fever”. And it seems to me that there was a bit of “buck fever going on with Peter here. He was so amazed and so excited- that he simply didn't know what to say. Dr. Luke sums it up best when he wrote that Peter said this:

... not realizing what he was saying.

So in his excitement or in a combination of excitement and sorrow or whatever state of mind he was in- Peter said,

"I have a proposal. Let's build three tabernacles or three tents or three dwelling places- one for Jesus and one for Moses and one for Elijah."

Now in **Matthew 17:4**- Levi wrote that Peter prefaced his remarks by saying,

"If You wish..."

So at least he did defer to the Lord.

But I think what Peter is trying to convey here is that he wants this magnificent scene to never end. He wants it to last. He wants Jesus to remain in His Glory and he wants this to be permanent. So in his mind- if this glorious scene is going to be permanent- there has to be a place for everyone to stay.

But even in his excitement or his bewilderment- whichever one it was- there a humility in his words. Notice that he didn't say,

"Let's make six tabernacles."

...so Peter didn't include himself or James or John in this. He knows that he and the other two men are not to be as honored as those who belong to the eternal Kingdom of God. It's the glorious persons that need to be properly honored in Peter's mind and the idea here is not just to honor them- but to also make the place permanent so that he and the other two Apostles can remain permanently in this glorious reality.

And this is what he had been anticipating from the very beginning. Peter had heard the prophecy that some of them were going to see the Kingdom and he knew now that he was seeing it. So his excitement was raised to its highest point when he saw the Glory of Christ and Moses and Elijah all associated within the eternal Kingdom and he heard them speaking about the exodus of Christ and so it is not far- fetched to say that Peter thought that the Kingdom of God was near

at hand- perhaps even right at that very moment! But I think that something else was at play here as well.

We also need to know that this was also a very special time in the calendar of the Jewish year. At that moment- it was the month of Tishri- so it was just six months before Passover and a very special event was happening down in Jerusalem while they were up in that mountain.

Now the chronology of the New Testament puts this event at the time of the Feast of Tabernacles- which was the Jewish celebration of their Divine deliverance from Egypt and over 400 years of slavery. And Peter would have known that. So while this is all going on up in the mountain- down in Jerusalem the Jews were celebrating the Feast of Tabernacles and their exodus out of Egypt's bondage.

So this was amazing timing here for the Lord to be changed at this particular moment. And the normal and natural thing for Peter and any other Jew at that time of the year was Tabernacles or Tents. So it was easy for Peter to say, *"Let's put up some temporary tabernacles for You and the other two men to dwell in for a while as the first phase of the exodus bringing Your people out of the bondage of sin and this world into this glorious Kingdom."*

So "tents" and "tabernacles" were really in the back of Peter's mind anyway. And no doubt he is thinking that perhaps this could be the first phase of the Kingdom for which he had waited for so long. If he remembered **Zechariah 14**- he would also remember that in the Kingdom- the Feast of Tabernacles would be held every year as a remembrance of the Exodus. And not just the exodus out of Egypt- but the exodus out of bondage to sin into the glorious Salvation of God.

So to some extent- there were elements that prompted Peter's response. But then we must consider Luke's comment:

... not realizing what he was saying.

So what does that mean? Well, Peter didn't know whether this was the beginning of the Kingdom or not. He didn't realize that this was not the launch point into eternity and the end of the word as we know it. Elijah was to come at the time of the Kingdom- he knew that- so that fit. And during the Kingdom- there was going to be a Feast of Tabernacles and they could have one right there in the Kingdom to

parallel the one at the same time down in Jerusalem. So all of the elements of the Kingdom that Peter had been taught and had longed for his entire life were there:

- ✓ The glory of the Messiah was displayed
- ✓ Elijah Appearing
- ✓ The Feast of Tabernacles

... yet he doesn't fully realize what he's saying. Because before there will ever be any eternal Glory- there has to be a Cross. The eternal Glory will come- it is certain- it will come in the future- but it's not going to come right now- and it's not going to come right there because there has to first be a Cross and then there has to be a Church and then there has to be the elected number of Gentile converts.

So the Son of Man must go and die as the prophet said He would, He must be the suffering servant of **Isaiah 53**. He must be wounded for our transgressions. He must be bruised for our iniquities. The judgment of God for us must fall on Him, He must die as the sacrifice for sin. He must be the ultimate and final Lamb- the One Whose sacrifice perfects forever those that are sanctified.

So there can be never be a crown without a cross. There can never be a Kingdom without a Calvary. So, this isn't it, yet, Peter. This is just a preview to firm up your faith so that you will always know, no matter what happens to you- that when Jesus dies and when He leaves this world and when you die- according to history- crucified upside down for 4 days; or in the case of James- beaten and thrown off a high cliff; or in the case of John- they tried over and over to kill him- but he just wouldn't die- so it wasn't their fault- as these men went through all these things- and as the rest of the Apostles go through their horrific martyrdoms- they will remember that that is not the end of the story.

There is a glorious Kingdom beyond this life and the King in that Kingdom is going to come again and bring that Kingdom to earth. And His Glory will fill the earth as the water covers the sea. That will come, Peter- but not now. Now I want to look at the final pint of all this-

4. The Father's Verification

Luke 9:34-35

34 While he was saying this, a cloud formed and *began* to overshadow them; and they were afraid as they entered the cloud.

35 Then a voice came out of the cloud, saying, "This is My Son, *My Chosen One*; listen to Him!"

So while Peter was talking- while he was struggling to say all this- a cloud suddenly began to form all around them and began to overshadow them. So here comes the *Shekinah* and as Peter was trying to voice his feelings- this cloud overshadowed them and their first response is the same as it always is when God Almighty Sovereignly moves on anyone-

... they were afraid...

Then a voice came out of the cloud, saying, "This is My Son, *My Chosen One*; listen to Him!"

Now how would you like for God to show up- at exactly the moment when you are trying your hardest to put into words just how you are feeling and say to you,

"Could you just be quiet and listen?"

And in Alabama English we would just say,

"Shhhh!" or *"Hush!"*

Now that's pretty intimidating. Peter just hush and listen. Here you are in a foretaste of the eternal Kingdom- listening to Jesus, Moses and Elijah, having a conversation and you have the audacity to say, "Hey, guys, can I make a suggestion?"

So in His great mercy- God says,

"Peter, hush! Just listen!"

And this issue is very critical to how we respond to God and why God's Word is superior and infinitely more reliable and trustworthy than *anything* we see with our eyes or hear with our ears. And I'm

going to get into that, Lord willing, next week- because we live in a day when in far too many areas in the modern Church- personal experiences are becoming superior to Scripture- and that is a terrible mistake.

Now Luke says that a cloud formed and began to overshadow them. **Matthew 17:5** says it was a “**bright cloud**”. So this is not an ordinary cloud- but simply another manifestation of the *Shekinah* of God- the very same God Who appeared in a pillar of a cloud back in **Exodus 13**; and Who appeared again as the Glory of the Lord appearing as the cloud of the Lord's Glory that filled the tabernacle in **Exodus 40**.

And Luke says that the three Apostles were now afraid because now the scene is enough to cause absolute panic. And they were more than simply afraid- they were actually terrified at this point. In **Matthew 17:6-8**- Levi wrote:

6 When the disciples heard *this*, they fell face down to the ground and were terrified.

7 And Jesus came to *them* and touched them and said, "**Get up, and do not be afraid.**"

8 And lifting up their eyes, they saw no one except Jesus Himself alone.

These three men were as afraid as Ezekiel was when he fell on his face in a coma when God appeared to him over 500 years earlier. They were as afraid as Isaiah was when he pronounced a curse upon himself when God appeared to him in **Isaiah 6**. They were afraid as John the Apostle later was in **The Revelation 1**, when the Glory of Christ appeared to him again and he fell over like a dead man. Terror always grips human beings when they experience the Holy glorious Presence of God.

Now the language here is not clear in the English- but in the Greek- the picture is this Kingdom cloud- which is the representation of God begins to engulf Jesus, Moses and Elijah. And we know that because the Apostles hear the voice, verse 35, coming *out* of the cloud- which means that they themselves were on the outside.

So God's Voice comes out of the cloud to these three Apostles. They were afraid of the cloud and now God speaks out of the cloud and He speaks directly to Peter and James and John and He says,

"This is My Son..."

And Jesus' transfiguration proved that He was indeed Deity. And His association with the prophets proved it. And the confirmation of the Apostles- who realized this was the Kingdom and He was the King proved it. And now the greatest confirmation ever- Luke now gives us the Voice of the Father that proved the same thing.

And it's the very same statement that the Father said earlier. Way back in **Luke 3:22**- at the baptism of Jesus- the Father spoke out of Heaven as Jesus came up out of the water and said:

... You are My beloved Son, in You I am well-pleased

So while this is not the only confirmation that Luke gives us- it is the best. God Almighty- the Maker of Heaven and earth speaks out of Heaven and says:

“This is My Son...”

...meaning Jesus is of the very same Nature; the very same Essence as God Himself- which is the same thing as saying, “

“Jesus is Deity”

Matthew wrote that God said,

"This is My beloved Son,"

... the Greek word is *agapetos*, which means: loved. So this is My chosen One; My elect Son and then God said:

... in You I am well-pleased

..meaning that Jesus is sinless; perfectly holy and righteous; no fault; always pleasing God; always doing God's Will perfectly; perfectly obeying God in thought, word, and deed 24/7; perfectly being led by God's Spirit with absolutely no flaw or fault 24/7.

So this is the one and only of God; this the only One in whom God is totally pleased. So when you put all those elements together, what

God is saying on that mountain on that day to Peter and the other two Apostles is:

"This is My Son, My beloved Son, My chosen One- the only One Who is perfect and sinless and therefore the only One Who I am perfectly pleased with- So shut up, Peter, and listen to Him."

Now what is interesting is that these words fulfill a prophecy that Moses gave 1400 years before Jesus was born back in **Deuteronomy 18:15** that says:

The Lord your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among you, from your countrymen, you shall listen to him.

So this astounding and amazing event attests to the Christ of God being the very Glory of God. He is the glorious God in human form. He declares it in His transfiguration. The Old Testament saints Moses and Elijah declare it. The New Testament saints- Peter James and John declare it. And now the Father Himself declares it.

Now this powerful scene has an epilogue in **Luke 9:36** and we'll close with this. And it's a strange one- read with me:

And when the voice had spoken, Jesus was found alone. And they kept silent, and reported to no one in those days any of the things which they had seen.

Now remember the disciples had fallen over and Jesus had touched them and lifted them up and when they looked again- Jesus was there alone. It's over. The Glory of God came and it went. It wasn't the time for the Kingdom yet. It wasn't the time to build some semi-permanent dwelling and start phase one of the Kingdom yet. It was magnificent; it was glorious- but now it was over. So this was just a preview. It was a taste. And verse 36 says,

... they kept silent, and reported to no one in those days any of the things which they had seen.

Isn't that strange? Didn't Jesus have these men so they could be eye witnesses of what happened here? Wasn't it important that they proclaim what they had seen? So why would they not say anything?

Were they unfaithful or disobedient to their responsibility? They had just seen a picture of the Second Coming, as well as an affirmation of Christ's Own personal Deity like no other human being had ever seen- and they don't say anything? What's up with that?

Well, Dr. Luke doesn't tell us – but Matthew does.

Matthew 17:9

As they were coming down from the mountain, Jesus commanded them, saying, "Tell the vision to no one until the Son of Man has risen from the dead."

So their silence wasn't permanent- but they kept quiet until Jesus rose from the dead- because Jesus commanded them to.

Now many people want to know why. Why such a prohibition? Why would Jesus tell them not to tell anybody now? Was Jesus simply telling them not to cast their pearls before swine? Was it a recognition that until the Resurrection- nobody was going to believe this because it's just too far- fetched and too impossible?

I think there is an element of truth to that. After everyone knew Jesus was risen from the dead- this vision would certainly become more believable. Some theologians have suggested that they were told not to say anything because if they started parading around and saying everywhere what certainly would be something they would want to say that they had seen the eternal Kingdom and that Jesus was the King, they would have then become a greater threat to the Jews and to the Romans which could have precipitated an attack against them and a premature execution of Jesus and the apostles, and so Jesus doesn't want that to happen. I think there's some truth in that too.

But there also was this possibility- that the Jews wanted a Messiah who could physically and militarily conquer the Romans. And so if the Apostles began to report around that they had just had a little conversation with Moses and Elijah in the Kingdom of God and they had seen the Messiah there, this may have fed the fever pitch of the radicals which finally did manifest itself on Palm Sunday when they wanted Jesus to be their Messiah and to do what they wanted done to Rome.

So the news of this event might have precipitated a sort of groundswell in which they tried to thrust Jesus in to lead an army, as it were, against Rome. So Jesus is telling them

"Let's just not get so involved in all the nationalistic and political stuff."

And after the death on the cross in its appropriate time, after the resurrection, then you can tell everybody what you saw. Then it becomes believable. Then it can't excite the crowds or the leaders or the Romans to bring about a premature death of Christ. Once He has conquered death, they'll know He didn't come to conquer the Romans. After the resurrection, then you can tell what you saw. And then you can tell people what you saw because they need to know that I'm coming again. That's why He gave them that preview. They will have seen My death, seen My resurrection, the believers will have known of My ascension into glory. After that, you'll have proof positive that I am in the Kingdom and I am coming in Kingdom glory as promised.

But whatever the case- we do know that they were obedient to the Lord because they did give testimony to this event. We don't know the testimony that James gave- because he died very early as a martyr and didn't write any Scripture. The Epistle of James is written by the half-brother of our Lord- not the Apostle James. But I read you John's testimony. Listen to **John 1:14**,

And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us, and we saw His glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth.

..so John says, "We literally saw the Glory!"

And finally Peter wrote his testimony. **2Peter 1:16-18:**

16 For we did not follow cleverly devised tales when we made known to you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but we were eyewitnesses of His majesty.

17 For when He received honor and glory from God the Father, such an utterance as this was made to Him by the Majestic Glory, "This is My beloved Son with whom I am well-pleased" —

18 and we ourselves heard this utterance made from heaven when we were with Him on the holy mountain.

So John says, "I personally saw the Glory of Jesus" and Peter says "I personally saw the Glory of Jesus" And the result is that the glorious One Who died and rose again and the One Who ascended is the same One Who is coming again to bring the Kingdom back with Him.

And both Peter and John are given privilege of writing inspired testimony to that reality. So Jesus Christ is God and His death and Resurrection and Ascension and His Second Coming are promised. And so that is what we look for and that is why we say with the Apostle John,

"Even so, come, Lord Jesus, come!"

Let's pray