

Glimpsing the Glory of God: a study series for fellowship groups

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The Christian life is about building relationships, rather than about adopting roles, and this series of studies is about coming to know God better and having a deeper relationship with him.

(6) Glimpsing God's Glory shown to us in His Son

Q 1 Have members of the group ever had a special experience of the Lord's presence in their lives? If so, what was it like?

Many people have claimed, down through the years, to have had a special encounter with Jesus. Some of these encounters have come through near-death experiences. In the Bible, Paul, (then *Saul*), had such an encounter, although not by way of a near-death experience (Acts 9:3-7). Three who certainly did have a special encounter with Jesus were Peter, James and John in the passage which we shall be looking at.

Read Matthew 17:1-13, comparing the account with Mark 9:2-4 and Luke 9:29-31

STUDY POINT: The last verse of the previous chapter, a verse which also precedes the accounts of the Transfiguration given by both Mark and Luke, was taken in the early church as a statement by Jesus that his return would be in the lifetime of some who were with him during his ministry. That did not happen of course, but many have held that the fulfilment is in the establishment of the church, which many of them did witness. Another view, especially considering where the verse occurs in each of these narrative ('synoptic') gospels, is that it was fulfilled in the transfiguration.

Have you ever considered why Jesus is presented in discussion with Moses and Elijah? The whole of the Old Testament writings are sometimes referred to in scripture as 'The Law and the Prophets (Matt 7:12)'. There are of course other important components to the Old Testament like the historical books and books of poetry, but the Jews of the first century concentrated on the Law (first 5 books) and the Prophets. Moses was the law giver (Ex 24:12; Lev 26:46; Deut 1:5; 31:9) and Elijah the representative of the Prophets (Deut 18:15,18; Mal 4:4-5). Now, as Luke writes (Lk 16:16), the time for the proclamation of the Law and the prophets (i.e. the Old Testament theology) has ended and the time for the proclamation of the good news of the Kingdom has come (i.e. the New testament theology).

Q 2 What do you think the description of Jesus' face shining like the sun, and his clothes becoming white as the light (v.2), tell us?

As often happened in Old Testament times when the glory of God was seen in a bright cloud (Ex 24:15-17; 40:34-35; 1 Kings 8:10), so now.

Q 3 What four specific things did the voice from the cloud want us to know about Jesus?

Peter, lest there were to be sceptics about the genuineness of the transfiguration account, writes over thirty years later to insist that this was no clever invention (2 Pet 1:16-18). Paul, having had that personal encounter with Jesus himself, makes the important statement that for all of us, there is the need to see the glory of God in the of Christ (2 Cor 4:6). If we want to see the glory of God more clearly, there is no better place to look than into the face of God's Son, Jesus Christ.

Next study: (7) Glimpsing God's Glory which transforms (2 Corinthians 3)