

7th Grade New Testament (Gospels)

Lesson Plan: The Transfiguration (Luke 9:28-36)

Learning Goals: Students should be able to define/describe the “Transfiguration” and begin to interpret what it means to see Jesus “in all his glory.”

Question: What does it mean to see someone in all their glory?

Prayer

Discuss Question on Board

Read Luke 9:28-36 (see also Matthew 17:1-9; Mark 9:2-10)

Read Matthew 16:13-17:13 to keep in context

We should always look for places where scripture interprets itself (2 Peter 1:16-18)

This event is closely connected to the events at Caesarea Philippi (these must always be in the background for us)

Caesarea Philippi - at the foot of Mt. Herman - likely that when they “went up on the mountain” they were going up on Mt. Herman.

- The Gospel writers don’t seem interested in that detail, however.
- Remember, if the Bible doesn’t answer your questions, it’s not because the Bible is falling short, it’s because you are asking the wrong questions.
- They are not interested in the “where” but the “what”

Go up onto the mountain with **Peter, James, and John**

- Jesus had singled these guys out and had spent special time/energy with them.
- Jesus strategy - concentric circles of intimacy and investment.
- They were the “inner core” - though we don’t really know why and don’t see that they were a special leadership core or anything like that.

What happened when they got up on the mountain?

- Jesus was “transfigured” (from Greek *metamorphote*) - supernatural transformation
 - from same Greek word as metamorphosis (what connections do we see?)
 - Not that the sun broke through the clouds and reflected off his bright white clothes
- Jesus emanated light from the inside out (compare with Moses’ face shining - reflecting God’s glory)
- His disciples were terrified (common response - the people were terrified of Moses so he put a veil over his face to shield them from God’s glory)
- This is foreshadowing of the glory that Jesus will have at the parousia (2nd Coming)
 - They are getting a glimpse of what is to come.

Appearance of **Moses and Elijah**

- Why were these two here?
 - They were the fulfillment of the Law (Moses) and the Prophets (Elijah)
 - In Jewish tradition, they had both ascended to heaven (this contradicts what we see in Deuteronomy)
 - They both witnessed a theophany on a mountain (Sinai, Carmel)
 - They refute that Jesus was one of the prophets returned.
 - Both of these guys were expected to appear before the messianic age

- Peter makes the mistake of trying to enshrine the moment by building tents (tabernacles for them) - mistake of trying to enshrine something temporary; equating Jesus with Moses/Elijah
- Jesus has no equals - people could not treat him on the same terms as Moses and Elijah - he was much greater.

The Voice from Heaven

- Closely connected to Peter's declaration that Jesus was the Christ; Some connection to Jesus' Baptism
- God is confirming what Peter already saw and confirming what Peter denied (that Jesus must suffer and die - "Listen to him")
- Peter couldn't fit what Jesus was saying into his own perceptions about who and what the Messiah would be (definitely political in nature) - God is saying, "redefine your expectations"
- "What [the disciples] could know and needed to accept was that the transfiguration was a divine verification of the confession and passion prediction made at Caesarea Philippi. It was God's seal of approval, the heavenly ratification, of Jesus' teaching concerning his messianic calling. Jesus was indeed the Christ, the Son of God. . . . The disciples dare not force Jesus' mission into their own mode of thinking. On the contrary, they must 'listen to him.' They must not try to make Jesus into a messiah that met with their approval" (Robert Stein, p. 174)

Jesus then "set his face toward Jerusalem" (Luke 9:51)

- There was no turning back now - Jesus' whole life and ministry is now pointed to the cross.

Lesson Summary/Review:

Students should review and highlight the following vocabulary terms and concepts from this lesson in their notes:

- Transfiguration
- Who appeared with Jesus at the Transfiguration? Why were they important? What did they represent?
- Who were the three disciples that were part of Jesus' "inner circle" - that accompanied him at the Transfiguration?