

Previews of Coming “Attractions”

Intro. I used to take a lot of pictures on vacation. My pictures end up in a messy drawer, or in the big drawer in the clouds, quickly forgotten. I came to realize most pictures cannot capture the beauty of nature or the feeling of awe in powerful moments. Now I try to enjoy the experience of just being there; forget the pictures. On the mountain, James, John and Peter had an experience unlike anything they ever knew. No words could ever explain it. The most they might say to others was, “You had to be there.” That was the point: to *experience* it and remember it.

I. The transfiguration took place after the Lord asked his disciples if they knew he was the Son of God. After Peter’s inspired answer, the Lord explained the meaning of it: as Messiah he would be

arrested, suffer, die and rise from the dead. Peter did not understand that idea of Messiah. He and most Israelites expected a Messiah who would conquer the Roman oppressors and restore Israel to its glory days. Six days later the Lord took his three closest friends to the mountain. Perhaps after a week of trying to understand, they still didn’t. The Lord tried a different way: don’t *explain* it, *show* them. They saw the bright light around the Lord. They saw him talking to the greatest heroes of their tradition. Just when the disciples thought it couldn’t get any better, they heard the voice of the Father, clearly identifying the Son. The Lord calmed their fear and told them not a word to anyone. Maybe the Lord took three disciples rather than one so they could tell each other it was *not* a dream; they *really had seen* the glory of the Lord. I believe they reminded each

other of this experience whenever following the Lord got difficult. Putting up tents may have been Peter's attempt to hold on to the moment, live on top of the mountain, not return to the valley of reality.

Wouldn't that be nice for all of us! The disciples had to come down from the mountain, but they brought something with them – a powerful preview of what was coming.

Concl. I think “mountain top moments” are given to us for a specific reason: to encourage and strengthen us during difficult and easy times to know the Lord is with us. The three disciples may have spent the next few months quietly reflecting on their experience and helping each other understand where the Lord was leading them. For many of us, it is hard to understand where the Lord is leading.

Taking time to savor the moments on the mountain

and reflecting on them helps us keep in mind the big picture of serving the Lord. Try to put down some of the many distractions – not easy to do - and find a “mountain” to spend time on. When we experience the Lord in those moments, don't try to explain them or hold onto them. Forget about “taking pictures.” Just *be in* them and *be glad* for them. **These are experiences of God we bring back to strengthen our daily lives. They remind us of how good it was to be there with Him and can be again.**

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