

Mark 9:2-13 (PM)

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[0 : 0 0] the gospel of mark was written to answer one question i think bang there it is who is jesus jesus in the very middle of this biography of him turns to his followers turns to the people who've been following him page after page in a sense he turns to us and he asks simply but who do you say that i am that's the question jesus asks each of us tonight you've been with us for any period of time if you've ever been in a church if you've ever opened a bible you've read the stories you've heard about miracles you've listened to jesus teaching you've followed him around and in through his gospel so who do you think he is our text is an epiphany it's a revelation of who jesus is it's an unveiling before our eyes of god himself in mark 9 we are given a front row seat to maybe the most unbelievable event in all of history and it helps us answer the question who is jesus let's look at the text together mark 9 page 844 we read in verse 2 that jesus takes his three closest disciples peter james and john and they go up a high mountain where they're all alone in the ancient world mountains are where people encounter the divine if you think about it in basically any civilization any religion people believed the summits of mountains are where heaven and earth met and so places where there weren't mountains they built mountains and they made them in their temples so jesus leads his closest disciples up a high mountain up into the heavens as it were and up there where heaven meets earth jesus appearance changes jesus changes he is transfigured that word literally is metamorphed jesus is transformed up to this point jesus would have looked like anybody else ordinary unremarkable a normal looking person of his ethnicity and geography but now atop a mountain where heaven meets earth jesus leads us into sacred space and he gives us this privileged seat to gaze at him as he is unveiled before us we see here the epiphany of jesus we're shown who jesus is in mark 9 through four c's we're shown jesus clothes we're told about jesus company there's something about a cloud and then we're given a command four c's which together give us the epiphany they reveal to us who jesus is so first c jesus clothes look on your page at verse three we're told as jesus is transfigured his clothes become dazzling white whiter than anyone in the world could bleach them jesus clothes change from ordinary dusty common fabrics to supernaturally white spotless pure dazzling light emanates from him and his clothes

what a strange detail why does this matter who cares about jesus wardrobe in the hebrew bible jesus bible our old testament dazzling white clothing is attributed to only one person in psalm 104 verse 2 it's page 502 if you don't believe me we're told that god wraps himself in light or listen to daniel 7 verse 9 daniel has a vision and he writes as i looked all these thrones were set in place and the ancient of days that's god took his seat and now listen god's clothing was as white as snow the hair of his head was white like wool see up to this point there's only one person in scripture who has clothes white like the sun whiter than any human experience or comprehension the only person whose glory dazzles and blinds and outshines light itself is god god wraps himself in light nobody else does only god wears clothing that is whiter than snow but in mark 9 it's jesus clothes that are now radiant intensely impossibly supernaturally white we're shown here that it's not just on mountains that people meet god we meet god when we come to jesus of nazareth he is where heaven and earth collide because he is both fully god and fully man there's the epiphany and we get it first from jesus clothes jesus is god saint paul writes to one of the first churches in colossians 1 that jesus is the image of the invisible god think about that for a moment jesus is the invisible god made visible that's the point of his bright clothes in mark 9 jesus is transformed before us and he takes his true unveiled form and as we gaze at him we are stunned to see that he is god not only is jesus the christ the king the promised messiah but he is god himself fully man fully god that's all from his clothes the second c i want you to notice the company that joins the transfigured jesus in verse 4 it says and there appeared before them elijah and moses who were talking with jesus when jesus true form is revealed he's joined by moses and by elijah why that's so weird isn't it these guys

are long dead what are they doing here and why these two you know if he could have conjured up anyone from the old testament why moses and elijah why not abraham or adam and eve why not king david or king nebuchadnezzar for that case moses famously was the leader of israel when god powerfully saved them from egypt and led them to the promised land god saved israel and he used moses to give his people his law so you could say moses represents the law elijah was god's most faithful prophet he was the great prophet so you could say elijah represents the prophet so you have the law and you have the prophet represented by moses and elijah who are now alive resurrected in conversation in communion with jesus moses and elijah conversing with jesus shows us the the entire law and the entire prophets the whole old testament is testifying and pointing to and witnessing to and talking with and talking about jesus christ on the famous emmaus road after jesus has risen from the dead spoiler alert he leads a bible study with two really discouraged disciples and we're told in luke 24 that beginning with moses and the prophets jesus explained to them what was said in all the scriptures concerning himself moses and elijah the law and the prophets all point to and are fulfilled in jesus christ they are all in conversation with jesus christ this means the main subject of our old testament is jesus christ the trajectory of the old testament is jesus christ in his kingdom he is the epiphany that all of scripture is now pointing to him but there's another important reason these two men are here moses and elijah both in their lives stood before god and they experienced god's presence it was on a mountain remember that moses encountered god and so too elijah met with god and now they stand on a mountain again before god again alive resurrected standing and communing with jesus christ so jesus company moses and elijah further reveals to us who he is he's the fulfillment of all of scripture he is god himself come to save and secure his kingdom on earth in him even death is undone third c the cloud tiny little detail look at verse seven and a cloud overshadowed them and a voice came from the cloud think in your sunday school bible stories where a cloud has come up before in scripture the cloud represents god's presence on earth do you remember in the exodus where god's people are led out of egypt well they're led by a cloud god's presence that goes before the israelites as they're delivered from egypt and led to the promised land or how the cloud god's presence enters the temple when solomon completes it or elijah remember he experiences a cloud god's presence when he's hiding up in the mountain wishing he were dead the cloud symbolizes god's presence on earth in mark 9 verse 7 we're told that a cloud overshadowed them now them here is referring to jesus disciples to peter james and john who in the story are terrified and have no idea how to respond to what's happening but notice the location of the cloud relative to jesus followers we're told in verse 7 that the cloud covers them it overshadows them it immerses them it surrounds them completely the disciples upon seeing jesus as he truly is are now brought into the very presence of god the cloud overshadows them in all the other stories of the bible god's people are never within the cloud they see the cloud they see the cloud but they aren't invited into it they can see god's presence but they aren't invited into his presence a human being has never been ushered into the presence of god except here where the cloud overshadows them god's presence overwhelms them surrounds them saturates them they don't just hear god they don't just see god they are swept up to be within god's presence so too for us if you follow jesus you don't just see god you don't just learn about god as you follow jesus christ you are swept up into the very presence of god we live our lives within god's presence as christians we believe that god the holy spirit has made his home within us as we believe in jesus so if you follow jesus god lives in you this is more than seeing this is more than hearing it is housing god it is housing god and living in him and through him okay we've got through three c's the clothes the company the cloud final c that reveals who jesus is is the command look at verse seven the cloud overshadows them and a voice came from the cloud this is my son whom i love listen to him do you remember when moses went up the mountain to be with god he was given a law he's given the ten commandments well now with moses present as jesus is transformed into his glorious state god gives us a new law from a new mountain this is a new commandment this is a new testament this is my son whom i love listen to him god the father here confesses that jesus is divine he says he's god the son and god here declares that the words of jesus are the new law by which all people are called to live see the transfiguration is so much more than just jesus giving us a glimpse a trailer of his future glory this scene is the new sinai it's the giving of a new law it's the start of a new exodus for the new people of god toward the eternal promised land it's the absolute revelation to all of humanity that jesus is god it is the paramount epiphany of jesus christ god speaks and he tells us who jesus is and you may remember way back

in mark one that god has spoken already this is actually the second time god speaks in the gospel of mark so if your bibles are still open flip back a couple pages to the very beginning of mark page 836 in mark 1 verse 11 jesus is baptized you remember that remember when jesus comes out of the water the heavens are ripped open and the holy spirit descends on jesus in the form of a dove and then god's voice comes from heaven do you remember what god says you are my son whom i love in you i am overjoyed so god the father speaks twice in mark's gospel he speaks at jesus baptism which is when jesus identifies fully with humanity and he speaks again at the transfiguration when jesus identifies fully with

god's divinity and the father says nearly the exact same thing at these two events at jesus baptism he talks to jesus and he says you are my beloved son but now at the transfiguration he says this is my beloved son what's different the baptism who's god talking to he's talking to jesus this is or you are my son the transfiguration he's not talking to jesus he's talking to jesus followers this is my son god is speaking to us in mark 9 not to jesus and god the creator of everything decides to enter history and speak audibly and have it recorded in a way we can understand so that we would know one thing this is my son i love him listen to him here's the epiphany jesus is god's son and here's the command listen to him the teachings of jesus should be for us our law our rule of life our signposts for how we ought to live they should be constantly on our lips and in our minds we should know them like the backs of our hands because the words of jesus will lead us to the his kingdom the words of jesus will lead us to his cross to the place where our sin is taken away and where jesus will give his life as a ransom for many so the words of jesus will lead us to his death but not just to it but through it to eternal life this is god's son his words give eternal life so listen to him that's the command for all of us listen to him when we're pressured at work to do something unethical it should be the voice of jesus that we are listening to to know how we ought to respond when our friends want us to do things that we know is wrong it should be the words of our teacher jesus which form the law for how we ought to live when we're discerning a major decision we're trying to figure out our identity our compass and our counsel ought to be jesus teaching when we as a church are planning our future or planning to plant a new church we shouldn't be looking to our financials or the politics or the logistics but to the words of jesus christ this is my son my beloved listen to him are you listening are you listening in your life to the voice of jesus do you read his word do you study it do you think about it what do you do when you read a text and you think i have no idea what that means do you talk about it did jesus words ever come up in your life in your free time on the bus at home with family or friends when you finally got your kids to bed and the dishes are done are you making space to listen to jesus many christians myself included complain that we don't know how we're supposed to live and we feel like we're on our own and as if god is silent when we need him to tell us what to do well let me ask you are you listening now some of you have never been followers of jesus

[20 : 30] and for you this text offers an epiphany and it gives you too a command jesus is god's son so listen to him hear his gospel hear what he has to say about the sin that infects every human heart including mine and yours listen to how he's come to forgive that sin and to put it away hear about the gift of his holy spirit sent to transform and transfigure you to become a new creation remade in christ's image see we listen to jesus by reading his word by hearing how the law and the prophets are fulfilled in him and hearing from him how we ought to live we listen to jesus by learning from one another by joining a community group or when we're wrestling with a difficult issue surrounding ourselves with others who are listening to jesus voice too for guidance what would it look like in your life to give space to be silent and to listen as jesus teaches you the words of life life and if you have absolutely no idea where to even start i want to give you two concrete suggestions first there's a free app that's called bible in one year super creative title and you guessed it it leads you through the entire bible in one year every day you can have readings emailed to you or they have an app or you can even download an audio version so you can listen to it while you're heading to work or whatever you can hear a brief devotional explaining each of the passages by an anglican pastor it's a brilliant tool to help you listen to jesus i highly recommend it i started it this morning practicing what i preach the second suggestion to make space to listen to jesus is these common prayer booklets that we've made in-house they're at the back on the table these books give you a structure to begin and end your day with short prayers and they also give a bible reading guide to help you go through scripture and if you're super keen or you want to be with other people doing this every weekday can you believe this every weekday at 8 a.m and 8 p.m on zoom there's a group at our church that prays through this booklet reads the passages together and here's a short

devotional on those readings the zoom links on our website under the events tab and you select daily offices so there two concrete examples how you can be listening to jesus this year bible in a year the saint john's common prayer booklet in mark 9 we see that jesus is god's son his glory is revealed to us and as we draw close to him we are swept up into god's presence and we're invited to become jesus students that's who jesus is so let's listen to him can i pray for you let's pray lord jesus help us to see you as peter james and john saw you to hear you as your disciples heard you and to follow you as your apostles followed you we pray this in your name amen