

The 3rd reason for the transfiguration is that ...

3. It Would Increase Confidence in the Bible

Turn with me now to 2 Peter 1:16-21

a. Years later Peter referred to the transfiguration

- 1) He said he was an eyewitness of Christ's majesty (2Pe 1:16)
- 2) He recounted the event of that high mountain experience (2Pe 1:17-18).

b. Peter said we now have a more sure word of prophecy

- 1) What was he saying? The written Word of God is more sure than if you had been an eyewitness of the transfiguration! (2Pe 1:19-21).
- 2) You can have more confidence that the Bible is true than if you actually saw the transfiguration as Peter did. The reason for this is because the Holy Spirit moved (i.e., carried along, led, conducted) the men who penned God's words for us. The Bible was penned by men but it was authored by God Himself.
- 3) God allowed Peter to see the transfiguration of Christ so that he could use this illustration to increase our confidence in the Bible.

📖 *Yes, one of the secondary reasons for the transfiguration was so that Peter could compare that experience to that of having the written word of God.*

Conclusion: Christ was transfigured for at least three reasons: It strengthened the faith of His disciples. It reaffirmed His deity. It increases our confidence in the Bible.

We do not need supernatural experiences like the transfiguration today. We have the completed Word of God. Instead of longing for a vision, revelation, sensation or spiritual high, we need to spend more time studying the written Word of God that we have in our hands.

Song: Thy Word Have I Hid in My Heart **177**

Why the Transfiguration?

26 November 2017 AM – Mark 9:1-13 – Mr17 – Scott Childs

Introduction: Everything God does has a purpose. Every miracle of Jesus, every word He spoke, every display of His divinity had a purpose.

In our text today, Jesus was briefly transformed before the eyes of three of His disciples. Why did He do that?

Transition: This morning I want us to note three reasons for the transfiguration of Christ. Parallel: Mt 17:1-8; Mk 9:28-36; 2Pe 1:16-21

The 1st reason for the transfiguration is that ...

1. It Strengthened the Faith of the Disciples

Jesus had just told the disciples that He would suffer, die and rise again. That is not the kind of Messiah they were looking for. Jesus then laid down the requirements for discipleship – deny self, take up your cross and follow Christ. Not only would Jesus suffer, but if they were to follow Him, they too would suffer.

a. Jesus said that some of them would see the kingdom of God come.

📖 *This was fulfilled when the disciples saw the transfiguration. It was a miniature, a preview of the kingdom, with the Lord appearing in a state of glory.* Ryrie, Mt 16:28

b. Jesus took Peter, James and John up high in a mountain (v.2). It may have been Mt. Hermon.

- 1) Jesus was transfigured before them. He was changed into another form. Verse 3 describes His appearance as brilliantly white.
- 2) While Jesus was praying, Moses and Elijah suddenly appeared with Him.
 - a) These men represented the Old Testament Bible. Moses represented the Law and Elijah represented the Prophets. Both of these find their fulfilment in Jesus Christ. ^{Wiersbe}
 - b) Moses had died physically and Elijah had been raptured, yet both of them were very much still alive.
 - c) Note what Luke tells us here. (Luke 9:32) "*But Peter and they that were with him were heavy with sleep: and when they were awake, they saw his glory, and*

the two men that stood with him." Again we see the humanity of these men. They were too tired to stay up and pray with Jesus.

- d) Jesus talked to Moses and Elijah about his coming death. (Luke 9:31) *"Who appeared in glory, and spake of his decease which he should accomplish at Jerusalem."* Evidently, the disciples heard this conversation. This confirmed what Jesus had already told them (8:31). This sight and conversation verified Christ's words. They saw and heard the proof.
- 3) Perhaps this was also a time of strengthening the Lord as the hour of His passion drew near. We do not know.
- 4) Typical of Peter, he asked Jesus if they could build a booth of branches for Jesus, Moses and Elijah (v.5).
 - a) Perhaps they hoped to keep the visitors on earth for a while? Maybe he was trying to be hospitable.
 - b) Mark tells us that they did not know what to say because they were terrified (v.6).

✞ *So, the transfiguration was to strengthen the faith of Peter, James and John and they saw and heard the supernatural conversation.*

The 2nd reason for the transfiguration is that ...

2. It Reaffirmed Christ's Deity

Jesus' disciples were still having trouble believing that He was God. They had seen His miracles, and they even proclaimed that He was the Christ (Messiah), yet they still wavered. Peter James and John were chosen to go with Jesus up the mountain to pray.

a. They saw Christ's glory (v.3).

- 1) Christ's appearance was changed - transfigured.
- 2) We know little of the details of this change, but Christ must have temporarily changed into His glorified form.
 - a) He was able to commune with Moses and Elijah who had been physically dead for hundreds of years.
 - b) Christ's clothing shined with glory.
 - c) His clothing shined as white as bright snow (v.3). Luke described them as white glistening (i.e., like a flash of lightening) (Lu 9:29). Matthew adds that His

face shown like the sun and His clothes were white as light (Mt 17:2).

- d) Christ was clothed in the glory of the LORD. Evidently Moses and Elijah were too.

b. They heard God speak (v.7).

- 1) The cloud that overshadowed Jesus may have been God's glory that had filled the tabernacle (Ex 40:34).
- 2) The disciples heard the voice of God the Father. Can you imagine the awe of hearing the actual voice of God?
- 3) God said He was well pleased with Christ. (Matthew 17:5) *"While he yet spake, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them: and behold a voice out of the cloud, which said, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him."*
- 4) God said that Jesus was He beloved Son. He was truly God the Son in human flesh (1Ti 3:16).
- 5) If God was *"well pleased"* with Christ, then Jesus had certainly told them the truth about His suffering.
- 6) If God suddenly spoke to us from heaven right now, would He be able to say that He is *"well pleased"* with your life? Is God well pleased with your plans, your words and you thoughts?
- 7) Jesus commanded them not to tell anyone until after His resurrection (v.10). Even after seeing and hearing all that, Peter, James and John still could not figure out the rising from the dead.
- 8) They then asked Jesus about the Scribe's teaching regarding Elijah (v.11-13). Jesus said they were right and that John the Baptist was that Elijah and as John was killed, so will Jesus be killed. (Matthew 17:12) *"But I say unto you, That Elias is come already, and they knew him not, but have done unto him whatsoever they listed. Likewise shall also the Son of man suffer of them."*(Matthew 17:13) *"Then the disciples understood that he spake unto them of John the Baptist."*

✞ *Yes, the transfiguration reaffirmed the deity of Jesus Christ.*