

# GLORY and GRIEF

MATTHEW 17:1-23

## 34: *Glory and Grief* (Matthew 17:1-23)

Christians should expect to experience both glory & grief, moments of peace, hope, & joy - but also trouble, fear, & pain. Today we are reminded to keep our eyes on the eternity while we keep our feet on the ground.

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## teachingnotes

### CATCH THE CONTEXT

**Matthew 16:27-28** (NIV) For **the Son of Man is going to come** in his Father's glory with His angels, and then He will reward each person according to what they have done. Truly I tell you, some who are standing here will not taste death before they see **the Son of Man coming in His kingdom**.

Jesus talks about **the Son of Man coming** in 3 different ways:

1. **The 2nd Coming of Jesus**, when He returns to rule in reign over the Earth.
2. As mentioned back in Mt 10:23, **the Son of Man** would come in judgement against unbelieving Israel during the generation of the first disciples of Jesus.
3. We **see the Son of Man coming in His Kingdom**, as Jesus gives 3 of His disciples a glimpse of His glory that others will not see until His second coming.

### The Transfiguration

**Matthew 17:1-3** (NIV) After six days Jesus took with him Peter, James and John the brother of James, and led them up a high mountain by themselves. There He was **transfigured** before them. His **face shone like the sun**, and his **clothes became as white as the light**. Just then there appeared before them **Moses** and **Elijah**, talking with Jesus.

We don't know *where* this occurred, but the focus is on *WHAT happened* while they were there.

The **face** of Jesus **shone like the sun**, a glimpse of His true GLORY - a preview to what all will likely see when Jesus returns. John later saw Jesus in a vision we call "Revelation".

**Revelation 1:12-17a** (NIV) I turned around to see the voice that was speaking to me. And when I turned I saw seven golden lampstands, and among the lampstands was someone like **a son of man**, dressed in a robe reaching down to His feet and with a golden sash around His chest. The hair on His head was white like wool, as white as snow, and His eyes were like blazing fire. His feet were like bronze glowing in a furnace, and His voice was like the sound of rushing waters. In his right hand He held seven stars, and coming out of His mouth was a sharp, double-edged sword. His face was like the sun shining in all its brilliance. **When I saw Him**, I fell at His feet as though dead.

**Jesus was talking with Moses and Elijah** (represent the Law and the Prophets). They affirm that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, who is about to finish the race as Jesus turning toward Jerusalem where the cross awaits (Lk 9:31).

**Matthew 17:4-5** (NIV) Peter said to Jesus, "Lord, it is good for us to be here. If you wish, I will put up three shelters—one for you, one for Moses and one for Elijah." While he was still speaking, a bright cloud covered them, and **a voice from the cloud** said, "**This is my Son**, whom I love; with him I am well pleased. Listen to him!"

Peter is ready to camp out for a while and doesn't want to leave.

This **bright cloud** that **covered them** was similar to God's Presence showing up in a cloud during the time of Moses with lightning, thunder, and fire (Ex 19:16, 24:15-18.)

- Yahweh's Presence would appear in a cloud at the entrance to the Tabernacle when **Moses** went in (Ex 33:9-10, 40:34-35).
- A **cloud would cover the Tabernacle by day and fire by night** until it was time to pack up and follow the cloud to the next encampment (Ex 40:36-38).

- *God's Presence showed up on Mt Carmel when **Elijah** challenged the false prophets. **Fire fell from heaven** and consumed the sacrifice, leading the people of Israel to fall on the ground crying out "Yahweh - He is God! Yahweh - He is God!" (1 Kgs 18:38-39).*
- ❖ Moses and Elijah were greatly used by Yahweh, but they are NOT the stars of the show. These ancient heroes had always been pointing FORWARD to the glory of Jesus!
- 🕒 The **voice** from heaven commands the disciples to **listen to Jesus!** *What a simple **life lesson**.* How are we to live in this world? **Listen to Him** - Listen to Jesus!

**Matthew 17:6-8** (NIV) When the disciples heard this, they fell facedown to the ground, terrified. But **Jesus** came and **touched them**. "Get up," he said. "Don't be afraid." When they looked up, they saw no one except Jesus.

*How would YOU respond? **They fell facedown to the ground, terrified!***

*Jesus responds to their fear, comforting them by saying "**Don't be afraid**" (cf. Mt 10:36-41; 14:25-27, Lk 5:4-11, ) and **touching them** just as Jesus does to John in Rev 1:17.*

**Revelation 1:17-18** (NIV) When I saw him, I fell at His feet as though dead. Then **He placed his right hand on me** and said: "**Do not be afraid**. I am the First and the Last. I am the Living One; I was dead, and now look, **I am alive for ever and ever!** And I hold the keys of death and Hades.

**When they looked up, they saw no one except Jesus**. Suddenly, the glory and brilliance had faded, but the words of Jesus had been fulfilled when He had early told them...

**Matthew 16:27-28** (NIV) For **the Son of Man is going to come** in his Father's glory with His angels, and then He will reward each person according to what they have done. Truly I tell you, some who are standing here will not taste death before they see **the Son of Man coming in His kingdom**.

**Matthew 17:9** (NIV) As they were coming down the mountain, Jesus instructed them, "Don't tell anyone what you have seen, until the Son of Man has been raised from the dead."

Mark's gospel gives us a little insight into what they were thinking by telling us...

**Mark 9:10** (NIV) They kept the matter to themselves, discussing what "rising from the dead" meant.

They still don't seem to understand that Jesus had come to do more than heal and teach.

› **Jesus came to DIE**, to become the sacrifice in place of Abraham's sons...and the sacrifice for US!

### **What About Elijah?**

**Matthew 17:10** (NIV) The disciples asked Him, "Why then do the teachers of the law say that **Elijah must come first?**"

*Remember who they had just seen on the mountain - Moses and ELIJAH. But now Elijah was gone instead of fulfilling Malachi 4:5-6.*

**Malachi 4:5-6** (LSB) Behold, **I am going to send you Elijah the prophet** before the coming of the great and awesome day of Yahweh. And he will turn the hearts of the fathers to their children and the hearts of the children to their fathers, lest I come and strike the land, devoting it to destruction.

So how could Jesus be the Messiah if Elijah DID NOT first come to fulfill what the Scriptures said?

**Matthew 17:11-13** (NIV) Jesus replied, "To be sure, Elijah comes and will restore all things. But I tell you, **Elijah has already come**, and they did not recognize him, but have done to him everything they wished. In the same way the Son of Man is going to suffer at their hands." Then the disciples understood that **He was talking to them about John the Baptist**.

John called people to repentance, to make things right with God and with one another. His ministry was successful, with thousands coming to hear his message, be baptized, and prepare themselves for the coming of the Messiah.

John the Baptist fulfilled Mal 3:1 and what the angel had told John's father just before he was born Luke 1:13-17.

- But not everyone appreciated John's message, and John suffered, ultimately being killed. So too, Jesus would **suffer** as John had. **John the Baptist WAS** the one who fulfilled the prophecy about **Elijah** in Malachi.

**Matthew 17:14-18** (NIV) When they came to the crowd, a man approached Jesus and knelt before him. "Lord, have mercy on my son," he said. "He has seizures and is suffering greatly. He often falls into the fire or into the water. I brought him to your disciples, but they could not heal him." "You **unbelieving and perverse** generation," Jesus replied, "how long shall I stay with you? How long shall I put up with you? Bring the boy here to me." Jesus rebuked the demon, and it came out of the boy, and he was healed at that moment

In Matthew's gospel we saw Jesus deputize his disciples and send them out with the ability to drive out demons and heal every disease and sickness (Mt 10:1-8). Yet this time, **they could not heal** this suffering son. **Jesus is clearly frustrated** and since the disciples of Jesus couldn't do anything to help, the **boy** is brought to Jesus.

- **Dr. Luke tells us that this boy was possessed by a demon** that would scream, foam at the mouth, and throw him to the ground (Lk 9:39-42).
- **Mark's gospel** adds that when the evil spirit saw Jesus he threw the boy into a convulsion on the ground, rolled around, and foamed at the mouth (Mk 9:20).

**Mark 9:26** says "The spirit shrieked, convulsed him violently and came out. The boy looked so much like a corpse that many said, "He's dead."

**Luke 9:43** adds, "And they were all amazed at the greatness of God. While everyone was marveling at all that Jesus did."

**Matthew 17:19-20** (NIV) Then the disciples came to Jesus in private and asked, "Why couldn't we drive it out?" He replied, "Because you have so little faith. Truly I tell you, if you **have faith as small as a mustard seed**, you can say to this mountain, 'Move from here to there,' and **it will move. Nothing will be impossible for you.**"

The focus here is *WHO* the disciple puts his/her trust IN. **Moving mountains** is referring to overcoming overwhelming obstacles in life. The person who obeys Jesus and asks in accordance with God's will (Mt 6:10) with simple and even **small faith**, will be answered. Had the disciples done this, the demon would have been cast out.

### GLORY to GRIEF

**Matthew 17:22-23** (NIV) When they came together in Galilee, he said to them, "The Son of Man is going to be delivered into the hands of men. They will kill him, and **on the third day He will be raised to life.**" And the disciples were filled with grief.

What an incredible moment of GRIEF. They did not understand what they would later understand - that Jesus would be **raised to life!**

**GRIEF** makes us think that there is no future hope - that *this* is all there is. And sometimes we even overlook the PROMISE that will follow the PAIN (the resurrection after the crucifixion).

☉ We **WILL experience moments of GRIEF on this side of eternity** - times we must have FAITH that God's Presence and Power is with us. Especially if we remember that Jesus is alive!

☀ **C.S. Lewis:** "God whispers to us in our pleasures, speaks in our consciences, but shouts in our pains. It is his megaphone to rouse a deaf world."

☉ We **WILL also experience moments of GLORY**, when God's Presence and Power is unquestioned - times that we would like to camp out and just stay there until Jesus returns...but of course...we can't. Not yet.

### Living Life Between GLORY & GRIEF

**2 Corinthians 4:14, 16-18** (NIV) because **we know that the one who raised the Lord Jesus from the dead will also raise us** with Jesus and present us with you to himself...Therefore we do not lose heart. Though outwardly we are wasting away, yet **inwardly we are being renewed day by day**. For our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an **eternal glory** that far outweighs them all. So **we fix our eyes** not on what is seen, but **on what is unseen**, since what is seen is temporary, but **what is unseen is eternal**.

TAKE YOUR OWN NOTES HERE:

## heretoserveyou

Have questions and need some help? ...real soon...how about now? Please **call** or **text** us soon!

\* Contact **Jackie** (850-673-1582), **Christy** (850-673-9764), **Caleb** (864-315-8015), **Gary** (850-673-2507), **Betty** (850-973-3266), or another follower of Jesus soon!

\* Or call our **deacons & wives: Alan & Christy Androski** (850-464-1428), **Steve & Debbie Bass** (850-673-7952), **Tim & Joni Hughey** (850-464-1156), **Mark & Dot Mancil** (850-253-5405), **Boss & Amelia Mulkey** (850-464-6717), or **Tom & Martha Waddail** (850-973-0011).

# discussion questions

Take some time to discuss these questions with your family, friends, or group.

1. Share about a moment of *GLORY* (when it was easy to trust God, knowing He was near) and a moment of *GRIEF* (when it was tough to trust God, struggling to believe He was near). How did God use those moments in your life?
2. **Read Matthew 17:1-8.** Take some time to discuss what you find most significant about the transfiguration of Jesus.
3. **Read Matthew 16:27-28.** How did the transfiguration let the apostles “see the Son of Man coming in His kingdom”?
4. **Read Malachi 3:1, 4:5-6 & Matthew 17:10-13.** Jews who don’t follow Jesus as Messiah are looking for the return of Elijah *before* the coming of the Messiah. What might you share with a Jewish person to help them see *John already fulfilled those prophecies*?
5. **Read Matthew 17:19-20.** Why couldn’t the disciples drive out the demon? [Note: v21 is not found in the earliest copies of Matthew but is found in Mark 9:29.] What kind of faith can move “mountains”? Is the focus on our faith or the One we put faith in? Explain your answer.
6. Share a time when God answered a simple prayer of faith in a powerful way.
7. **Read Matthew 17:22-23.** Why were the disciples “filled with grief”, even after Jesus spoke of His future resurrection? How are we more likely to focus on current, yet temporary GRIEF rather than the eternal future GLORY?
8. **Read 2 Corinthians 4:14-18.** What secures the promise that God will raise us from the dead? Despite experiencing troubles (“light and momentary”) on earth, what can keep us from becoming discouraged (“losing heart”)?
9. What challenged or encouraged you *most* from today’s teaching? What does God want YOU to do with what we studied today?
10. Share prayer needs and pray for one another.