

Suffering and Glory

Talking about God on a plane

My conversation with a Lakewood staff member

They don't have God's heart wrong, they have God's timing wrong

Philippians 3:10 “...that I may know him and the power of his resurrection, and **may share his sufferings**, becoming like him in his death, ¹¹ that by any means possible I may attain the resurrection from the dead.”

Romans 8:18, 29 “¹⁸For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory to be revealed... for those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be **conformed to the image of his Son.**” (emphasis added)

The problem is an “over-realized eschatology.”

“You can have right thoughts about God, but not get him right.” – the esteemed theologian Natalie Bish

Gloryⁱ

A long six days

The record of six days elapsing is uncharacteristic of Mark's style

These were perhaps Jesus' loneliest and saddest days.

“When there is a sharp exchanged, a tension can hang in the air.” – Colin Smith

This was a time when the disciples could not understand his mission, identify with his sufferings, or share in his burden. They follow him, but not gladly, because they do not like where he is going.

A glimpse into the future

The disciples needed this

The future reign of Jesus

Witnesses

Elijah and Moses

Note the sinfulness of Moses and Elijah. They were not perfect people. Yet they talk with Jesus.

Moses finally stands on the promised land! He shares the glory of Jesus.

Thoughts on our future state. Continuity, recognition, glory, perfection, and immortality.

Peter

His bumbling speech and fear show human, unglorified reaction to God’s glory. (Hab. 2:20, Mt. 22:12)

Cloud

Connections to Sinai

The reflected glory of Moses compared to the radiating glory of Jesus

God’s final revelation

Fire and cloud

God’s pleasure in the son

If God loved the son, but had even him on a path of suffering, our sufferings cannot be evidence of his displeasure in us, but in fact are the opposite. (The apostles left the council and were happy, because God had considered them worthy to suffer for the sake of Jesus, Acts 5:41).

Questions for Personal Study

1. Why does suffering precede glory for the Christian according to Romans 8:18-29?
2. What is the significance of Jesus’ appearance changing?
3. Why do we need to know that we will share in God’s glory?
4. What are the various ways that this passage connects to Mt. Sinai in Exodus? Why does this matter?

ⁱ Outline credit to Colin Smith’s sermon “The Transfiguration”