



Herod is ruler in Israel at this point and he is very jealous of the idea that a Messiah is prophesied. He thought he had shut the whole thing down by killing John the Baptist but the word is spreading and spreading, the excitement is growing and growing. There is a lot of confusion. Jesus tells Peter not to tell anyone when he confesses that Jesus is the Christ because Peter understood who Jesus was but he did not yet understand what he had come to do. We spread more confusion if we preach a half-baked gospel. We need to preach the whole gospel.

This is an amazing event. These three guys, Peter, John and James, heard the voice of God! We hear the voice of God in the power of the Spirit but their confession is that they heard the voice of God and it was in a language they could understand. This is the Voice of the God in whose hands every person's life, whoever has or will live, exists. He is the judge, creator, ruler, owner and sovereign over the entire cosmos. The entirety of the creation is too small to contain him. That is the God whose voice they heard audibly. He spoke in the hearing of their physical ears.

We know that Jesus is God manifest in the flesh and yet God is veiled in his humanity so you only get the occasional flashes of his divinity: the occasional miracle, acts and words of wisdom where God is clearly at work, so we shouldn't be surprised that we actually get to see him as he is. This is God the Son so of course he is going to be glorious and his face shines like the sun and God the Father will say, "This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased". That is the nature of the Trinity. The Father loves the Son who loves the Father who loves the Spirit who loves both. It is an eternal communal of love existing within the Godhead. It is remarkable to see this manifest in front of your eyes as these three fishermen did. They'd grown up in a normal religious community, involved in synagogue, school, religious festivals, looking for the coming of the Messiah; carried along by the culture, morals and mores of their society but really the main preoccupation of their minds was fishing because when it comes to Monday morning you have to go to your job. We get caught up in the whole thing of being religious and excited about the Lord's return within the times and spaces where religion is supposed to operate but, in the end, I alone, must find a fish to feed myself and my family. Did these men think for a moment that they would actually hear the voice of God and see the Messiah in his glory right in front of their eyes? Do you think you will actually hear the voice of God and see Jesus as he truly is? Seeing Jesus as he actually is, is not much of a story but in terms of these men's lives they are seeing Jesus as he really is with Moses and Elijah. Everything is focused in on Jesus, the very apple of Heaven's eye, the all-in-all, Heaven's glory, the King of kings. They have had a major revelation. You can not go back and not be changed by such an experience. Jesus takes us higher. He takes us up the mountain. We hear that we can not live on the mountain but there is a mountain you will climb and you will live there for ever in the glory of God, with Jesus Christ and Moses and Elijah and all the rest of them. Jesus is taking you to the tip-top! There you can build your booth and it won't be foolishness as it was here.

There is another portion of Scripture in the Old Testament that mirrors this event. In Exodus 19 Moses goes up on the mountain, the clouds descend, the Voice is heard, a covenant is given, a form of worship is established, a group of people are made into a great nation. When Moses goes down the mountain he must put a veil over his face because it shines so brightly. In Luke 9 we see a greater Moses bringing a greater covenant, a greater form of worship, a greater law. They were talking about Jesus' departure or exodus, the greater exodus. The book of Exodus is the foundational book of the Bible because it explains what it means to be saved by God. We are completely powerless and we squeak a prayer. Then God's compassion and mercy moves in power. He turns a sea into a road. He takes an army and swallows it whole and provides for people in the wilderness where there is no food. There is a new people, a new covenant, a prophet, a word of God, signs and wonders. Jesus puts all this in the shade with his greater salvation and a greater hope. We are not going to the promised land. We are going to Heaven! We are going to the tip-top and that is where we can stay for ever and ever and ever. A greater Moses, a greater exodus.

After all those extraordinary things they didn't tell anyone. Later Peter wrote, "For we did not follow cleverly devised stories when we told you about the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ in power,

but we were eyewitnesses of his majesty. He received honour and glory from God the Father when the voice came to him from the Majestic Glory, saying, “This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased.” We ourselves heard this voice that came from heaven when we were with him on the sacred mountain”. (2Pet, 1:16-18) They were not followers of cunningly devised stories. Peter was experiencing a number of allegations made against him that he had made it all up. Peter said that he was an eyewitness. He heard the Voice. He was there. ‘I know that Jesus Christ is lord.’ ‘I heard God say so.’ There have always been doubters so you are not the first to be told that it’s all made up. Can you blame people for doubting these incredibly remarkable events. They’d like to put Peter in a padded room. In the other gospel accounts Jesus told these men sternly not to say anything to anyone until certain events had happened. Actually, they were just being ‘good boys’. It can be hard to keep a secret. It is a very important skill to keep your mouth shut. The thing is they knew who Jesus was but they hadn’t yet understood what Jesus had come to do. This glorious Jesus was going to suffer such indignity that they would be scandalised and horrified that Christ must suffer and die. How can God allow such a thing to happen to his gloriously beautiful Son?! It was the plan. Jesus would pay the price for our blind, bumbling, bleating, selfish, fish-occupied lives. Jesus lived his life completely and entirely, never flinching or deviating for a moment from the plan so that our punishment would be taken upon himself. Until they saw the redemption and forgiveness of their own sin it was better that they just kept quiet until the penny dropped, when they had come to the Father through Jesus the Son in the power of the Spirit, being baptised in the name of the Father, Son and Spirit. They’ve been disciples and now they are ready to preach the gospel to the whole world. “Tell them what you have seen and understood. Declare the glory of Jesus Christ and do not be ashamed.”

If you have the gospel tell it. If you are still getting there be encouraged, If you are still resisting repent. Jesus is worthy of your worship.

1. Immortal honours rest on Jesus’ head;
My God, my portion, and my living bread;
In Him I live, upon Him cast my care;
He saves from death, destruction, and despair.

2. He is my refuge in each deep distress;
The Lord my strength and glorious righteousness;
Through floods and flames He leads me safely on,
And daily makes His sovereign goodness known.

3. My every need He richly will supply;
Nor will His mercy ever let me die;
In Him there dwells a treasure all divine,
And matchless grace has made that treasure mine.

4. O that my soul could love and praise Him more,
His beauties trace, His majesty adore;
Live near His heart, upon His bosom lean;
Obey His voice, and all His will esteem.