

“God Breaks Through”

Mark 9: 2-10

Six days later Jesus took Peter, James, and John, and led them up a high mountain to be alone. As the men watched, Jesus’ appearance was transformed, 3 and His clothes became dazzling white, far whiter than any earthly bleach could ever make them. 4 Then Elijah and Moses appeared and began talking with Jesus.

5 Peter exclaimed, “Rabbi, it’s wonderful for us to be here! Let’s make three shelters as memorials—one for you, one for Moses, and one for Elijah.” 6 He said this because he didn’t really know what else to say, for they were all terrified.

7 Then a cloud overshadowed them, and a voice from the cloud said, “This is my dearly loved Son. Listen to Him.” 8 Suddenly, when they looked around, Moses and Elijah were gone, and they saw only Jesus with them.

9 As they went back down the mountain, He told them not to tell anyone what they had seen until the Son of Man had risen from the dead. 10 So they kept it to themselves, but they often asked each other what He meant by “rising from the dead.”

[NOTE 1] How many of you remember the old commercials that used to be on TV where Coach John Madden would break through a paper screen or wall trying to make his point. Well, today’s text is about how, every once in a while, God breaks through, into our lives. I don’t mean in a small inconspicuous way either. In fact, we hope and pray that every Sunday God breaks through the busyness of life and through my weaknesses and speaks to you in some way through our worship service. If you ask Jesus Christ to be the Lord of your life you can be sure that when you ask to be filled with the Holy Spirit that God will break through and fill you with His Holy Spirit. It is simple logic: Jesus told us that if we ask anything according to His will, we will get what we ask for. Then later it is commanded, “Be filled with the Holy Spirit!” So if it is commanded, it is obviously God’s will. So if you pray to be filled with the Holy Spirit, God answers that prayer and you are whether you feel it or not! But, every once in a while, God breaks through in a big way. Now we know that God is always with us, but there are certain times when God breaks through and it is as if you don’t have to believe in what is not seen because there is no doubt! He’s there. It is as if God put skin on so we could see Him.

Have you ever played a game in the dark. I can remember when I was younger my friends and I would go downstairs at my parent’s house to play tag in the dark. We would close all the curtains and doors until it was almost entirely dark. Then we would try to find each other and play tag. After awhile your eyes would adjust so that you could see someone if they stood up in the room or made big movements. I was pretty quick so that if I felt someone tag me I usually could tag them back and get away before they could tag me again. At least until my friend got an idea. He tagged me and then

blinded me with a flashlight. Just as my eyes were adjusting he would get a flashlight and turn it on right in your face. He would tag you and you would be so blind you couldn't tag him back. You would be blinded and it would take a little while for your eyes to adjust again. The flashlight beam broke through the darkness in a major way.

[NOTE 2]

In our text for today God breaks through in a major way. Jesus takes His three closest disciple friends with Him up on top of a high mountain. When they get to the top, all-of-a-sudden, Jesus is transfigured before the disciples eyes. His clothes shine whiter and brighter than anything they thought was possible. The Greek word translated “shining” refers to an outer splendor created by an inner purity. So in a way, the disciples were seeing Jesus’ sinlessness. As they kind of look away until their eyes start to adjust to the brightness, there in front of them stand two of the most prominent figures in Jewish salvation history, Moses and Elijah. Moses was the author of the Bible as they knew it at the time, the Torah, the first five books of the Bible. Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy. Moses was the one whom God used to free the Israelite people from the slavery of the Egyptians. Moses also led them into the promised land and gave them the Law, the Ten Commandments. Elijah was the first of the great prophets. He raised a boy from the dead he is the one whom God used to shame or show up, the prophets of Baal an idol on Mount Carmel. So there in front of the disciples are Jesus, shining like the sun, Moses, and Elijah and they talk with one another. This is God breaking through! The disciples are seeing and then later in the passage hearing the voice of God. Yes the Bible says, “Blessed are those who believe and have not seen,” but that doesn’t mean those that get a glimpse will die.

Glimpses come and go, you can’t preserve them. When God breaks through into your life, cherish the moment, but don’t do what Peter does in our text and try to preserve the moment. It is impossible. Peter says, Hey guys, ah, uh, it is good for us to be here, let’s preserve the moment—let’s bottle it okay? Let’s build some booths for you guys to stay in. Mark excuses Peter and tells us that Peter didn’t really know what he was talking about because he was terrified of all the things that he was seeing. But isn’t that our reaction sometimes also? When something good happens, we wish it could last a long time. We keep getting back in line to ride the roller coaster to extend the thrill.

We try to bottle the essence of the experience. **[NOTE 3]**

Think back to one of those times when you wished the “ministry of music” didn’t have to end, or even those uncommon times when you wished the sermon didn’t have to end. Think about those times when you wished you could share with everyone exactly why and how your heart was strangely warmed, or your outlook on life changed but you can’t. Usually they are in the “had to be there” category. These are times when God breaks through, times when you get a shiver up and down your spine, or tears inexplicably appear in your eyes. Cherish these glimpses of God’s glory. Cherish those times when the curtain between the present and the future is pulled back.

But Sunday glimpses of glory do not calm and put out all our doubts and fears or tell us what to do next; at least not specifically. You can’t build your faith on such

glimpses any more than you could build the whole story of Jesus around what happened that transfiguring moment on the mountain. But it does make a difference, it can be a reassurance, a light, a remembrance of the power of God.

[NOTE 4] Back to the text (Mark 9). After Peter makes his foolish statement, which, you may have noticed was totally ignored, a cloud envelopes the disciples. So not they can't see hardly anything because they are in the middle of a cloud and voice speaks to them from the cloud. God says to them, "*This is my Son, whom I love. Listen to Him!*" Let me set the stage for you so that you catch the significance of this statement. Up until about a week before this event the disciples had pretty much gone along with everything Jesus said. But then Jesus started saying things like, "The Son of Man must suffer many things and be rejected by the elders, chief priests and teachers of the law, and He must be killed and after three days rise again." This is not the kind of Messiah that the disciples wanted. They wanted to rule with Jesus. Peter even took Jesus aside and rebuked Him. The disciples were having a hard time with Jesus' prediction of His suffering and death. So Peter, James and John see God confirming Jesus through the transfiguration and the meeting with Moses and Elijah. Then on top of that god speaks directly to them and reaffirms the fact that Jesus is His beloved Son and that the disciples should "LISTEN TO HIM."

As the disciples begin to take this in, they are again startled by a clear sky and only Jesus standing before them. I imagine they kind of looked at each other like, did you see what I just saw? Peter probably said to John, "Did you see and hear what I saw and heard?" And after a little while of comparing stories and pinching themselves to make sure they weren't dreaming I imagine they concluded that it has been real since three people never all dream the same thing at the same time.

Why do you think God felt it necessary to give this command? Afterward, the disciples now know, if they ever doubted, that the words of Jesus are the words of God. The voice from the cloud tells them that Jesus is God's beloved Son! It is important to understand that the Greek word translated as "listen" in English has with it the full sense of obedience. So to "listen" is to hear AND obey! We need to listen to the only Son of God and OBEY! Jesus is our ultimate example! We need to listen to Him. **[NOTE 5]** As you go through life, with your dreams, your ambitions and aspirations, listen to Jesus Christ who rejected the offered kingdoms of this world for the larger kingdom of God. When life goes wrong and darkness starts to win, when clouds and dreariness take away your sunshine; when sorrow failure and despair seem to be sticking around, then listen to Jesus, the man of sorrows, who was acquainted with grief, and whose revelation of God brings the sustaining word of comfort and the enabling word of hope to our lives. We need to keep on, keeping making an effort to listen to God's still small voice through the Holy Spirit. Never give up trying to listen to Jesus through the person of the Holy Spirit. There is a difference between hearing and listening. Hearing is acknowledging the sound waves hitting your ear. Listening is hearing and doing something about it. That's why, at the end of every message, I ask you the question what are you going to do about it? If you just hear the message it's a nice thing to hear but it doesn't make a

difference. The whole idea of preaching a sermon is to challenge, to teach, to bring about change. To bring the Bible to bear upon our lives so we can learn to be more like Jesus. To love God, love our neighbor, and go make disciples ... and Listen to Him!

Now Peter, James, and John are on their way down the mountain with Jesus thinking about how to share the story. It is starting to sink into the disciples' brains that from now on, every word that Jesus speaks, whether they like it or not, will carry the glory of transcendent truth. They can be sure now that Jesus' words are God's words. This was a timely reinforcement of the disciple's faith. It was a great memory to which they could return. It was assurance that the road Jesus was taking was ordained by God. Now comes verse 9. Jesus tells the disciples that they are to tell no one. What a bummer! That doesn't seem fair does it? They have just seen Jesus transfigured talking with Moses and Elijah and they have to keep it a secret?? Why? It goes back to their understanding of what kind of Messiah Jesus was to be. Jesus knew that only when the cross had taught them what Messiahship really meant and when the resurrection had truly convinced them that Jesus was the Messiah, could they see and understand the truth! Then they would be free to tell people what they had seen. Only after Jesus death and resurrection could the disciples truly understand the significance of what they had witnessed. He was right of course! **[NOTE 6]**

From the time Jesus and his three close friends go to the bottom of the mountain on, every step they took was toward Jerusalem...toward the cross and it is probably this mountain top experience that sustained the three disciples through the tough times. Sometimes when we need it God will give us a little glimpse of heaven. When He does break through, accept it for what it is, and cherish it. If this is the first time you have heard this story, or if God is breaking through to you today, I encourage you to listen to Him. Maybe He is tugging at your heart and saying that you need to make a commitment or recommit your life. If He is, I want to give you an opportunity to make Jesus Lord of your life, or rededicate your life to Him. I invite you to pray with me and acknowledge it if the Holy Spirit is breaking through to you this morning. Let's pray: Lord Jesus, I need you. Thank You for dying on the cross for my sins. I open the door of my life and receive You as my Savior and my Lord. Thank You for forgiving my sins and giving me eternal life. Take control of the throne of my life. Help me to be the kind of person you want me to be. In Jesus name we pray ...AMEN. If you prayed the prayer with me for the first time in your life, or if you rededicated your life to Christ this morning please just write a note to me on the card in the pew and put it in the offering basket at the back of church or hand it to me. Thanks.

“Sermon Note for “God Breaks Through” based on Mark 9: 2-10
Given at Doster Community Church on October 5, 2025

- I. If you pray to be filled with the Holy Spirit, God will answer that prayer every time. Whether you feel it or not, it is so!
- II. Jesus is transfigured, the disciples see Elijah and Moses, then hear the voice of God! This is God breaking through in a major way!
- III. When God breaks through cherish the moment, but don't try to bottle it.
- IV. “This is my Son, whom I love. Listen to Him!” How did they, how can we ... Listen to Him!
- V. The word in the original language (Greek) translated as “Listen” in English means to “Listen AND Obey”.
- VI. Now that Jesus' death and resurrection of clarified things for us. We can and are commanded to share the story of Jesus. Tell people what Jesus has done for them. What are you going to do about it?