

# Paying Attention

Jesus sent His 12 out on a nearby preaching tour while being questioned by Herod as to the nature of His ministry. Jesus then fed the 5,000 and, well into the 3rd year of ministry, told His disciples of the impending death and resurrection. Jesus called them to deny themselves, pick up their cross daily, and follow Him.

*Note: I've enjoyed and recommend Mark E. Moore's "The Chronological Life of Christ." Some of my comments can be found in his material by coincidence (he's not the only one making such observations articulated in his material), and other times, I've leaned on his accurate and helpful observations. He's done an excellent job making 1st-century culture and practices available.*

*No events occurred between last week's lesson and today.*

## The Transfiguration (Luke 9:28-36)

- *Harmonizing and/or explaining the text:*

- Peter refers to this even in 2 Peter 1:16-18.
- Luke said this occurred "about 8 days after", while Matthew & Luke state "after 6 days." Perhaps Luke is being loose "about," or he's using different methods of counting days (Greek vs. Jew or Roman), or as one brother suggests, including travel time after Jesus' teachings that the others did not. One observation is interesting. Moses waited 6 days before ascending the mountain to receive the Law (Exodus 24:15-16). Afterward, his face "shone" (Exodus 34:29).
- Matthew says his face shone as the sun.
- Mark says Peter spoke because he didn't know what to say because they were terrified.
- Matthew has the remaining additional information. God called Jesus His beloved Son "with whom I am well pleased." We learn the disciples fell on their faces after hearing this and were terrified. Jesus tells them to rise and have no fear. Then, we know of their discussion with Jesus about Elijah coming. Jesus said Elijah did come, and they killed him. Jesus would suffer as well. Then they understood He was talking about Elijah.

- *What we can take home:*

- Perhaps it's Moses and Elijah because of who/what they stand for. The Lawgiver and great prophet? They both had unique departures from this world. Is Jesus a superior summary of the whole? The great prophet and lawgiver? Either way, Jesus is shown in a unique glory. He holds authority and was approved by God.
- It's meant to strengthen the disciples. It's intended to strengthen us as well. Jesus is unique. There is a glory that awaits us all. Notice how Peter recognized Moses and Elijah. I'm assuming he heard their names (since he'd never seen them before). Here's evidence that we will know and remember one another in heaven.
- Like Moses and Elijah, who suffered, so would Christ. Brethren, we must suffer as well before we experience full glory. The goal in life is not to make it through unscathed. Soldiers suffer before victory is realized.

## A Man's Only Son (37-43)

- *Harmonizing and/or explaining the text:*
  - Luke states the miracle occurred the next and that the boy is the man's only son.
  - Mark informs us that Jesus asked the crowd what they were arguing about, and after the father explained the boy's condition, Jesus asked how long it had been happening to him. This account also includes how the father asked, "IF you can do anything," and Jesus' response. The father replies, "I believe; help my unbelief." Finally, this account has Jesus explaining how this kind (demon) could not be cast out by anything but prayer.
  - Matthew's account expands on Jesus' end comments on why they couldn't cast the demon out. He said it was because of their little faith.
- *What we can take home:*
  - Pay attention to what you say because it reveals your heart. "If you can."
  - Pay attention to reality: many of us need help with our unbelief. God bless those who are humble enough to admit so.

### Jesus Reiterates His Coming Death (43b-45)

- *Harmonizing and/or explaining the text:*
  - Matthew & Mark specifically mention Jesus' death and resurrection.
- *What we can take home:*
  - It's interesting how they were kept from understanding. Matthew states they were greatly distressed. They understood something, but not totally. Resonate with you?

### Events that occur in between:

- *Peter questioned about Jesus paying taxes. Jesus does so. (Mt. 17:24-27).*

### Who's The Greatest? (46-48)

- *Harmonizing and/or explaining the text:*
  - Matthew's account informs us of Jesus' teaching of turning to become like children to enter the Kingdom of Heaven. They were to be humble like a child to be great in the Kingdom. He also warns of causing little ones to sin.
  - Mark's account informs us that Jesus asked them what they were discussing on the road.
- *What we can take home:*
  - Pay attention: Be humble like a child, but stop **arguing** as one. "Child, not childish."
  - Pay attention: Do you care more about what others think of you? We often need to stop complaining about what others have said/done and care more about what Jesus would say about us. What have you said/done?
  - Pay attention to what it looks like: this goes beyond what you say, but how you live. Those who think they're the greatest live like they're the greatest. Jesus was too busy serving others while they were only thinking of themselves. We can be guilty of self-deception. Do you think Judas, as Moore put it, put in his two cents?
  - Pay attention to anything and everyone who promotes that message in your life. Listen carefully to what people say. Is it in line with Jesus' teaching?

### Who's That Guy? (49-50)

- *Harmonizing and/or explaining the text:*
  - Mark's account gives Jesus' full response.
- *What we can take home:*

- Pay attention: you don't know everything. Perhaps they thought God only gave them the power to cast out demons. It seems as though this man had a genuine ability. Maybe this is like Num. 11:26-29 as one brother pointed out. Two men begin to prophesy, and a young man complains to Moses. Joshua asks Moses to forbid them. Moses rejoices that the Lord used them. Brethren, be careful before judging who's "in" or "out."

*Events that occur in between:*

- *All of Jesus' teaching on forgiveness (Mt. 18).*
- *Intro to the Feast of Tabernacles (John 7).*

### **Fire From Heaven (51-56)**

- *Harmonizing and/or explaining the text:*
  - This occurs as Jesus makes His way to Jerusalem for the Feast of Tabernacles.
  - Jesus was welcomed the last time He visited Samaria some 21 months earlier. Jesus was headed to the competing mountain for worship. This apparently upset them.
- *What we can take home:*
  - Pay attention: is this really about Jesus? Sounds a bit arrogant. They were sure of their power, weren't they? They're doing it "in the name of Jesus", so they think, yet Jesus would have nothing to do with it. Sometimes, "righteous indignation" is a cover-up for self-righteousness.

*Events that occur in between:*

- *Jesus at the Feast of Tabernacles (John 7).*
- *Jesus and the woman caught in adultery and confronting the Jews (John 8).*
- *Jesus and the blind man (John 9).*
- *Jesus is the Good Shepherd (John 10).*

### **Following Jesus (57-62)**

- *Harmonizing and/or explaining the text:*
  - Moore thinks Luke's account is the same event as Matthew (Mt. 8:19-22), but has the better chronological order. Matthew's seems to be ordered topically.
  - The first to approach Jesus is a scribe, according to Matthew.
  - The second man was a disciple. Moore states that funerals were typically held the day one died. He suggests the man's father was close to dying and that he's probably asking for an extended leave of absence for mourning, which could be months.
  - The third man wishes to say goodbye to his family.
- *What we can take home:*
  - Jesus calls for total commitment. He requires sacrifice over comfort, allegiance over worldly cares, and family.
  - Would you have followed Him? Are you following Him?