

Sermon Series: “Becoming God’s Humble Hero: Elijah”–Lord of Life Lutheran, Westfield, IN–9/30/07

Title: “Good Company”

Text: Matthew 17: 1-13

Intro.: Ills.: Supersize me – do I recognize Jesus

Theme: When we walk out into the days of our lives, who we have going with us and in us is far more important than what we to get ready for them.

In Christ making the most of the mountain-top experiences

- Understanding the purpose of Jesus’ transfiguration
 1. To leave behind “3 witnesses” of his pre-resurrection glory/Godhead
 - a. *“On the evidence of two or three witnesses a matter shall be confirmed. Deut. 19:15*
 2. To prepare the whole band of disciples for the dark days ahead
 - a. *Moses and Elijah appeared in heavenly glory and were discussing Jesus’ approaching death and what he was about to fulfill in Jerusalem. Luke 9:31 (vs. 3)*
- Taking spiritual advantage of the high points of respite in our lives
 1. **Ills.: Honey pot ants**
 2. When times are good in our life, how do we expend this spiritual blessing from God
 - a. Using up all our spiritual, emotional, and physical capital
 - b. Forgetting to take the time to build ourselves up spiritually
 - c. *But you, beloved, building yourselves up on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Spirit, Jude 1:20*
 3. “Mountain-top” experiences are given by God to get us ready
 - a. **KEEPING THE LINES OPEN** – Often Jesus took time “alone” for prayer (**Print vs. 1**)
 - b. **KNOW THE TRUTH TO BE FREE** – Spending specific time in the Word (*If you abide in my Word, you are really my disciples; and you will know the truth and the truth shall make you free.” John 8: 31-32*)
 - c. **KNITTING TOGETHER MEMORY POINTS** – connecting the dots of God promises and actions (**Print vs.9**)

With Christ standing in His confidence that He is my Savior in the dark valleys of life

- Recognizing what causes us to give up hope in our dark times
 1. We don’t want to see Jesus for who He is – the Son of God (**Print verse 2**)
 2. We want to withdraw into ourselves instead of living “out” our lives in Christ (*“It is good for us to be here.” vs 4a*)
 3. We worship the created rather than the Creator (*“Let us put up three tabernacles—one for you, one for Moses, and one for Elijah..” Vs 4b*)
 4. **Ills.: Misidentifying God**
- Relying on the transforming power of Christ available to us in our transfigured Savior
 1. Jesus does not “change into” an angry God when we fail/fall but He is still the same Savior who came in the flesh
 2. He still touches us with his “physical touch” (Lord Supper and the Word of his voice) to empower us (**Print vs5-7**)
 3. **Ills.: Mysterious Voice**
 4. *And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect. Romans 12:2*
- Committing to look to Jesus, alone (**vs. 8**) to find comfort and purpose to take the next step
 1. Going back to the Scriptures to find God’s purpose for the moment in which we stand
 - a. The Father brought **Moses (law)** and **Elijah (prophets)** to testify to all his promises coming true in Jesus
 - b. *Now He said to them, “These are My words which I spoke to you while I was still with you, that all things which are written about Me in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms must be fulfilled.” Then He opened their minds to understand the Scriptures, and He said to them, “Thus it is*

written, that the Christ would suffer and rise again from the dead the third day. Luke 24:44-46

- c. Disciples queried Jesus about **Elijah** and meaning of OT promises and found answer (**Print vs.10-13**)
2. Focus on the job at hand no matter what moment of history in which you stand (**Print vs. 9**)
 - a. **Ills.: 911 firefighter's story as told by his wife**
 - b. Unlike the disciples we are no longer constrained from speaking about Jesus because of timing
 - c. Ready to get the good news out because Jesus is risen
 - d. *For we who live are constantly being delivered over to death for Jesus' sake, so that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our mortal flesh. 2 Cor. 4:11*

Supersize Me—Recognizing Jesus

Children asked to identify picture of George Washington, Jesus, and Ronald McDonald: **Elapsed Time: 00:44:52 to 00:46:10, DVD scene 18 Super Size Me (Samuel Goldwyn and Showtime Independent Films, 2004); produced and directed by Morgan Spurlock**

Misidentifying God

When my daughter-in-law noticed that her two-year-old daughter was ignoring her food, she said, "Keri, why aren't you eating?" Keri replied, "I can't eat; God told me not to." Her mother chided: "God wouldn't tell you not to eat your supper." Keri looked up at the ceiling, then conceded, "Well, maybe it was Moses." **Esther F. Schmidt, Coldwater, OH. Christian Reader, "Lite Fare."**

Mysterious Voice

I neglected to tell my new patient, a little boy, how his hospital room intercom worked. Soon his light flashed. I called his name and asked what he wanted. There was complete silence. I repeated myself. After a long pause he said, "Jesus, I hear you but I don't see you. Where are you?" **Mary Williamson, Kirbyville, TX, Today's Christian Woman, "Heart to Heart."**

Matthew 17:1-13

¹After six days Jesus took with him Peter, James and John the brother of James, and led them up a high mountain by themselves.

²There he was transfigured before them. His face shone like the sun, and his clothes became as white as the light.

³Just then there appeared before them Moses and Elijah, talking with Jesus.

⁴Peter 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."

⁵While he was still speaking, a bright cloud enveloped them, and a voice from the cloud said, "This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased. Listen to him!"

⁶When the disciples heard this, they fell facedown to the ground, terrified.

⁷But Jesus came and touched them. "Get up," he said. "Don't be afraid."

⁸When they looked up, they saw no one except Jesus.

⁹As 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."

¹⁰The disciples asked him, "Why then do the teachers of the law say that Elijah must come first?"

¹¹Jesus replied, "To be sure, Elijah comes and will restore all things.

¹²But 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."

¹³Then the disciples understood that he was talking to them about John the Baptist. [NIV]