

Marks of Discipleship

Daily Prayer ■ Weekly Worship ■ Bible Reading
Giving Time, Talents & Resources
Spiritual Friendships ■ Service In & Beyond the Church

February 14, 2020

Day 1: Luke 9:28

Now about eight days after these sayings Jesus took with him Peter and John and James, and went up on the mountain to pray.

It was 8 days since Jesus told the Disciples that he would suffer and die in Jerusalem. Peter and the others argued with Jesus and Jesus rebuked them. For 8 days biblical scholars believe they did not talk very much. Jesus wants them to have, in a very dramatic way, to have a vision of what the resurrected Christ will look like. The mountain they went to was Mt. Tabor and it would have taken the better part of the day to ascend to the top. Peter, John, and James were considered the leaders of the group.

Question: Is there a place in nature where you feel close to God? Where is it?

Challenge: Compare the account of the Transfiguration in Mark and Luke and note the differences. Take a guess as to why they are different. (Mark 9:1-13)

Scripture: Luke 6:12-19

Day 2: Luke 9:29-31

And while he was praying, the appearance of his face changed, and his clothes became dazzling white. Suddenly they saw two men, Moses and Elijah, talking to him. They appeared in glory and were speaking of his departure, which he was about to accomplish at Jerusalem.

The scene of Jesus praying was to be repeated some time later in the Garden of Gethsemane. Moses was the one who led the people out of slavery and gave them the law. Elijah was considered the greatest prophet, who was to return just before the Messiah. These two men are seen talking to Jesus about the upcoming events in Jerusalem. In Jesus' day it was assumed that they (Moses and Elijah) were with God because their burial place was never known. These two coming from heaven, conversing with Jesus, meant they came from God.

Question: When do you pray during the day?

Challenge: For the rest of the week, pray four times: 1. At rising in the morning (a simple thank you for the new day), 2. Mid-day (pray for those you work with), 3. Evening meal (giving thanks for the day), 4. Evening (giving praise to God for God's gift of salvation in Christ)

Scripture: Numbers 9:15-23

Day 3: Luke 9:32-33

Now Peter and his companions were weighed down with sleep; but since they had stayed awake, they saw his glory and the two men who stood with him. Just as they were leaving him, Peter said to Jesus, "Master, it is good for us to be here; let us make three dwellings, one for you, one for Moses, and one for Elijah"—not knowing what he said.

Peter, James, and John saw (or rather felt) the presence of God coming from the ones on the mount. Sleep here functions as the faithless counterpart to watching and praying. If they did not stay awake they would have missed the "Glory of God" in the persons of Moses and Elijah. Peter is not sure how to respond to the appearance of God in the three persons he sees.

Question: Have you ever stayed awake all night? How did you feel the next day?

Challenge: Recall a time when you stayed with something you wanted to give up on? What made you stay with it?

Scripture: Romans 13:11-14

Day 4: Luke 9:34

While he was saying this, a cloud came and overshadowed them; and they were terrified as they entered the cloud.

In the Bible a cloud is present to conceal the presence of God. The reason for concealing is that we could not stand to see God because it would blind us (see Exodus 3:6). To come into the presence of the living God means that we will be changed. Jesus never left someone the same but changed them and left them better off. As Christians today we have the same possibility to use the love of God to change people's lives and leave them better off.

Question: What is the scariest time you have ever had?

Challenge: How have you shared the love of God this week?

Scripture: Deuteronomy 5:23-33

Day 5: Luke 9:35

Then from the cloud came a voice that said, "This is my Son, my Chosen; listen to him!"

God now speaks the words that were used at Jesus' baptism (Luke 3:22). This is the message Jesus wanted to get through to the disciples, that Jesus is the Son of God. He is the Son even if he dies on the cross. It was hard to imagine the ruler of the universe dying but that is what was going to happen. What looked to be the weakest thing that could happen was really the strongest. For without the death, the Resurrection would have little punch. Long life was a sign of God's blessing but resurrection was a sign of God's acting. Only God can give life

Question: What image would you use to define weakness? What image to define strength?

Challenge: How has Jesus changed your life?

Scripture: Isaiah 52:13-15 and Isaiah 53:1-3

Day 6: Luke 9:36

When the voice had spoken, Jesus was found alone. And they kept silent and in those days told no one any of the things they had seen.

It seems odd to have Jesus tell the disciples to keep quiet but this vision was just for them because they could now understand it. If someone heard what happened on the mount they would not believe it and think the teller was crazy. Jesus had to be sure that those who would be responsible to carry the message of His resurrection truly believed what they saw when it happened. Without this current vision they might not have believed the resurrection.

Question: Can you keep a secret? When is it best not to keep a secret?

Challenge: Think of your life in the faith, what helped you believe in the resurrection?

Scripture: Exodus 24:12-18