

It Is Good For Us to be Here

Matthew 16:28 – 17:27

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~ The hope of mankind will not be found in science or education. The hope of mankind is not found in government; and it's not in humanity itself, either. All four have let us down completely; to the point where we have most Christians believing we are either in some stage of the Great Tribulation period or in the Kingdom; neither of which are Biblical. They typically feel they can locate themselves somewhere beyond chapter four of Revelation. We have created Frankenstein-like monsters that we label "national institutions" – with which we can't do anything because they are broken. Our modern technological advancements have brought us polluted air, over-filled land garbage dumps with radioactive material oozing out, and fraud, pornography and excess on demand at your fingertips. Modern engineering has made it possible for me to barely be able to drive down a freeway at rush hour in the city I live in. Science, with each new discovery, only seems to compound the myriad problems mankind already has. Politicians have been promising us for centuries that things are going to get better; but they haven't gotten better. Today, total and complete corruption reigns America as greed, lies, fraud and murder are a normal part of business as usual for us. Just browse this forum on which I teach, and you'll find every single problem known to mankind. The hope of this world is only found in One Person – the Lord Jesus Christ – the Son of God – who came to this earth to die for our sins; was raised from the dead - and ascended bodily into Heaven....

XVI

28 Verily I say unto you, There be some standing here, which shall not taste of death, till they see the Son of man coming in his kingdom.

~ This report from our Spiritual Safari expedition through the entire Word of God takes us up into the mountain of transfiguration in an awesome scene. If you have your Bible you'll want it out and open. Read this entire section of Scripture while praying for wisdom, judgment and discernment.

Then read this report. You'll be amazed what a difference it makes when you do that. In our last report we stated briefly that verse twenty-eight of chapter sixteen really belonged as verse one of chapter seventeen. Chapter seventeen is the explanation the Lord Jesus gave for what He said in verse twenty-eight. The following transfiguration is how this took place for the apostles in their day. The "transfiguration" is a picture of the Son of Man and Son of God establishing His Kingdom. Jesus shall be transfigured here right before their very eyes.

Some people are not sure Jesus is talking about the transfiguration when He made this statement in verse twenty-eight; but we can be sure. Simon Peter will soon write in second Peter chapter one at verse sixteen, "....for we have not followed cunningly devised fables, when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eyewitnesses of His majesty. For He received from God the Father honour and glory, when there came such a voice to Him from the excellent glory, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. And this voice which came from heaven we heard, when we were with Him in the holy mount...." ~

XVII

1 And after six days Jesus taketh Peter, James, and John his brother, and bringeth them up into an high mountain apart,

~ So, Peter has confirmed the statement made by the Lord Jesus Christ. We know this is what we are talking about. This is a picture of the Kingdom and other writers of the Gospels, except John, include this account. We know that at least three apostles are going up there with Him. Interestingly, the transfiguration does not PROVE and it does NOT set forth the deity of Christ. This account sets forth the humanity of the Lord Jesus Christ. Is that a startling statement to you? The Gospel of John is an emphasis on the deity of Christ – and this account is not there! That should be our reasonable conclusion in this Spiritual Safari; in fact – it is.

The transfiguration of the Lord Jesus Christ reveals His humanity AND the HOPE for humanity! When we see Jesus transfigured we see the transfiguring that is going to happen to YOU – IF – you are a child of God!

Beloved, it doth not yet appear what we shall be; but we know that when He shall appear, we shall be like Him! This is the picture of Christ glorified BEFORE His death and resurrection. This should be absolutely thrilling to you, my Christian friends. When we get to Luke we will deal with this transfiguration completely and thoroughly. We can only go so far here because we have other portions of Scripture to consider. If we tried to make this an exhaustive study today we would just get overwhelmed and end up with about six or seven hundred thousand words on THIS subject - a serious shipwreck. Dr. Luke will set forth His perfect humanity and adds some very interesting statements that Matthew and Mark do not record. So, we're just going to deal with what is here at this time....

2 And Jesus was transfigured before them: and his face did shine as the sun, and his raiment was white as the light.

~ Transfigured is, actually, a very wonderful word. When Jesus shined like the sun it wasn't from a spotlight coming up as He took the stage at His concert. He WAS the light! His light shone from within. I have a suggestion. You may consider it or not: it's evident to me this is the same power that Adam and Eve had before their fall in the Garden of Eden. They were clothed with some type of light; remember, at the fall, Adam and Eve suddenly discovered they were naked? They weren't naked before because of the light that shone. They weren't appearing before God naked, friends – you can just forget that! This is the HUMANITY of Jesus we're looking at in this transfiguration.

The transfiguration sets forth His perfect humanity. However, we do have something else here that we can merely allude to today. The word "transfiguration" means metamorphosis. Metamorphosis can describe changes that are either up OR down in the living organism classification scale. Of course, this is the process by which that feared little caterpillar becomes a beautiful Monarch Butterfly. This worm of a body we have is going to be transfigured someday. Transfigured is our HUMAN application of the animal's metamorphosis. Even those people left alive at the return of Christ will be changed in this same process. Friends, I hope I have led you to that desert stream under this winter moon because it's the ONLY hope we have for our humanity, and it's right here in your hand....

3 And, behold, there appeared unto them Moses and Elias talking with him.

~ Alright, Moses is our representative of the law. Elijah is the representative of the prophets. We remember Moses died on the mountain and was buried by God and Elijah went up to Heaven in a chariot of fire. Dr. Luke tells us they were discussing His decease in Jerusalem in this conversation they are having. So, the three here, Jesus, Moses and Elijah are talking about His death that He will accomplish at Jerusalem. Both the law AND the prophets are required to bear testimony of His death so if this is the real Jesus Christ spoken of in Scripture – He must speak of it ALSO – my friends, this report should be BLOWING YOUR MINDS TO ITTY BITTY PIECES....

4 Then answered Peter, and said unto Jesus, Lord, it is good for us to be here: if thou wilt, let us make here three tabernacles; one for thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elias.

~ We're going to find out that Simon Peter cannot resist an opportunity to say something! Every occasion is an auspicious occasion for him. Peter generally is the one who speaks, and he generally says the wrong thing, almost every time until the Day of Pentecost. Here, he says the wrong thing, of course. Peter should have remained silent, but he just can't. So, what's the problem? Peter is attempting to put Elijah and Moses on the same plane of superiority as the Lord Jesus Christ. THAT is a problem that we have throughout the church today. Of course, Simon Peter is rebuked by the Lord Jesus. Interestingly, Peter said, "...it is good for us to be here," not really understanding what he said. That makes me laugh, friends. We're going to find that Dr. Luke doesn't have a whole lot of confidence in any statement of Peter before Pentecost; and Luke is a little provoked by Peter, usually. Well, we have a whole lot of people who talk today having NO EARTHLY IDEA what they are saying....

5 While he yet spake, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them: and behold a voice out of the cloud, which said, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him.

~ God the Father now gives His testimony of Jesus, His Son. Our Father in Heaven will be our Final Authority in all matters of spiritual revelation in this Spiritual Safari. Moses is a fine man and Elijah is a wonderful prophet; but they're not on the same par as the Lord Jesus as the writer to the Hebrews says, "...God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, the Lord Jesus Christ." Christ is superior in all matters. This Jesus that we are looking at is the One of Whom is spoken as the final revelation of the command of God! This is a HIGH and profound statement that we have recorded for us. God never made that statement about me or you – only concerning Him! Christ is the only One Who has ever been well-pleasing to God. You and I will never enter the presence of God until we are in Christ by faith; accepting Him is the only way to be placed into the body of believers....

6 And when the disciples heard it, they fell on their face, and were sore afraid.

7 And Jesus came and touched them, and said, Arise, and be not afraid.

8 And when they had lifted up their eyes, they saw no man, save Jesus only.

9 And as they came down from the mountain, Jesus charged them, saying, Tell the vision to no man, until the Son of man be risen again from the dead.

~ Would you like a good life's motto? Try verse eight of chapter seventeen in Matthew! The Motto: "Jesus – Only!" Is Christ your authority today? I would underline those two words in my Bible if I were you. Can you say that's your life today? Honestly? Why should the apostles wait until His death; and why should it only be told then? The reason is: its part of the Gospel story! This tells us He is now the perfect Lamb of God! Jesus has been tested for three years now. Christ is moving rapidly towards the cross to die for the sins of the world. Of course, Christ is the only One Who could have been offered as the Lamb with no spot or blemish. A correct,

complete and comprehensive understanding of this transfiguration is critical to us on this expedition. We're looking for Christ – we have found Him here in His perfect humanity! We have found here the hope for the humanity of all mankind! However, you're not going to recognize Him unless we know Who He really is and exactly what He did you for us down here....

10 And his disciples asked him, saying, Why then say the scribes that Elias must first come?

11 And Jesus answered and said unto them, Elias truly shall first come, and restore all things.

12 But I say unto you, That Elias is come already, and they knew him not, but have done unto him whatsoever they listed. Likewise shall also the Son of man suffer of them.

~ A truly remarkable statement that confirms Malachi also seems to raise a question in the minds of many sincere men: was John the Baptist really Elijah? The answer, of course, is - no. You cannot make the argument that Christ must die on the cross because John the Baptist is not Elijah. Elijah must appear prior to Christ establishing His Kingdom. Christ has not yet established His Kingdom. I don't take iffy questions but I do address them from my one-sided narrative. There is no "if" here; this is the way it happened. The Lord Jesus is saying if they would receive Him as King then John the Baptist would be Elijah. I don't know how that can be so don't bother asking me – these are things God does. His thoughts are not my thoughts and His ways are not my ways; and they're not yours, either, friends. God does a whole lot of things He doesn't explain to us; but we know it's God Who does them. They didn't receive Jesus as King so John the Baptist was not Elijah....

13 Then the disciples understood that he spake unto them of John the Baptist.

~ Now we have a miniature picture of the Kingdom today and how the church fits in. To get that picture let's get down to the very foot of the

mountain where the other disciples are really in some big trouble. They can't handle the responsibility Jesus left them with! These impotent apostles are exactly what we have in the church today. They are doing nothing at the very bottom of this mountain before them. What a picture! This world is Satan possessed; and let's keep this real: this world has gone crazy! You and I are living in a world that is whack! The church today is completely ineffective and outdated – why? Do we not have enough psychology? Do we not have enough man-made methods? Do we not have enough money? The church doesn't lack any of these things. A man has come for help and the apostles cannot help the man! We have come across the worst case that was ever presented to the Lord Jesus. A certain man is coming to Him and is asking Him to have mercy on his son....

14 And when they were come to the multitude, there came to him a certain man, kneeling down to him, and saying,

15 Lord, have mercy on my son: for he is lunatick, and sore vexed: for oftentimes he falleth into the fire, and oft into the water.

16 And I brought him to thy disciples, and they could not cure him.

17 Then Jesus answered and said, O faithless and perverse generation, how long shall I be with you? how long shall I suffer you? bring him hither to me.

~ Faithless and perverse is God's message today to you and to me – and to His church! You might want to just write that down. I have been recommended to healers – I went to NONE! I went and watched them and decided they were all fraudulent. I took my case straight to the Lord Jesus Christ and HE healed me – make no mistake. I am physically healed at this time; have been for a very long time. Jesus said, bring him to Me – so – I went to Him! God is the Great Physician. Have you taken your case to him for that second opinion? Who are you going to? WHAT are you reaching for besides Him? Are you serious about trusting God? Do you REALLY believe He can and will heal you? This is the worse case scenario we have and we'll revisit it again in Luke for some very important additional observations....

18 And Jesus rebuked the demon; and he departed out of him: and the child was cured from that very hour.

19 Then came the disciples to Jesus apart, and said, Why could not we cast him out?

20 And Jesus said unto them, BECAUSE OF YOUR UNBELIEF: for verily I say unto you, If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye shall say unto this mountain, Remove hence to yonder place; and it shall remove; and nothing shall be impossible unto you.

~ I hear this abused passage of Scripture today presented so piously as people say "....nothing is impossible." What this means is: nothing is impossible with God; according to the will of God! There is a whole lot that is impossible with YOU, my beloved; and, frankly, according to the will of YOU, everything is impossible. This was Gods will for this demon to be cast out but the apostles didn't have the kind of faith to allow God to produce it through them! That faith deficit is the only problem they had. Make a note....

21 Howbeit this kind goeth not out but by prayer and fasting.

~ Verse twenty-one is not in our better manuscripts; it's not in the Nestle text; the Novum Testamentum Graece – that is; the Greek text – it's not there. It got in somewhere in some other text and ended up here. You can write to me and call me names and you can jump up and down and scream that I don't believe the Word of God and all that – but – I do not consider it part of the inspired Word of God. I have put a line thorough it in my Bible to cross it out and I'll take my chances with that. You may take it or leave it as you wish on this adventure. Fasting is not an essential to do the will of God at all – it's voluntary - I just reject that verse completely. You will make up your own mind regarding this....

22 And while they abode in Galilee, Jesus said unto them, The Son of man shall be betrayed into the hands of men:

23 And they shall kill him, and the third day he shall be raised again. And they were exceeding sorry.

24 And when they were come to Capernaum, they that received tribute money came to Peter, and said, Doth not your master pay the Temple Tax?

25 He saith, Yes. And when he was come into the house, Jesus prevented him, saying, What thinkest thou, Simon? of whom do the kings of the earth take custom or tribute? of their own children, or of strangers?

26 Peter saith unto him, Of strangers. Jesus saith unto him, Then are the children free.

27 Notwithstanding, lest we should offend them, go thou to the sea, and cast an hook, and take up the fish that first cometh up; and when thou hast opened his mouth, thou shalt find a piece of money: that take, and give unto them for me and thee.

~ Verse twenty-three is the third mention of the cross. They were way up in Caesarea Philippi when He first mentioned it – now He is in Galilee where He says it again. The apostles are not sure what to say, so all they do is feel sorry for themselves. That’s when Christ immediately demonstrates very definitely that He has recovered what Adam lost in the fall of mankind to sin! In the transfiguration we saw what Adam was. In this tribute money we see what Adam did. The Lord Jesus Christ has reclaimed both for us today! We are heirs to it with Him. This is, perhaps, the most remarkable, precious jewel we can obtain in our Spiritual Safari expedition through the entire Word of God. We will consider chapter eighteen in our next report ~

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