

THIN PLACES: MOUNTAINS

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Matthew 17:1-8

Six days later, Jesus took with him Peter and James and his brother John and led them up a high mountain, by themselves. ²And he was transfigured before them, and his face shone like the sun, and his clothes became dazzling white. ³Suddenly there appeared to them Moses and Elijah, talking with him. ⁴Then Peter said to Jesus, “Lord, it is good for us to be here; if you wish, I will make three dwellings here, one for you, one for Moses, and one for Elijah.” ⁵While he was still speaking, suddenly a bright cloud overshadowed them, and from the cloud a voice said, “This is my Son, the Beloved; with him I am well pleased; listen to him!” ⁶When the disciples heard this, they fell to the ground and were overcome by fear. ⁷But Jesus came and touched them, saying, “Get up and do not be afraid.” ⁸And when they looked up, they saw no one except Jesus himself alone.

Scripture and Context

Last week we saw an example where Jesus went up a mountain on his own to pray. This week we see Jesus invite his three closest disciples to go up the mountain with him. When they arrive Jesus’ complexion changes in front of them and they are met by Moses and Elijah. God speaks from the sky, Peter gets it wrong (again), and the disciples have a literal mountain-top experience.

REFLECT & DISCUSS

1. Read the scripture passage carefully and slowly. What word or image stands out to you? Why?
2. Recall a “mountain top” experience in your life when you saw things in a completely new way. What happened? How were you changed?
3. In what ways do you “go to the mountain” to experience God?
4. Peter wanted to make dwellings on the mountain. Jesus didn’t plan to stay. He later led them off the mountain, back into the messy world of ministry (and the road to the cross). What mountain-top moments might we get stuck in today? Why do we prefer to stay on the mountain?
5. What “mountains” have you had to come down from, and what was that experience like?

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