

Four ways we veil the Majesty of Christ
Luke 9:37-50
Sermon prepared for WellSpring Church
April 10, 2011

1. Introduction

- a. Engage How do we keep the majesty of Jesus from being seen when we are off of the mountain?
- b. Review
 - i. Herod wonders who Jesus is...
 - ii. Who do people say that I am?
 - iii. Three answers so far
 1. Feeding the five thousand, the greatest miracle
 2. Peter
 3. The Transfiguration and the voice of God
- c. Preview: Two things different
 - i. Use a larger chunk of Scripture
 - ii. Use someone else's outline—The basic outline for this sermon is taken from Philip Ryken, *Luke, Volume I: Capters 1-12, Reformed Expository Commentary*, (Phillipsburg:P&R Publishing, 2009), 482-495
 - iii. The main story and three follow up conversations show us how we often get it wrong
- d. Big Idea: How do we Veli the Majesty of Christ?

2. A boy and his dad—Unbelief

- a. Time: The next day, down from the mountain
- b. The people involved
 - i. Large crowd—what a contrast here following the contrast from the episode last week. That contrast was between suffering and glory, the now and the future. Here is another contrast: from the future reality to the present reality. From the private to the public, from the mountain to the plain. From the glory to the grittiness of everyday life. Most of our experience will be in the grittiness of life. Man and his son, v. 38
 - ii. The other nine disciples v. 40
 - iii. In Mark it says that the crowd was standing around the man and the disciples arguing. What a tense situation!
- c. The problem at hand
 - i. a cry for help “Teacher I beg you to look at my son for he is my only child” He knelt before Jesus—Have mercy!
 - ii. the boy's situation “A spirit seizes him and he suddenly cries out. It convulses him so that he foams at the mouth and shatters him and will hardly leave him. (Now in Matthew the

- father says that the boy is an epileptic—this doesn't discount the reality of the demon in the boy. If he were merely an epileptic there would have been no reason to rebuke a demon—which all three Gospel writers say that he did.) Here is a terrible situation.
- iii. the disciples' inability. they couldn't do this-why? Had Jesus taken the power away that he had given them in the beginning of Luke 9? Read this.
 - d. Jesus addresses the problem
 - i. Faithless and twisted generation
 - ii. bring your son to me
 - iii. He rebuked the demon
 - iv. the demon goes out but not with first trying to hurt the son again—Satan's desire is always to hurt the children or God and their children.
 - e. Majesty seen again! This is so important. The disciples had seen the majesty of Christ on the mountain but the people saw the majesty of Christ in the ground.
 - f. What is the mistake here that we make? It is in the chastening words of Jesus Oh Faithless and twisted generation!
 - i. At the root of the disciples' problem was their unbelief—which is the root of every one of our wrong responses to our situations. Whenever we feel overwhelmed, desperate, depressed, and desperately helpless, there is one reason. We have failed to believe. We have failed to remember that God is a very big God. I am not talking about a helplessness that drives us to God, but a sense of helplessness and impotence that drives us to desperation and desolation. A readiness to throw in the towel, to give up, to quit. What is going on here? Unbelief. At root of all of this is unbelief. Forgetting the majesty, the promises, the power, the purpose of God. It seems that the disciples have moved from a confidence in the Person of Jesus to a confidence in themselves.—And how quickly is this? One week. it can be much quicker.
 - ii. Twisted—Deut. 32:1-18)
 - 1. Crookedness, twistedness, and perversity always come from unbelief. (Kent Hughes)
 - 2. Not every problem we face is demonic—but every sin we commit is a result of unbelief
 - 3. John Piper "Future Grace" My sin is always and only unbelief!
 - iii. How long must I put up with you? Why are you so slow to learn? He is saying this to the disciples—he is saying this to us! This is not a sinful impatience, but a holy frustration. "Jesus longed for his disciples to trust him with a simple faith. One of

the great sufferings of his earthly pilgrimage was the unbelief of his own disciples.”

1. Sometimes we grieve the Savior in this same way! We are slow to learn, quick to forget, unwilling to trust, stubborn.
2. Can you believe that the frustration is with us because we are standing in the way of letting his majesty shine? Where is the majesty of Christ?
 - a.

The main point of this episode is not that we need to trust God to help us cast out demons—which is something that rarely happens—but that we need to trust God to do *all* the spiritual work that only he can do. We have all the more reason to trust God than the disciples did, because we have received the full benefits of Christ’s finished work, and the Holy Spirit is now at work in us to help us trust in God. We need this faith in our struggle against temptation. We come up with all kinds of methods to manage our sin, but real transformation comes by trusting in the gospel to change our hearts and minds. We need this faith in our relationships, which can be restored only by the healing work of God’s Spirit. We need this faith in our ministry, both as individual Christians and as a church, both locally and around the world. We may be very busy serving the Lord in practical ways, but this makes a spiritual difference only when we depend on God to use what we do to advance his gospel. We need this faith in our evangelism leading someone to Christ does not depend on the skill of our witness, but on the grace of God. We need this faith in our discipleship. No matter how much good advice we give, we cannot be the Holy Spirit for anyone else; only God can change someone’s life. Then we need this faith in our ongoing war with Satan, who is seeking to destroy everything we do for God. The only way to be safe from the Evil One is through faith in Jesus Christ and his mighty power. (Philip Ryken, Luke, 486)

3. Debrief and Review: Taking our eyes of the cross
 - a. The main event is the cross. The main event is not exorcism, food for the hungry, mountain top experiences, not even bold confession of faith.
 - b. In the midst of their marveling at the majesty of God, Jesus brings them back to the main event. “Let these words sink into your ears: The Son of Man is about to be delivered into the hands of men.”
 - c. The quadruple negative. Luke 9:45 they were missing it—
 - d. How do we miss the cross? How do we hide and veil the glory of God when we miss the cross?
 - e. What is the cross?
 - i. Victory
 - ii. Reconciliation
 - iii. Example: Sacrifice and Suffering.

4. A Pointless argument: Seeking greatness for ourselves
 - a. Who is the greatest—this is closely related to the previous mistake for as soon as I take my eyes off of the cross, I start thinking about my own glory rather than the glory of the sacrifice. There is not argument or even a question of greatness when we are looking at the Cross—when I survey the wondrous cross--
 - b. We may not have verbal arguments about who is the greatest, but we argue with our lives.
 - i. Any time I am the center of a story
 - ii. Any time I seek to have my talents, gifts, experience honored, appreciated, affirmed or rewarded I am arguing for my greatness.
 - iii. Any time I sulk when I am not appreciated, affirmed, or rewarded I am arguing for my greatness.
 - iv. Any time I am angry or hurt because I have not been appreciated, affirmed or rewarded I am arguing for my greatness.
 - v. Any time I put another down, do not show appreciation for them, am ungrateful, I am arguing for my greatness.
 - vi. Anytime my way or my opinion is rejected and I withdraw from the conversation I am arguing for my greatness.
 - vii. Anytime I act in any way other than as a humble servant and see others as greater than myself, I am arguing for my greatness (Phil 2)
 - viii. Anytime I pad my resume
 - ix. Anytime I brag about things I am involved in—I am arguing for my greatness,
 1. Church
 2. Ministries
 3. Way we educate our children
 4. ways of witnessing
 - x. Lastly, anytime I am upset when someone else seems to be getting appreciation, approval and reward and I am not—or when the actions or life of another seems to point out my failures and I am peeved-I am arguing for my greatness.
 - c. We might not argue out loud—but the desire for greatness that is resident in our hearts comes out through our words, and we argue for our greatness. Ryken says “This is a silly argument.” a little bit like arguing about who is the tallest pygmy.”
 - d. Jesus describes greatness
 - i. He took a child by the hand
 - ii. Jesus said that the way we treat children will show what kind of relationship we have with him and with the father. It takes humility to make friends with a child, to listen, to be patient, to get down to their level.
 - iii. How are we at getting involved in the lives of children?

1. Nursery
2. Care
3. education
4. Discipline

5. Fighting the wrong enemy (Luke 9:49)

- a. Not entirely clear why John said this
 - i. confession—I didn't treat someone right
 - ii. Question: Have I done right?
 - iii. Bringing attention to his good work in the face of Jesus chastening?
 - iv. Maybe objecting that Those who were with Jesus as his disciples were in some way to be considered better than those who were not.
- b. Jesus' response—if they are not against you, they are for you.
- c. The lesson: Be careful that you are not fighting the wrong enemy. "Anytime we look at the way other people are serving Christ and are tempted to think that they should do things differently—we are veering off of the path.

"...thousands, in every period of Church history, have spent their lives in copying John's mistake. They have labored to stop every man who will not work for Christ in their way, from working for Christ at all. They have imagined, in their petty self-conceit, that no man can be a soldier of Christ, unless he wears their uniform, and fights in their regiment. They have been ready to say of every Christian who does not see everything with their eyes, "Forbid him! Forbid him! for he follows not with us....We forget that no individual Church on earth has an absolute monopoly of all wisdom, and that people may be right in the main, without agreeing with us. We must learn to be thankful if sin is opposed, and the Gospel preached, and the devil's kingdom pulled down, though the work may not be done exactly in the way we like. We must try to believe that men may be true-hearted followers of Jesus Christ, and yet for some wise reason may be kept back from seeing all things in religion just as we do. Above all, we must praise God if souls are converted, and Christ is magnified--no matter who the preacher may be, and to what Church he may belong." (J.C. Ryle Expository Thoughts on the Gospel of Luke

6. Conclusion—GRACE How long?

- a. there are four mistakes that we make that hide and veil the majesty of Christ
- b. How does Jesus Respond—Mercy, patience, grace and continued teaching.
- c. Michael Wilcock **"What then can Jesus do with a group of disciples still so unbelieving, slow-witted, swollen-headed, and narrow-minded, except take them with him on another year's course of teaching?"**