

Scripture Reference: Luke 9:18-36

Date: September 28, 2014

Title: "Who is God?"

Focus: God speaks that lives would be affected and His person revealed to others. / Hearing God Series (8 of 11)

What if God were to be heard? This passage recounts two occasions where He was. Let's see what happened.

The two events take place over the course of about a week. One involved a question by Jesus (vv. 18-27) and the other a statement from the Father (vv. 28-36) about Jesus. At first these two events appear unrelated. However, they are *intimately* connected. "*Who am I?*," Jesus asked the disciples (9:20), to which God replied for the hearing of the disciples, "*My Son, My Chosen One*" (9:35).

Both these are examples of God speaking. One is by way of Jesus, God in the flesh. The other comes from God, The Father.

The events illustrate that God speaks to reveal Himself so people can live the new life (eternal life) He offers.

Jesus Spoke to the Disciples (vv. 18-27)

Jesus asked the disciples, "*Who do the crowds say that I am?*" and "*Who do you say that I am?*" He inquired of people's opinions regarding Him.

The opinions expressed were based in human reasoning.

Some reject the concept of God because He does not fit their worldview.

Others acknowledge Jesus as a *great teacher* or *good man* because this is the most they can envision Him being.

Even though the disciples recognized Jesus to be "*the Christ of God*," this should not be taken to mean they understood what that meant.

It must be noted that apart from God speaking into a life, there is only so much people can deduce about God, Jesus or eternal life. That Jesus spoke to the disciples about Him being the atoning sacrifice for sin (v. 22) demonstrates this fact.

God did not Speak so the Disciples Would Possess More Knowledge

What Jesus told His followers, He did so for the purpose that by knowing Him better they would be shaped by who *He is*.

vv. 22-26; "*The Son of Man must suffer many things and be rejected by the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed and be raised up on the third day.*' And He was saying to them all, *'If anyone wishes to come after Me, he must deny himself, and take up his cross daily and follow Me. For whoever wishes to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake, he is the one who will save it. For what is a man profited if he gains the whole world, and loses or forfeits himself? For whoever is ashamed of Me and My words, the Son of Man will be ashamed of him when He comes in His glory, and the glory of the Father and of the holy angels.'*"

Knowing Who Jesus is, defines who those that follow Him are to be.

Jesus revealed that as a servant of God He came to be rejected by men, to die, and to be raised to a new life.

He then says the life of those who follow Him will also be characterized by self-denial and self-sacrifice.

Living the life exemplified by Jesus, here and now, is eternal life. What disciples do now echoes into eternity.

This would remain unknown except Jesus said it and His disciples heard Him.

God Spoke to Affirm Who Jesus Is (vv. 28-36)

To live off the words and example of another can be a dangerous proposition. Consider the case of Jonestown and the like.

However, with Jesus there need be no fear of deception. Why? Because God has attested to His person. This was the point of the transfiguration.

One of those present, John, wrote,

"What was from the beginning, what we have heard, what we have seen with our eyes, what we have looked at and touched with our hands, concerning the Word of Life—and the life was manifested, and we have seen and testify and proclaim to you the eternal life, which was with the Father and was manifested to us—what we have seen and heard we

proclaim to you also, so that you too may have fellowship with us; and indeed our fellowship is with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ. These things we write, so that our joy may be made complete” (John 1:1-4).

Before the eyes of Peter, James, and John, Jesus was changed, transfigured. The disciples were given a glimpse at the preincarnate glory of Christ and His role in creation.

So there would be no misunderstanding about who Jesus is, God spoke, saying, “*This is My Son, My Chosen One; listen to Him!*”

Did the disciples listen? Yes! How is this known? Look at their lives.

The Last 18 Inches

It is not enough to hear God speak. There must be the intention of living what is heard.

God does not speak to prove His existence. He does not speak merely to bolster your faith. God speaks to reveal Himself that people would live new lives.

Hearing God today, what do you do differently?

If God were to call down to you tomorrow, would you be ready to “*take up [your] cross daily and follow [Him]*”?

If not, then there is no reason for God to speak.