

Title: WHY JESUS? WHY NOW? MATTHEW 17:1-9
(Chatham, NJ; 03/06/11, AM) [E – Topical]

Theme: In the Transfiguration we have answers to the questions, “Why Jesus? Why now?”

Purpose: To show that the Transfiguration provided Peter and the church with a dramatic demonstration of why we believe in Jesus.

Introduction:

1. In an age of so many religious voices and choices, today we will answer the question that may be on the minds of many, “Why Jesus?”
2. In an age also sees itself as modern, technologically advanced, and scientific, we will answer the question, “Why Now?”
3. Why Jesus in this day and age, at this time in history?
4. The experience of the Apostle Peter provides the answers we seek.

I. What Peter Saw: the Transfiguration, Mt. 17:1-9.

A. A brief description.

1. Peter, James, and John accompanied Jesus up a mountain.
2. Both his face and his clothes took on a bright appearance: the sun, light, 2.
3. Moses and Elijah appear and speak with Jesus, 3.
4. Peter offers to build a memorial, 4.
5. A bright cloud and a voice: “This is my Son...Listen to him,” 5-6.
6. Fear overcomes them, 6.
7. But when they get up, they see only Jesus, 7-8.

B. What he thought about the event later, 2 Peter 1:16-21.

1. This wasn't something made up (16, 20-21).
2. We witnessed his majesty and heard the voice of God, 17-18.
3. These were not ordinary experiences. (I am unaware of other religious leaders who have been so transformed.)
4. Because of this, you do well to pay attention, 19.
5. This was almost as pivotal a moment as seeing Jesus after the Resurrection.
6. Only now he could talk about it (Mt. 17:9).
7. This is one of the reasons that brought Peter to believe and to live his life proclaiming that all people should believe in Jesus.

II. Why Jesus? (The Transfiguration is one of many reasons.)

A. Because of what he said.

1. John 7:46 – the officers' answer
2. These men were taken back by his teachings.
3. His claims were and are controversial, John 8:58.
4. A deluded soul, a liar on par with Satan himself, or one who is truly Lord says these things.
5. The Apostles and the church choose Lord.

B. Because of what he did.

1. Can anyone do more, John 7:31?
2. His miracles pointed to something powerful in him.
3. John 14:10-11, believe on account of what you have witnessed; this is what he says to his disciples.

C. Because of the resurrection.

1. Initial shock turned to joy, Luke 24:36-43.

2. They turned the world upside down with their teaching.
3. The Gospel of Christ is the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ.

III. Why Now?

- A. Our scientific age needs something more.
 1. We live in an age of scientific materialism, a school of thought that believes the material world is all there is and everything can be explained by physical things.
 2. Deep inside we chafe at this; intuitively we know there is something more.
 3. That something more is the transcendent God revealed by Jesus, Jn. 1:18, and the transcendent world he spoke of, Jn. 14:2, "I go to prepare a place for you."
- B. Other religious choices are weak and fraudulent.
 1. John 14:4, "No one comes to the Father except through me."
 2. Whereas other religions (through wisdom or by looking within) may claim enlightenment and knowledge of spiritual things, Jesus he is the way to them.
 3. What Jesus said, what he did, and his Resurrection make him relevant to any and all ages.
 4. No other faith can legitimately offer you eternal life because no other faith has a risen savior.

Conclusions:

1. The world needs reconciliation because it is in the grip of sin and under condemnation.
2. It needs salvation because without it judgment looms.
3. Sin has condemned us; the only escape is repentance and belief in the Gospel.
4. Christ offers this salvation through his death, burial, and resurrection.
5. Won't you accept our offer to see what this story of Jesus is all about?