

ITS TIME TO TALK ABOUT JESUS LUKE 9:28-36
LAST SUN AFTER EPIPH./TRANSFIGURATION FEB 7, 2016

²⁸ Now about eight days after these sayings he took with him Peter and John and James and went up on the mountain to pray. ²⁹ And as he was praying, the appearance of his face was altered, and his clothing became dazzling white. ³⁰ And behold, two men were talking with him, Moses and Elijah, ³¹ who appeared in glory and spoke of his departure, which he was about to accomplish at Jerusalem. ³² Now Peter and those who were with him were heavy with sleep, but when they became fully awake they saw his glory and the two men who stood with him. ³³ And as the men were parting from him, Peter said to Jesus, "Master, it is good that we are here. Let us make three tents, one for you and one for Moses and one for Elijah" — not knowing what he said. ³⁴ As he was saying these things, a cloud came and overshadowed them, and they were afraid as they entered the cloud. ³⁵ And a voice came out of the cloud, saying, "This is my Son, my Chosen One; listen to him!" ³⁶ And when the voice had spoken, Jesus was found alone. And they kept silent and told no one in those days anything of what they had seen.

I think if Peter, James & John were around today,
they would be into Lutheran Hour Ministries.
Lutheran Hour Ministries is not just about weekly Lutheran Hour
radio program any more,
although as longest running Christian outreach broadcast,
it continues to be heard by 51 million each week.
Now, LHM also provides daily devotions in print & on line,
like Lent devotions on mailbox tables to pick up
- Project Connect booklets on life and faith issues
- witness training programs for adults and youth
- mission trips connected with 34 world mission centers
involved in a variety of culturally relevant activities.
And, through lhm.org, men's network, which provides
Bible studies and other resources for individuals and groups
that connects them to things like fishing contests.
You can even get an official man card.
But at same time Lutheran Hour Ministries isn't just for men,
I think that is why it is not called Lutheran Laymen's League
any more. It is a whole lot of both/and.
So, I think Peter James and John would be into LHM
because they obviously like to fish, and, according to text,
are apparently into hiking in mountains and camping,
but at same time are into learning from Jesus
and being trained for evangelism & praying

even though, like typical men used to outdoors,
if they sit still for 5 minutes they fall asleep.
and, especially, God uses them, wherever they are,
to tell other people about Jesus.

So, Lutheran Hour Ministries is about both/and,
both men stuff and sharing gospel in every way possible.
In text also, we see several both/ands

THOSE SEEING JESUS' GLORY also SPEAK OF HIS DEATH
THOSE LISTENING TO JESUS NOW also TALK ABOUT HIM
THOSE WANTING TO STAY HAVE GOD STAY WITH THEM

THOSE SEEING JESUS' GLORY SPEAK OF HIS DEATH

²⁹ And as he was praying, the appearance of his face was altered, and his clothing became dazzling white. ³⁰ And behold, two men were talking with him, Moses and Elijah, ³¹ who appeared in glory and spoke of his departure, which he was about to accomplish at Jerusalem.

One of the things LHM's Men's Network is is a support group
for those facing challenge of living as God's man
in today's world

That is sort of what is happening here on this mountain.

Jesus is the ultimate God's man.

He is facing not just challenges of life but of death.

As we begin Lent and journey to the cross this week,
after this turning point, Jesus heads to the cross.

One thing that prepares Jesus & his disciples for this
is the Father's affirming voice and the glory that shows
but which is always there even when hidden
because Jesus is true God at same time as true man.

This is the only reason his death has power to save us.

On this mountain there is just a peek, a preview,
of the glory in store for him and for us in heaven.

But from here Jesus can also see where he is going: cross.

Their appearance is of glory but their discussion is of death
by which Jesus is truly glorified and victorious.

So they talk about departure he is about to accomplish.

His death is not defeat but his greatest accomplishment
because it is ultimate death that ends all deaths.

This is not the first Jesus has discussed this.

First verse of text includes phrase "after these sayings,"

In verses before Peter has affirmed Jesus is Christ of God
and Jesus has replied he was going to suffer and die.
Moses & Elijah call it his departure. Word in Greek is exodus.
Moses knows about exodus, going through plagues,
nights of terror, middle of Red Sea & barren wilderness,
but ending up in the promised land,
which he, like us, only gets peek at before death.
Elijah too knows about mountaintop experiences,
like defeating prophets of Baal with fire from heaven
but going on into valley of despair
before being taken up into heaven.
Both their words here and their lives before
pointed to the way of salvation through Jesus' death
and our way of following him through suffering to glory.
This is why we continue to come this place of retreat,
not just to rest but to pray & worship,
and peek again at where we are headed
while going through difficulties which will not last
but cannot be skipped over.
But we also come here to prepare for our next task.

THOSE LISTENING TO JESUS NOW TALK ABOUT HIM

²⁸ Now about eight days after these sayings he took with him Peter and John and James and went up on the mountain to pray. ³⁴ ... a cloud came and overshadowed them, and they were afraid as they entered the cloud. ³⁵ And a voice came out of the cloud, saying, "This is my Son, my Chosen One; listen to him!" ³⁶ And when the voice had spoken, Jesus was found alone. And they kept silent and told no one in those days anything of what they had seen.

I don't know what time of year this happened,
but I wonder if it was in seventh month of their year
when there is series of special Jewish festivals
Starting with day of trumpets, reminding of when
they came to Mt. Sinai & heard voice of God like trumpet
speaking from midst of glowing fiery cloud.
Then was day of atonement when they confessed sin
and High Priest entered holy of holies, place of God's glory,
to sprinkle blood of a special sacrifice.
Then was Tabernacles, which I call national camp-out week,
when they lived outdoors in booths or tents,
remembering how God took care of them in wilderness.

Do you notice the similarities, the voice from heaven,
glorious cloud showing God's presence,
special death to pay for sin, idea of building shelters?
On the eighth and last day of Tabernacles
there was assembly to listen to reading of law of Moses.
I think is no coincidence v. 28 says this happened on 8th day.
But on this day, instead of listening to law of Moses,
God speaks and says, listen to him,
that is, now listen to the gospel of Jesus.
This is how we get to the new promised land.
As only few went up to God's presence on Mt. Sinai,
only a three disciples were here to see this.
v. 36 says they told no one about it in those days
but obviously it is written here because the time came
when they did tell others.
It is time to tell about Jesus, his death and his glory.
Moses and Elijah came to speak about what Jesus would do.
The Father spoke from heaven, affirming that
everything Jesus did was right.
Now it is time for us also to speak.
This is why we have recognition of Lutheran Hour Ministries
and why it does all the different things it does,
and why we do all the different things we do here
and as we go on from here, back down mountain,
because it is time to proclaim from the mountain tops
and to those in the valley of the shadow of death,
who Jesus is and what he does for us.
He is true God. No one comes to Father except through him.
but he has humbled himself, turned off his glory,
to suffer and die to take away our sins,
so that now our lives can be transformed,
we can look forward to seeing God
and his light will shine through us as well.
But this is hard for us to do, maybe it seems to us
it is harder than it was for Jesus to go to the cross.
This is why,

THOSE WANTING TO STAY HAVE GOD STAY WITH THEM

³² Now Peter and those who were with him were heavy with sleep, but when they became fully awake they saw his glory and the two men who stood with him. ³³ And as the men were parting from him, Peter

said to Jesus, "Master, it is good that we are here. Let us make three tents, one for you and one for Moses and one for Elijah"— not knowing what he said.

Jesus regularly went for time of prayer before doing things,
like he did in the Garden of Gethsemane,
because he knew he did nothing by himself.
Everything he did, he did together with Father & Spirit.
How much more is this true of us.

We need God's presence and power for all we do.
This is why Jesus took Peter, James and John with him,
to train them to prepare for everything with prayer.
But even such prayer itself is hard for us.

No wonder they fell asleep here as in Gethsemane.
But Peter is always ready to do something,
even if he has no idea what to do.

He says it is good for them to be here, but why, good for who?
Is it good that they are here to help or honor
Jesus, Moses & Elijah by building shelters for them?
Or is it good for Peter, James & John to see his glory
and so they just want to stay and camp out here?

Luke writes Peter didn't know what he was talking about.
But in Bible God often puts his words in mouths
of those who don't fully realize what it means.

If we are going to talk about Jesus,
this is what we need God to also do for us.
It is good for us to be here with Jesus, seeing him in his word,
not because we are doing something here for him,
and not just so we can hang out with him feeling good
but so that he can do something for us
and so that we can go and share this with others.

The shelters people built during festival of Tabernacles
were a reminder that as they went through wilderness,
wherever they were, they had what they needed
because God was with them, protecting, providing, guiding.
That was the take-away of this experience for disciples,
that as they went, God himself was with them.
not just when we get to glory but in the daily grind.

They would not stay there in temporary shelters
nor would Jesus stay in temporary tent of this body
but he is leading us on to an eternal home.

Now we in the church today need and want to build
not just holy huts where we can hang out by ourselves
but structures for sharing the glorious gospel.
so others also can be prepared for all the difficulties
ahead of them in their lives.
Nothing they can build or do here will last
but because of what Jesus does, our sins won't last.
It is good for us to be here, not because of anything
we can do for Jesus
but because of what he can do for us, in us, through us,
here and wherever we are.
It is time for us both to see Jesus and to talk about Jesus.

THOSE SEEING JESUS' GLORY SPEAK OF HIS DEATH
because what his death accomplishes is the way to glory.
THOSE LISTENING TO JESUS NOW TALK ABOUT HIM
Those who heard the Father say, "listen to him"
didn't talk about it right then, but now they have
and now that we listen and know, it is time for us to talk too
to tell others about Jesus and the glorious gospel.
THOSE WANTING TO STAY HAVE GOD STAY WITH THEM
We have difficult challenges ahead,
we may feel like just staying where we are.
But we go out into the world and on to the cross
because God stays with us through life and death
and in his glory forever.