

Read: Mark 9:2-9

Best Place Ever

Mark 9:5-7

Peter said to Jesus, “Rabbi, it is good for us to be here. Let us put up three shelters—one for you, one for Moses and one for Elijah.” (He did not know what to say, they were so frightened.)

Then a cloud appeared and covered them, and a voice came from the cloud: “This is my Son, whom I love. Listen to him!”

In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

What is the coolest place you have ever been to? Have you traveled to another country? Have you been to a national park? How about an insanely awesome water park with super cool slides? Disney World? Some other place?

Most people have been somewhere that they think is absolutely amazing. The place is so fun, so relaxing, or so beautiful that they never want to leave. If they could just stay at that place forever and never go home, they would be totally happy. Why leave the best and coolest place ever?

Peter, James, and John experienced an absolutely amazing place. Jesus took them to a mountaintop, but it wasn't the beautiful view that was so amazing. There, atop that mountain, Jesus transfigured before them. That's a fancy word that means to be changed. Suddenly Jesus was shining brightly, and his clothes appeared whiter than snow. Then, Moses and Elijah appeared and were talking with Jesus, too. Incredible!

The disciples were so amazed and afraid at the same time that they didn't know what to do. But they knew it was awesome! Peter suggested that they put up some tents and stay there. After all, why leave the best and coolest place ever? That may have sounded like a good idea at first, but it shows that Peter didn't really understand why Jesus came to earth in the first place.

Then suddenly a cloud appeared over them. God the Father spoke from the heavens just as he did at Jesus' baptism, “This is my Son, whom I love. Listen to him!”

Those words help to remind us why Jesus really came. Jesus did *not* come to give us a really cool and awesome place to hang out here in this world. He came to give us something better than that. The beloved Son of God came so that we could be children whom God loves, too. How would he do that? Jesus had to come down this Mount of Transfiguration so he could go up another mount called Calvary. On Mount Calvary, Jesus would die for all our sins and bring

us God's forgiveness and love. By his death and resurrection, Jesus won for us an eternal life in heaven. Peter, James, and John saw just a little bit of Jesus' glory for a little while. But in heaven, we will live with Jesus in his glory forever. Now that will be the *best place ever!*

The questions below are to help families discuss this devotion. The questions are divided by age group as suggestions, but anyone could reflect on any of the questions as they desire.

Questions for the Younger Children

- What happened when Peter, James, and John were with Jesus on this special mountaintop?
- Who were the two people that appeared with Jesus that day?

Questions for Elementary Age Children

- Why was it foolish for Peter to want to stay on that mountaintop with Jesus? What didn't he understand?
- Explain why heaven will be the best place ever.

Questions for Middle School and Above

- Explain how the Mount of Transfiguration was a sneak peek preview of heaven.
- What do you look forward to the most about heaven? Why?

Closing Prayer:

Dear Jesus, by grace you have called us to be your disciples and to follow you. Help us to put you first in all we think, say, and do as we serve you in our lives. Amen.

Hymn: CW 97:1,4,5 – Down from the Mount of Glory

Down from the mount of glory Came Jesus Christ, our Lord.
Recall the wondrous story, Rich gem in sacred Word.
Again your faith will view him In double glory here;
The greater homage due him Will in your life appear.

Strange how his journey ended! In love that is his fame
Our Lord again ascended A mount—the hill of shame.
Upon the cross he proffered Himself to agony;
His holy soul he offered To set the guilty free.

Then hail the double glory Of Jesus Christ, our Lord,
And let the wondrous story Full peace and joy afford!
The holy mount acclaims him The majesty divine;
Mount Calvary proclaims him Redeemer—yours and mine.