

Read: Mark 9:2-9

Keep Listening to Jesus!

Mark 9:2,3,5-7

After six days Jesus took Peter, James and John with him and led them up a high mountain, where they were all alone. There he was transfigured before them. His clothes became dazzling white, whiter than anyone in the world could bleach them. Peter said to Jesus, "It is good for us to be here. (He did not know what to say.) 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.

Has someone tried to tell you something and you just did not understand them? Maybe Mom says, "Hey, would you grab that water glass for me from over there?" That's confusing! Where is "there"? Is it on the counter? Is it in another room? Then she points directly to where the glass is. Oh good, now you know!

In a way, the same thing happened with Jesus and his disciples. For about three years, Jesus had been showing the disciples that he was the one who had come to die for everyone's sins, but they still didn't really get it.

Just a few verses before the section of God's Word you read from Mark 9, Peter confesses that Jesus is the Messiah (Mark 8:29), but in our text for today, he shows that he didn't really understand what that meant. When Peter saw Jesus in his glory on the mountain, he wanted to stay there, but that was not what it meant for Jesus to be the Messiah. No, the Messiah had to come down the mountain and go to the cross to die. That's what it meant to be the Messiah.

All of us are like Peter in some ways. We believe that Jesus is the Messiah, but sometimes we don't understand (or sometimes forget) what that really means for our lives. We don't understand that he really will be there for us, that he really wants what is best for us, that he really loves us no matter what, that he will really always forgive us. We might have to suffer now for being a Christian, but a forever time with Jesus is our future.

Meanwhile, look at what God does for Peter and us. He doesn't scold Peter and say, "Peter, you don't get it!" God simply points to Jesus and says, "This is my Son, listen to him."

Let's do that! Let's keep listening because this is a very special week. This Wednesday is called Ash Wednesday. Let's follow Jesus to find out where "here" is. It's wherever the cross is. Whenever you find yourself at the cross, say, "It's good, Lord, to be *here!*"

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

- Do you ever have trouble listening? What do your parents/teachers do to help you listen?
- Name one thing that would help you better listen to Jesus.

Questions for Elementary Age Children

- Give an example of why clear instructions are so important.
- What are the consequences if someone doesn't listen careful to Jesus' instructions?

Questions for Middle School and Above

- This week is Ash Wednesday. Why is the season of Lent a good time to double-down on listening?
- Discuss with your family a commitment to following and listening to Jesus in the coming weeks of Lent.

Closing Prayer:

Jesus, give me wisdom to know you better and to trust you more strongly. Help me follow your lead and listen to what you say so that I may understand how much you love me and what you have planned for me. Amen.