



## **Luke 9:28–36**

28 About eight days after Jesus said this, he took Peter, John and James with him and went up onto a mountain to pray. 29 As he was praying, the appearance of his face changed, and his clothes became as bright as a flash of lightning. 30 Two men, Moses and Elijah, appeared in glorious splendour, talking with Jesus. 31 They spoke about his departure, which he was about to bring to fulfilment

at Jerusalem. 32 Peter and his companions were very sleepy, but when they became fully awake, they saw his glory and the two men standing with him. 33 As the men were leaving Jesus, Peter said to him, 'Master, 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 he was saying.) 34 While he was speaking, a cloud appeared and covered them, and they were afraid as they entered the cloud. 35 A voice came from the cloud, saying, 'This is my Son, whom I have chosen; listen to him.' 36 When the voice had spoken, they found that Jesus was alone. The disciples kept this to them-

selves and did not tell anyone at that time what they had seen.

## **Reflection**

Who is Jesus? It is a relatively simple question. Just three words in length. And yet, it is possible that there may be no more important question than this. Who is Jesus? Some say he is the son of God; others that he was just a man. Many more say he was a great moral teacher, perhaps the greatest of all time. But to those, the Christian apologist C.S. Lewis adds some spice, quoting him,

I am trying here to prevent anyone saying the really foolish thing that people often say about Him: 'I'm ready to accept Jesus as a great moral teach-

er, but I don't accept his claim to be God.' That is the one thing we must not say. A man who was merely a man and said the sort of things Jesus said would not be a great moral teacher. He would either be a lunatic — on the level with the man who says he is a poached egg — or else he would be the Devil of Hell. You must make your choice. Either this man was, and is, the Son of God, or else a madman or something worse. You can shut him up for a fool, you can spit at him and kill him as a demon or you can fall at his feet and call him Lord and God, but let us not come with any patronizing nonsense about his being a great human teacher. He has not left that open to us. He did not intend to. ... Now it seems to me obvious that

He was neither a lunatic nor a fiend: and consequently, however strange or terrifying or unlikely it may seem, I have to accept the view that He was and is God.

Who is Jesus? This is the question that sits behind Luke chapters 8 and 9. In them Jesus says and does some extraordinary things that give us clues as to his identity. And twice Luke sets the question before us. In Luke 8 Jesus' disciples were filled with awe and terror in Jesus' presence, Luke 8:25,

In fear and amazement they asked one another, 'Who is this? He commands even the winds and the water, and they obey him.'

But it is more than just fishermen and confidants who are asking the question. The highest authority in the land, Herod Antipas, repeats their question, Luke 9:9,

‘I beheaded John. Who, then, is this I hear such things about?’

Herod is of course speaking about the healings, exorcisms and large-scale miracles Jesus has been performing like his feeding of the five thousand after which Jesus said of them,

‘Who do the crowds say I am?’

Who is Jesus? The question is on everybody’s lips. And it is the right question, because ultimately, everything hinges on your response to it. In today’s passage,

God himself emphatically answers our question. Listen out for his answer, reading from Luke 9:28–36,

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the men were leaving Jesus, Peter said to him, ‘Master, 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 he was saying.) 34 While he was speaking, a cloud appeared and covered them, and they were afraid as they entered the cloud. 35 A voice came from the cloud, saying, ‘This is my Son, whom I have chosen; listen to him.’ 36 When the voice had spoken, they found that Jesus was alone. The disciples kept this to themselves and did not tell anyone at that time what they had seen.

In these two chapters Jesus’ identity has been building; we’ve caught increasing



glimpses of his glory. He's Lord over the natural realm, calming a storm. He's Lord over the supernatural realm, casting out demons. He's the Lord of life, healing, even raising the dead. He's Lord over creation, feeding five thousand people with five loaves and two small fish; tantamount to creating something out of nothing as he did in the beginning. According to Peter, he's the Messiah of God, or the Greek equivalent, the 'Christ' of God – the chosen one of God, who's kingdom and reign will never end. Over these two chapters we've caught glimpses of Jesus' glory but today it is in full view. The same glory, the visible presence of God, that led Israel in the form of a luminous cloud in the Old Testament; the same glorious presence of God that passed before Moses and left his face radiant with God's glory; the same

glorious presence of God that filled the tabernacle, then Solomon's temple, then lit the dark night sky with angels rejoicing at the birth of Jesus – the same glory descends once more to bathe Jesus in light and to once and for all illuminate his true identity. Who is Jesus?

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For a brief moment the veil of Jesus' hu-

manity is lifted and his inner circle – Peter, James and John – see him as he truly is. The glory that has always been in the depths of his being, his true essence, momentarily, blindingly, shines through. Moses is there, Elijah is there – the two greatest figures in the Old Testament who had conversed with God on mountaintops again today are conversing with God on a mountaintop. Peter, James and John are dumbfounded. They're lost for words, until, embarrassingly, Peter mumbles something about putting up some tents. God himself cuts him off with words that must forevermore put an end to any question as to who Jesus is.

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the cloud. 35 A voice came from the cloud, saying, ‘This is my Son, whom I have chosen; listen to him.’

## **Think & Pray**

Who is Jesus to you? All of eternity hangs on how you answer this question. Jesus is a far greater authority than Moses or Elijah. The Law handed down to Moses and the Prophets of whom Elijah was the greatest were only partial expressions, but here is the final statement,

‘This is my Son ... listen to him.’

Hebrews 1:1–2,

In the past God spoke to our ancestors through the prophets at many

times and in various ways, 2 but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, and through whom also he made the universe.

Given who he is, everything depends on listening to Jesus. Who is Jesus to you? Are you listening to him? He said,

‘I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.’ John 14:6

Is he your truth, your life? Jesus said,

‘Let anyone who is thirsty come to me and drink.’ John 7:37

Are you satisfied in him? Or are you

looking elsewhere to be satisfied?  
Jesus said,

28 ‘Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. 29 Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. 30 For my yoke is easy and my burden is light.’  
Matt 11:28–30

Are you busy and stressed? Feeling restless and incomplete? Find rest for your soul in him.

Reflect on who Jesus is and what he has said to you. Then pray to him this morning as you set out about your week. Who is Jesus? He’s everything to us. Tell him so

in prayer. What has he said to you? Are you listening and obeying? Ask for God's help to do so today.