

# Simply Jesus

## The Life and Ministry of God's Son

### Inductive: Lesson 11

#### Introduction

Matthew explains that “after six days Jesus took Peter, James, and John his brother, led them up on a high mountain by themselves, and He was transfigured before them.” Were these six days comprised of more of the same: miracles, multitudes, and merciful acts of kindness? Or were they days of solitude Jesus enjoyed with His men? We aren't told, but maybe there was time to digest what the disciples were privileged to earlier eyewitness about their Messiah. Why did Jesus take three disciples along with Him? Why these particular three? He didn't explain His choice, leaving us to speculate. Perhaps it is because these three—Peter, James, and John—were about to experience up close the Lord's agony in the garden, and they would need the memory of this first occasion to help them withstand the second.

The startling manifestation of Jesus' glory would be followed by another display of His compassion for a boy and more lessons for the disciples to learn. Questions of course would come—they always do—when that which is human attempts to lay hold of that which is divine. One by one the answers would follow, as Jesus unfolded the mysterious truths the eyes of the disciples beheld. Jesus made everything simple to His own, but there remained still a lot to understand. He would help them see that what perplexes the human mind becomes peace in the human heart through God's comforting Spirit. Shortly, He would define the gift of His Spirit with the offer to receive Him.

#### Did you know

Pastor and commentator Ivor Powell noted in his book, “Matthew's Majestic Gospel,” the following fascinating comment: *It is impossible to overemphasize the importance of the transfiguration experience in the life of the Savior. From it, Jesus looked back to the cradle and creation, and onward to the cross and the crown. With Him were Moses and Elijah, the prophets, who represented all others whose ministry prepared the world for the Lord's first coming; with Him also were those who would, with their successors, prepare the world for His return.*

Open your Bible and lesson each day by beginning with a word of prayer.

## Up Close ~

The chart below represents a reader's guide to the contents of this week's lesson. The topical teachings and/or events covered are followed by the primary scriptural text as well as the supportive parallel passages. You will be able to receive and grasp a well-rounded picture of the story narrative in the Gospel harmony by reading every passage. However, using the bolded text as your point of reference (your anchor text) will allow you to determine the facts, lessons, and personal applications necessary to formulate your own conclusions.

<u>Teaching / Event</u>	<u>Scripture Text</u>	<u>Parallel Passages</u>
The Transfiguration	<b>Matthew 17:1–13</b>	Mark 9:2–13; Luke 9:28–36
Mustard Seed Faith	<b>Matthew 17:14–21</b>	Mark 9:14–29; Luke 9:37–43a
Jesus Predicts His Death a Second Time	<b>Matthew 17:22–23</b>	Mark 9:30–32; Luke 9:43b–45

## First Impressions: Group Discussion

**Reflect** for a moment on the passages you have just read.

**Respond** by recording your first impressions from your initial reading of the text. Be prepared to share one of your impressions with your discussion group.

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## Heartbeat: Matthew 17:20 NKJV (Memory verse)

(Write it out once in the space below. **Practice it each time** you open your lesson.)

*. . . Assuredly, I say to you, if you have faith as a mustard seed, you will say to this mountain, 'Move from here to there,' and it will move; and nothing will be impossible for you.*

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1 Now after six days Jesus took Peter, James, and John his brother,  
led them up on a high mountain by themselves;

2 and He was transfigured before them. His face shone like the sun, and His clothes  
became as white as the light.

3 And behold, Moses and Elijah appeared to them, talking with Him.

4 Then Peter answered and said to Jesus, ‘Lord, it is good for us to be here; if You wish, let us  
make here three tabernacles: one for You, one for Moses, and one for Elijah.’

5 While he was still speaking, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them; and suddenly a voice  
came out of the cloud, saying, ‘This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. Hear Him!’

6 And when the disciples heard it, they fell on their faces and were greatly afraid.

7 But Jesus came and touched them and said, ‘Arise, and do not be afraid.’

8 When they had lifted up their eyes, they saw no one but Jesus only.

9 Now as they came down from the mountain, Jesus commanded them, saying,  
‘Tell the vision to no one until the Son of Man is risen from the dead.’

10 And His disciples asked Him, saying, ‘Why then do the scribes say that  
Elijah must come first?’

11 Jesus answered and said to them, ‘Indeed, Elijah is coming first and will restore all things.

12 But I say to you that Elijah has come already, and they did not know him but did to him  
whatever they wished. Likewise the Son of Man is also about to suffer at their hands.’

13 Then the disciples understood that He spoke to them of John the Baptist.

Matthew 17:14–21

Mustard Seed Faith: A Boy is Healed

14 And when they had come to the multitude, a man came to Him,  
kneeling down to Him and saying,

15 ‘Lord, have mercy on my son, for he is an epileptic and suffers severely;  
for he often falls into the fire and often into the water.

16 So I brought him to Your disciples, but they could not cure him.’

17 Then Jesus answered and said, ‘O faithless and perverse generation, how long shall I be  
with you? How long shall I bear with you? Bring him here to Me.’

18 And Jesus rebuked the demon, and it came out of him;  
and the child was cured from that very hour.

19 Then the disciples came to Jesus privately and said, ‘Why could we not cast it out?’

20 So Jesus said to them, ‘Because of your unbelief; for assuredly, I say to you,  
if you have faith as a mustard seed, you will say to this mountain, “Move from here to there,”  
and it will move; and nothing will be impossible for you.

21 However, this kind does not go out except by prayer and fasting.’

Matthew 17:22–23

Jesus Predicts His Death a Second Time

22 Now while they were staying in Galilee, Jesus said to them,  
‘The Son of Man is about to be betrayed into the hands of men,  
23 and they will kill Him, and the third day He will be raised up.’

And they were exceedingly sorrowful.

(Scripture from the New King James Bible, © 1980 by Thomas Nelson, Inc. Used by permission.)

## Observation: Look!

Pray. Read the Bible passage several times, trying to get a big picture of what is going on.

Left Column (Facts): Following the writer in the order he tells the story, briefly describe who is involved, what is happening, when and where the events are taking place.

Right Column (Observations): Look closely to observe details. Some questions you may ask:

- What do you know about the people involved in the story? What questions does the story raise? What sources of conflict do you see? What does Jesus identify as true and important to life?
- Put yourself in the Biblical character's shoes. What were his ambitions? How did the character relate to others or to God? What problem did he think he faced? Did Jesus identify a different problem in his life? What did he discover about God? How did he respond?
- Are there any words that you are not familiar with? Look up the definition.
- Are there words or phrases that are repeated or emphasized? Why are they key?
- Identify comparisons, such as "The kingdom of heaven is like leaven..." What do you know about leaven (yeast)? Identify contrasts, such as "You have heard it said...but I say to you..."
- Extra: Record information you may find in Bible dictionaries, maps, handbooks, or encyclopedias. Understanding the culture/time in which Jesus lived will help you discover the meaning of the text.

Matthew 17:1–13

The Transfiguration

What does it say? (Facts from passage)

What do I see? (Personal research/observations)

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**Matthew 17:14–21      Mustard Seed Faith: A Boy is Healed**

What does it say? (Facts from passage)

What do I see? (Personal research/observations)

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**Matthew 17:22–23      Jesus Predicts His Death a Second Time**

What does it say? (Facts from passage)

What do I see? (Personal research/observations)

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## Interpretation: What does it mean?

Pray. The more time you take to observe the passage, the more you will have a basis for understanding what God's Word means. Interpretation **always** seeks to answer the questions, "What was God saying to the original audience?" and then, "How does that same truth relate to life today?" Asking yourself questions will help you see the spiritual lesson in the text: What does this teach me is true about God? What does it teach me is true about mankind? Is there a command to obey? Is there a promise to claim? Is there a condition to the promise? Is there an example I should follow or avoid? A spiritual lesson is a timeless truth that points to God and speaks to the heart of man. Stating the lesson in a sentence of 10 words or less will help you keep it simple and memorable.

**Application:** How does it apply to me? Pray. Practicing Biblical truth day-to-day is the only way to grow in Christ and reflect the glory of God. To apply the spiritual lesson you have learned from the text, you have to take deliberate action. Take the time to examine yourself, and ask: Does this spiritual lesson point out error in my thoughts about God? Does it point to error in my attitude or actions? How does this lesson relate to my home life, my work, my relationships, how I spend my time, etc? What change is required? What practical steps will I take to make that change? Write your application in the form of a question to help make it personal.

Matthew 17:1–13

Lesson: \_\_\_\_\_

Application: \_\_\_\_\_

Matthew 17:14–21

Lesson: \_\_\_\_\_

Application: \_\_\_\_\_

Matthew 17:22–23

Lesson: \_\_\_\_\_

Application: \_\_\_\_\_

## Behold & Be Transformed

What did you see as you beheld God's Son?

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How does beholding (looking upon) Him, motivate you to change your thoughts, habit, attitude, speech or actions?

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**Pause . . .** What is the most significant lesson you have learned this week?

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**Ponder . . .** How will you put it into practice?

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**Pray . . .** Write out your prayer and be specific.

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