

MARK 9 – A TWO-ACT PLAY?

Wow, talk about your mystery theatre events! The first story in Mark 9 is filled with mystery and wonder on this “road trip” to transfiguration and more ...

ACT 1

Your teacher takes three of you off on a “road trip” to a high mountain. There, you experience a change in this teacher – a person already dazzling with his words and actions, he is now transformed physically and is talking with sages from ages past. Where did these guys come from?

You’re tongue-tied, yet you manage to offer a celebration at the gathering of three such important people in the life of the church. Why did that offer come out of your mouth?

As if this trip is not wild enough already, God then enters the scene in dramatic climate fashion (a cloud) and confirms that your teacher is God’s Child and that you should listen to him. What a way to end the first act!

ACT 2

The curtain opens with the three disciples chattering about who that was in the cloud. The voice sounded like George Burns to Peter; James thought it was more like Morgan Freeman, and John wasn’t sure it was a male voice at all - maybe a deeper female voice like Kate Smith’s? What they all knew was that this was the voice of God!

Jesus confirms that this is the voice of his Parent. They are all invigorated by this experience and heightened energy levels allow them to make good time down the mountain. What a road trip!

- Did they all hear Moses emphasizing actions for Jesus to take, using his experiences with Pharaoh for emphasis?
- Was Elijah really describing how he ascended so Jesus could take that into account for his own life?
- Then there was the dramatic entrance of God. Could there be any doubt now, that Jesus the Christ was God’s Son?

Wait ‘til they got back and could tell the others!

They are stunned when Jesus says there will be no talking of this with the others, at least not while he is still alive.

WHAT? That’s just not fair!

The four return to the full group and live through the rest of Jesus the Christ’s life. Once Jesus is dead, the three disciples spread the word about this mountaintop experience to their friends and colleagues. There are clues but little proof to share with the others - even less so now because the “key witness” is no longer with them physically!

Who will believe in these events and in Someone they can’t see?

It’s a mystery of faith, isn’t it? 😊

REFLECTION

What are your ACT 1 experiences as a Christian? Can you describe times in your life where God felt this close – as though in a cloud right near – yet a mystery to fully describe? How will you share those moments with others as you continue in ACT 2 during this season of Advent and in the years ahead?

STEVE'S REFLECTION

As for me, the mystery is lessening. My journey has led to less concern with the "who done it" answers of the exact sound of God's voice, whether Jesus was really born in a stable, changing water into wine, etc. and more about the underlying truths of the messages: during Advent and all year-round, how can we embrace the fruits of the Spirit and be more God-like, listening to the Spirit in us and using Jesus the Christ (God's child) as a loving, caring, nurturing, mentoring example!

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Mark 9:2-9

9:2 Six days later, Jesus took with him Peter and James and John, and led them up a high mountain apart, by themselves. And he was transfigured before them, 9:3 and his clothes became dazzling white, such as no one on earth could bleach them. 9:4 And there appeared to them Elijah with Moses, who were talking with Jesus. 9:5 Then Peter said to Jesus, "Rabbi, it is good for us to be here; let us make three dwellings, one for you, one for Moses, and one for Elijah." 9:6 He did not know what to say, for they were terrified. 9:7 Then a cloud overshadowed them, and from the cloud there came a voice, "This is my Son, the Beloved; listen to him!" 9:8 Suddenly when they looked around, they saw no one with them any more, but only Jesus. 9:9 As they were coming down the mountain, he ordered them to tell no one about what they had seen, until after the Son of Man had risen from the dead.