

Jesus reveals his identity

Lesson 04 of the series “Jesus in Action”

1. Jesus is transfigured in front of three of his disciples.

“Six days later Jesus took Peter, James, and John, and led them up a high mountain to be alone. As the men watched, Jesus’ appearance was transformed, and his clothes became dazzling white, far whiter than any earthly bleach could ever make them.” Mark 9:2-3 (NLT)

Note: Jesus revealed a glimpse of the heavenly glory he laid aside in order to become one of us. “Though he was God, he did not think of equality with God as something to cling to. Instead, he gave up his divine privileges; he took the humble position of a slave and was born as a human being.” Philippians 2:6-7 (NLT)

Then Elijah and Moses appeared and began talking with Jesus. Peter exclaimed, “Rabbi, it’s wonderful for us to be here! Let’s make three shelters as memorials—one for you, one for Moses, and one for Elijah.” He said this because he didn’t really know what else to say, for they were all terrified. Then a cloud overshadowed them, and a voice from the cloud said, “This is my dearly loved Son. Listen to him.” Suddenly, when they looked around, Moses and Elijah were gone, and only Jesus was with them. As they went back down the mountain, he told them not to tell anyone what they had seen until the Son of Man had risen from the dead. So they kept it to themselves, but they often asked each other what he meant by “rising from the dead.” Jesus responded... “Why do the Scriptures say that the Son of Man must suffer greatly and be treated with utter contempt?” Mark 9:4-12 (NLT)

Note: It was vitally important to Jesus that his disciples correctly embrace his identity and his mission. “Who do people say I am?” “Well,” they replied, “some say John the Baptist, some say Elijah, and others say you are one of the other prophets.” Then he asked them, “But who do you say I am?” Peter replied, “You are the Messiah.” ...Then Jesus began to tell them that the Son of Man must suffer many terrible things and be rejected by the elders, the leading priests, and the teachers of religious law. He would be killed, but three days later he would rise from the dead. As he talked about this openly with his disciples, Peter took him aside and began to reprimand him for saying such things. Jesus turned around and looked at his disciples, then reprimanded Peter. “Get away from me, Satan!” he said. “You are seeing things merely from a human point of view, not from God’s.” Mark 8:27-33 (NLT)

Note: Peter projected his faulty expectations of the Messiah on Jesus.

Life Application: We must embrace Jesus’ identity and mission as revealed in the Bible.

“For we were not making up clever stories when we told you about the powerful coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. We saw his majestic splendor with our own eyes when he received honor and glory from God the Father. The voice from the majestic glory of God said to him, “This is my dearly loved Son, who brings me great joy.” We ourselves heard that voice from heaven when we were with him on the holy mountain. Because of that experience, we have even greater confidence in the message proclaimed by the prophets. You must pay close attention to what they wrote, for their words are like a lamp shining in a dark place—until the Day dawns, and Christ the Morning Star shines in your hearts.” 2 Peter 1:16-19 (NLT)

2. Jesus drives an evil spirit out of a boy.

When they returned to the other disciples, they saw a large crowd surrounding them, and some teachers of religious law were arguing with them. When the crowd saw Jesus, they were overwhelmed with awe, and they ran to greet him. “What is all this arguing about?” Jesus asked. One of the men in the crowd spoke up and said, “Teacher, I brought my son so you could heal him. He is possessed by an evil spirit that won’t let him talk. And whenever this spirit seizes him, it throws him violently to the ground. Then he foams at the mouth and grinds his teeth and becomes rigid. So I asked your disciples to cast out the evil spirit, but they couldn’t do it.” Jesus said to them, “You faithless people! How long must I be with you? How long must I put up with you? Bring the boy to me.” So they brought the boy. But when the evil spirit saw Jesus, it threw the child into a violent convulsion, and he fell to the ground, writhing and foaming at the mouth. “How long has this been happening?” Jesus asked the boy’s father. He replied, “Since he was a little boy. The spirit often throws him into the fire or into water, trying to kill him. Have mercy on us and help us, if you can.” “What do you mean, ‘If I can’?” Jesus asked. “Anything is possible if a person believes.” The father instantly cried out, “I do believe, but help me overcome my unbelief!” When Jesus saw that the crowd of onlookers was growing, he rebuked the evil spirit. “Listen, you spirit that makes this boy unable to hear and speak,” he said. “I command you to come out of this child and never enter him again!” Then the spirit screamed and threw the boy into another violent convulsion and left him. The boy appeared to be dead. A murmur ran through

the crowd as people said, "He's dead." But Jesus took him by the hand and helped him to his feet, and he stood up. Afterward, when Jesus was alone in the house with his disciples, they asked him, "Why couldn't we cast out that evil spirit?" Jesus replied, "This kind can be cast out only by prayer." Mark 9:14-29 (NLT)

Life Application: We will never be effective in ministry unless we stay closely connected to Jesus.

"Remain in me, and I will remain in you. For a branch cannot produce fruit if it is severed from the vine, and you cannot be fruitful unless you remain in me. "Yes, I am the vine; you are the branches. Those who remain in me, and I in them, will produce much fruit. For apart from me you can do nothing."

John 15:4-5 (NLT)

Life Application: Private, personal time in prayer is vital for us to stay closely connected to Jesus.

"As often as possible Jesus withdrew to out-of-the-way places for prayer." Luke 5:16 (MSG)

"But when you pray, go away by yourself, shut the door behind you, and pray to your Father in private. Then your Father, who sees everything, will reward you." Matthew 6:6 (NLT)

Life Application: Our faith will grow as our relationship with God grows.

"And now, just as you accepted Christ Jesus as your Lord, you must continue to follow him. Let your roots grow down into him, and let your lives be built on him. Then your faith will grow strong in the truth you were taught, and you will overflow with thankfulness." Colossians 2:6-7 (NLT)

JOHN SCHMIDT • 04-02-17 • john@centeringlives.com

Connect Group Discussion Questions

1. Describe an experience in your life when you knew God had revealed something to you (an answer to a difficult problem a knew perspective, an exciting, clear understanding of a Scripture passage, etc.). How did you respond?
2. Read Mark 9:2-12 & Philippians 2:5-11. Why do you think Jesus wanted some of his disciples to see him in all of his glory? Why was it necessary for him to become human anyway?
3. Read John 15:4-5 & Mark 9:14-29? Why couldn't the disciples cast out the demon who was tormenting a little boy?
4. At Centerpoint we often say that the pathway to drawing close to God involves 4 steps:
 - surrender
 - listen
 - pray
 - obey

Why do we need to surrender first? What does this look like in a daily relationship with Jesus?

5. Read Matthew 6:3-15. How would you describe your personal prayer times with God (non-existent, weak, dull, powerful, best part of my day)? Why? Describe someone who has a vibrant prayer life. How can you tell?
6. Read Colossians 2:6-7. How does someone get more faith? Can you store faith away like food or cash? Can you buy it/sell it? How do we maintain it?

Quotations to ponder:

"If you only pray when you're in trouble... you're in trouble!" unknown

"The secret of praying is praying in secret. A sinning man will stop praying and a praying man will stop sinning."
Leonard Ravenhill

"To be honest, I'm afraid not to make time to pray. I don't want to miss out on the power that is necessary to really help others. I don't want to miss out on the power that's necessary to impact the world around me. I don't want to miss out on the power of prayer that moves heaven and changes nations. But I will miss out if I don't make the time to draw a side with Him in private prayer." Anne Graham Lotz