

Summary

Pastor Dave teaches from Mark 9 about Jesus' transfiguration on the sacred mountain, emphasizing the need to escape the noise of our busy lives to hear God's voice clearly. He shares personal stories about how his wife helped him recognize his soul exhaustion from being sinfully busy, leading to forced spiritual retreats that transformed his perspective. The message explores three key aspects of the transfiguration: revelation of glory (seeing Jesus for who He truly is), affirmation of identity (hearing God's voice about our true identity), and preparation for the valley (being equipped for life's challenges). Pastor Dave challenges the congregation to schedule regular spiritual retreats, arguing that just as Jesus needed time away from the crowds to connect with the Father, we too need intentional time away from our busy schedules to gain spiritual clarity and rest.

Intro Prayer

Father, we come before You this morning acknowledging our need for Your presence and Your voice in our lives. We confess that we often get caught up in the busyness and noise of our daily routines, and our spiritual vision becomes blurry. Lord, we ask that You would quiet our hearts and minds right now. Help us to be open to what You want to speak to us today through Your Word and through our time together. Remove any distractions or preoccupations that might prevent us from hearing clearly from You. Holy Spirit, we invite You to move among us and teach us what it means to find true rest in You. In Jesus' name we pray, Amen.

Ice Breaker

What's the most beautiful or peaceful place you've ever visited that made you want to stay there forever?

Key Verses

1. Mark 9:2-3
2. Mark 9:7
3. 2 Peter 1:16-18
4. Matthew 11:28-30

Questions

1. Pastor Dave shared how his wife had to force him into a spiritual retreat because she saw his soul exhaustion. Have you ever experienced or witnessed this kind of spiritual burnout? What were the signs?
2. Jesus regularly withdrew from the crowds to spend time with the Father. What prevents you from creating similar rhythms of rest and solitude in your own life?
3. On the mountain, the disciples experienced a 'revelation of glory' - seeing Jesus for who He truly is. How has your understanding or vision of Jesus changed over time?

4. The Father's voice affirmed Jesus' identity saying 'This is my son, whom I love.' How does our busy culture attack our identity, and how can we find affirmation in God's voice rather than our productivity?
5. Moses and Elijah appeared to prepare Jesus for His upcoming suffering in Jerusalem. How has God used times of rest or retreat to prepare you for difficult seasons?
6. Pastor Dave mentioned that 'you cannot stay on the summit forever' but that we can live in the valley by the memory of what we saw on the mountain. How can we carry mountain-top experiences into our everyday lives?
7. The message emphasized that we are 'human beings' not 'human doings.' What would it look like practically to work from rest rather than working toward rest?
8. Jesus took Peter, James, and John with Him up the mountain. Who in your life could you invite to join you in pursuing deeper spiritual rhythms and accountability?

Life Application

This week, take a concrete step toward creating space for God in your life. Get out your calendar and schedule at least 48 hours between now and Christmas for a personal spiritual retreat - whether alone or with close friends/family. Choose a specific location, invite trusted people if desired, and make a simple plan for how you'll spend the time seeking God's presence. If a full retreat isn't possible, commit to at least one full day away from your normal routine to pray, read Scripture, and listen for God's voice.

Key Takeaways

1. Our busy, fast-paced culture can cause spiritual vision to become blurry, and we need intentional time away from the noise to hear God's voice clearly
2. On the sacred mountain, God provides three things: revelation of His glory, affirmation of our identity, and preparation for the valleys we must walk through
3. Just as Jesus regularly withdrew from crowds to connect with the Father, we need rhythms of rest and solitude to sustain our spiritual lives
4. We are human beings, not human doings - our value comes from our identity in Christ, not our productivity or busyness
5. God wants to invite us up the sacred mountain not to escape life permanently, but to gain perspective and strength for living faithfully in the valley

Ending Prayer

Lord Jesus, thank You for the example You set of regularly withdrawing from the busyness of ministry to spend time with the Father. We confess that we have often tried to live at a pace that even You, in Your humanity, knew was unsustainable. Help us to trust that You have good things waiting for us when we slow down and create space to hear Your voice. Give us the courage to step away from our to-do lists and the wisdom to know that our identity and worth come from You, not from our productivity. As we commit to seeking You on the sacred mountain, prepare our hearts for whatever valleys lie ahead. May we become a people who work from rest rather than toward rest, reflecting Your unforced rhythms of grace to a hurried and weary world. In Your precious name we pray, Amen.