

**Mark 9: 4-8; "Hear My Beloved Son", Sermon # 70 in the series –  
"Astonished at His Teaching", Delivered by Pastor Paul Rendall on  
May 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2010, in the Afternoon Worship Service.**

In last Sunday's sermon we spent all of our time thinking together about the revelation of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ. The transfiguration was a revelation of the glory of Christ to these three men; Peter, James, and John. They were witnesses to the reality of the strength and the power; the beauty and the holiness, of who the Lord Jesus really is. He is the Lord of Glory. What they saw and experienced, they wrote down for us so that we can perceive that this glory, which shone forth from Christ's face and His garments on that night for a few brief minutes, is meant to be a taste of the glory that you and I shall experience forever if we have believed in Jesus for the salvation of our sins. Have you come to know the greatness of the glory of God? Do you have Christ in you, the hope of glory? Have you come to understand, even in a small way, the greatness of the experience of the glory which is yours, even now, in Jesus Christ? And do you perceive how exceedingly great this glory will be through all of eternity, for each one who is trusting in Him? Truly it can be so, if you will take Jesus as your Savior and your Lord. May He be yours this very day by your believing the glory of what He did for sinners at the cross. This is what Moses and Elijah were speaking of when they appeared with Jesus in the transfiguration. They were standing there in the glory with Him, but they weren't speaking of the glory of being there with Him. They were speaking of His going to the cross and suffering there. They were speaking of His resurrection from the dead; His departure which He was about to accomplish at Jerusalem, His exodus (This is the word in the Greek which is translated "departure"). They were speaking of the sufferings which Jesus would undergo; they were speaking about His departure out of this world; His being victorious over sin and death, His ascending to reign in the glory at the right hand of the Father on High. But there was a certain and most definite point of application which was being made there in the transfiguration, by God the Father Himself. And sometimes I think that Christians do not focus upon it as they should. It is the phrase, "This is My beloved Son, Hear Him!" The Father of glory; the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ did not say, "This is My beloved Son, See Him!" Rather it is – "This is My beloved Son—Hear Him!" The Father was not only bearing testimony to the fact that Jesus Christ was and is His Son, and beloved by Him. That is certainly a great enough truth to consider. But He was commanding these disciples, and all of us also, who have believed in their word, to hear Him. That is the primary thing which He would have us to do in light of the revelation of the glory of Christ – to hear Him.

So the proposition which I have for you this morning is this. It does not matter, for the disciple of Christ, if he or she has had the greatest of spiritual experiences of Christ, if they do not hear and heed His words which He has spoken. The Father is pleased; only with our faith and obedience in Christ. He is interested in our recognizing the glory of Christ in this specific way; that we will hear Him. For us modern-day Christians who do not have revelatory experiences like Peter, James, and John did; at least not on that same level; it is very important that you and I understand where we do have Christ's glory revealed to us; more than in any other way. It comes to us; the revelation of Christ's glory comes to us, in the preaching of the Word of God. When Christ is preached to us, and the word comes to us accompanied by the power of Spirit of God, Christ is revealed to our minds and hearts in this holy and glorious way, more than in any other way. Since this is how the glory of Christ is being revealed to us, in and through the preaching of His word; then how do we know if we are spiritually hearing Christ in the way that the Father was exhorting these three Apostles? Well, I believe that there are 3 ways that we can know if we are hearing Him, which we will glean from the text that we are studying today. 1<sup>st</sup> - We know that we are truly hearing Jesus if we will receive and believe the truth that Moses and Elijah were alive and already glorified at that very hour in which the transfiguration took place. 2<sup>ndly</sup>- We know that we are truly hearing Jesus if we will receive and believe the things that Moses and Elijah have said about Him. And 3<sup>rdly</sup> - We will know that we are truly hearing Jesus if we are focusing our greatest attention on our cultivating our fellowship with Him.

**1<sup>st</sup> of all - We know that we are truly hearing Jesus if we will receive and believe the truth that Moses and Elijah are indeed raised from the dead.**

Verse 4 says, "And Elijah appeared to them with Moses, and they were talking with Jesus." The Apostles, when they waked up from their sleeping state, they saw and they knew these 2 men to be Elijah and Moses. Luke's gospel says, "And behold, two men talked with Him, who were Moses and Elijah, who appeared in glory and spoke of His decease which He was about to accomplish at Jerusalem." I think that these men were not apparitions; they were not the ghosts of these men. They were the men themselves as they are now in glory. Now, you and I should not have any trouble believing that Elijah could be there in his glorified body, because we read the account of his being taken up into heaven in a whirlwind; his riding to heaven in a chariot of fire. I hope that you will grasp the idea that that he was transformed and glorified as he went. Flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God. He must have been changed and glorified that day he went to heaven. He was like Enoch, who it says in Hebrews 11: 5, "By faith Enoch was taken away so that he did not see death, and was not found, because God had taken him; for before he was taken he had this testimony, that he pleased God." This same evaluation on God's part, concerning Elijah, was that he pleased Him. This was no doubt true, and the reality is; that neither Enoch nor Elijah ever saw

death. There are but a few persons in the glory today, who are there in their glorified body. But there are some. Moses and Elijah and Enoch are alive and glorified in heaven today. I think we can also safely add, those who were raised from the dead at the same time as the Lord Jesus. They are mentioned in Matthew 27: 52 and 53. It says there: "Then, behold, the veil of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom; and the earth quaked, and the rocks were split, and the graves were opened; and many bodies of the saints who had fallen asleep were raised; and coming out of the graves after His resurrection, they went into the holy city and appeared to many. This is not the walking dead. This is some of the saints whose bodies had been in the cemetery just outside of Jerusalem who were raised from the dead. They were raised from the dead when the veil of the temple was torn in two, at the time of Jesus' death. But they came out of their graves after His resurrection, and they went into the holy city and appeared to many. John Gill believes that they continued on during the 40 days when Christ was appearing to His disciples and that they ascended with Him to heaven. They did not go back to their graves. God appointed that they should remain alive during the 40 days of Jesus time when He revealed Himself as the resurrected Christ; before His Ascension. And then, I believe, that at the time that Jesus ascended, they ascended to heaven with Him.

But you will say to me, "But what about Moses?" "He died didn't he?" "How could he be glorified at the time of the transfiguration?" Well, you know if you have read your Bibles, that Moses most definitely did die, and it was recorded for us in Deuteronomy 34: 5 and 6. "So Moses the servant of the Lord died there in the land of Moab, according to the word of the Lord." "And He (that is, the Lord) buried him in a valley in the land of Moab, opposite Beth Peor; but no one knows his grave to this day." Well, at some point; we are not told when; it may have been when Christ was raised, Moses must have been raised from the dead to appear as he did with Elijah at the Transfiguration. If the Lord buried him; the Lord also knew how to raise him from dead and the grave. We should not be surprised at these things. It should not be thought incredible by any Christian here today, that God raises the dead. However in the case of these saints it is an incredible witness, and an incredible privilege. Listen to the words of Thomas Manton –"That they appeared in bodies is certain, for bodily acts and properties are ascribed to them—as their talking with Christ, their being seen by the apostles; for a spirit cannot be seen." "If in bodies, why not their own?" "It is as easy to the Lord to cause them to appear in their own bodies as in a body assumed for this special purpose and service; and they were known by the disciples to be Moses and Elijah, not by the external lineaments, for they never saw them in person before, but either were made known to them by some internal revelation, or by Christ's words, or by some words of Moses and Elijah themselves; but which waysoever they knew them, certain it is they knew them, and took them to be Moses and Elijah, therefore Moses and Elijah they were, both as to soul and body." "The apostles that were admitted to this transfiguration were not to be deceived by a false appearance, for

they that were admitted to this transfiguration were not to be deceived by a false appearance, for they were admitted to be confirmed in the truth of Christ's person and office, that by what they saw they might confirm others." "How would it weaken the testimony if what they saw appearing before them in glory were not the bodies of Moses and Elijah but only other bodies assumed!" I agree with Thomas Manton. Moses was raised from the dead and Elijah was translated so that he did not see death. Flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God. Therefore they were not only raised; and not only raised in their own bodies, but they were glorified bodies. All this, of course, could only happen according to the will of the Father who had spoken His word to them and through them. But no doubt it did happen.

**2ndly- We know that we are truly hearing Jesus if we will receive and believe the things that Moses and Elijah have said about Him.**

Moses and Elijah were great witnesses during the time of their lives upon the earth, and they continue to be a great witness to every person who will believe or who is thinking about believing in Jesus Christ. If we would know God and be saved from our sins, we should indeed hear and receive their witness. But why Moses and Elijah? Why were they in particular singled out for this great privilege to be raised from the dead before the time of Christ's Second Coming; before even the resurrection of Christ Himself? It is because they as individual men represent the entire witness of the Law and the Prophets. It is imperative that every person who would believe in Christ, should believe their witness. Turn with me to Romans Chapter 3, and verse 21. "But now the righteousness of God apart from the law is revealed, being witnessed by the Law and the Prophets, even the righteousness of God, through faith in Jesus Christ, to all and on all who believe." The phrase, the Law and the Prophets is referring to the people who received the revelation of God's Law and wrote it down for the people of God, or spoke it to them. The Law and the prophets set down and set forth the Word of God. When it was written down it became the "more sure word of prophecy" of the Old Testament scriptures, and even the New Testament Scriptures that Peter refers to in 2 Peter 1: 1-8. He says there: "For we did not follow cunningly devised fables when we made known to you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eyewitnesses of His majesty." "For He received from God the Father honor and glory when such a voice came to Him from the Excellent Glory: "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well-pleased." "And we heard this voice which came from heaven when we were with Him on the holy mountain." "And so we have the prophetic word confirmed, which you do well to heed as a light that shines in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts." The Law and the Prophets bear witness to Jesus Christ in the Scriptures.

But this verse in Romans is saying that the righteousness of God (which is found by faith in Jesus Christ) is revealed apart from the law, which is a statement of all that God requires of man. If you are under law; if you think that you can keep this law, if you are a person who is trying to please God in this way; then you

should know that you are seeking to establish your own righteousness in the sight of God. If you are attempting to do this, you will utterly fail. Verses 19 and 20 of Chapter 3 of Romans say, "Now we know that whatever the law says, it says to those who are under the law, that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God." "Therefore by the deeds of the law no flesh will be justified in His sight, for by the law is the knowledge of sin." These verses are saying that to know God, and to please Him, you must believe in someone else besides yourself to obtain a perfect righteousness. Yours falls far short. "All we like sheep have gone astray." "We have turned every one to his own way." "But the Lord has laid the iniquity of us all on Him." (Isaiah 53: 6) The righteousness which God has set forth is found in the giving of His Son, to live and to die for you, if you will have Him. The Law and the Prophets are bearing witness to Jesus Christ, that He alone is perfect. They are saying that He alone would be the One to bear the punishment due your sins. He died so that you would have a better righteousness than your own. Oh, that you would hear the voice of the Law and the Prophets. Oh, that you would hear the voice of God as He speaks to you through them. Turn with me to Deuteronomy Chapter 18, and verse 15. Here is the witness of Moses. "The Lord your God will raise up for you a Prophet like me from your midst, from your brethren." "Him you shall hear, according to all you desired of the Lord your God in Horeb in the day of the assembly, saying, 'Let me not hear again the voice of the Lord my God, nor let me see this great fire anymore, lest I die.'" "And the Lord said to me: 'What they have spoken is good.'" "I will raise up for them a Prophet like you from among their brethren, and will put My words in His mouth, and He shall speak to them all that I command Him." "And it shall be that whoever will not hear My words, which He speaks in My name, I will require it of him." This is exactly what God said on the holy mount, in the transfiguration. "This is My beloved Son –Hear Him!" Moses bears witness to this fact that Jesus is the Prophet who was like him, faithful in all His house. And the fact is, as well, that the person who will not hear His words, it will be required of that person. This verse was quoted by Peter in Acts Chapter 3: 22, where he said to those whom he was preaching to: "For Moses truly said to the fathers, "The Lord your God will raise up for you a Prophet like me from your brethren." "Him you shall hear in all things, whatever He says to you." "And it shall be that every soul who will not hear that Prophet shall be utterly destroyed from among the people." "Yes, and all the prophets, from Samuel and those who follow, as many as have spoken, have also foretold these days." This is why Moses and Elijah were on the mount with Jesus that night. They are witnesses of His glory. Now let me ask you; have you received his witness?

The Law was given by God to Moses on Mt. Sinai. Moses received the commandments on the mountain as a glorious declaration of the will of God to men. The 10 commandments summarize God's holy will for each and every person, and not just for the nation of Israel. There was a glory in the giving of the Law. When Moses was on the mountain with God, God's glory was so great that

Moses' face shown when he came down from the mount. The people did not want God to speak to them, because when He drew near there was thunder and lightning and God's voice frightened them. Since God's law is holy, all the commandments of His law are holy, righteous, and good, it says in Romans 7: 12. Holiness, righteousness, and justice are good things in God because He is a perfect, all wise, and all knowing Being. He would not be God without having these attributes. His holy law bears witness to the strictness of His justice which says that if any man can keep the commandments of God and keep them perfectly, then he can have life. If that person does not keep them perfectly then a curse is upon them. The Law was given through Moses, but grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. The law, it says in 2 Corinthians 3, verse 7, brought only a ministry of death. It could not bring life. It had the power and the right because of God Himself, to command. But the law and its ministry could not give life. But yet it had glory. It had glory in that showed the standard of righteousness which God expected, and that standard could only be fulfilled by God Himself giving us His Only-begotten and beloved Son. The expectation of the law points us to the glory of Christ. Verse 9 of that same chapter says, "For if the ministry of condemnation had glory, the ministry of righteousness exceeds much more in glory." "For even what was made glorious had no glory in this respect, because of the glory that excels. Do you receive the witness of Moses; the witness to Jesus on the night of the transfiguration? Have you come to experience the veil over your heart being lifted so that you can see the glory of Christ? Moses knew that the Lord Jesus was the only one who fulfill the law's demands. He knew of the veil which lies over men's hearts which cannot see the glory of Christ, but sees the glory of the law. Verse 15 of 1st Corinthians 3 says, "But even to this day, when Moses is read, a veil lies on their heart." "Nevertheless when one turns to the Lord, the veil is taken away." "Now the Lord is the Spirit; and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty." "But we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as by the Spirit of the Lord. Are you being transformed from glory to glory? Will you serve and worship the Lord of Glory, the Lord Jesus Christ, and pray to become like Him? Elijah was a prophet who was concerned that people behold the glory of God and come to know Him in truth. He was so concerned that his fellow-countrymen understand that the true and living God, alone, must be worshiped and served, that he issued a challenge to the prophets of Baal. The God who could give the ability of calling down fire from heaven on the sacrifice; that God was the true God. In this statement, and with this ministry, Elijah became the ultimate fulfillment of what all prophets, teachers, pastors and people are to do in their witness. They challenge what is false and damning, and they set forth God in His glory. The prophets like Elijah all set forth the truth that God is just and He must punish sin. They declared the will of God to the people and told them that, 'If God is God, then serve Him.' "But if Baal is God, then serve him." Choose you this day whom you will serve, Elijah said to the people. When they saw Elijah defeat the

prophets of Baal in calling down fire from heaven, then they said, "The Lord He is God." "The Lord He is God." And yet, even though so many had seen this miracle, their hearts were not changed. You see, when you really are beholding the glory of Christ you will become a servant of the Lord. You will worship Him alone. You will, by the grace of Jesus Christ, go about to keep the commandments of God. Moses was a lawgiver; Elijah was a prophet. But he knew that a prophet was a servant of the Lord.

Let's see if we can apply this a bit further. Do you serve God or are you serving money? Do you serve God, or do you serve yourself? Turn with me over to Luke Chapter 16, verse 15. Jesus was being derided by the Pharisees for His saying to them that they could not serve God and money. But in verse 15, He says to them, "You are those who justify yourselves before men, but God knows your hearts. For what is highly esteemed among men is an abomination in the sight of God." "The law and the prophets were until John." "Since that time the kingdom of God has been preached, and everyone is pressing into it." So the law and the prophets that Jesus was talking about were the standing witness of God through Moses as the head representative of the law, and Elijah, the head representative of the Prophets, during the whole Old Testament time. But then Jesus goes on to give a parable; that of Lazarus, a poor beggar, and a rich man who is not named. The poor man Lazarus died and was brought to Abraham's bosom; the picture of the reality of the Old Testament saint's heaven. And the rich man died and went to hell or what is called Hades in verse 23; the place where all the Old Testament dead who had not believed in God and the promise of Christ, went. We should not have a problem in seeing Hades as the very suburbs of Hell, for this rich man was in torments there, and as he lifted up his eyes, he saw Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom. He could see the happiness and contentment of the poor man whom he had never ministered help to, even when he could have. In verse 24 he cried and said, "Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus that he may dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame." "But Abraham said, Son, remember that in your lifetime you received your good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things; but now he is comforted and you are tormented." "And besides all this, between us and you there is a great gulf fixed, so that those who want to pass from here to you cannot, nor can those from there pass to us." This truly is a torment to the damned, and a joy to all the saints that it is so; that a great gulf is fixed between the two places. It will be proved to each one of us here that there are such places. Verse 27 – "Then he said, 'I beg you therefore, father, that you would send him to my father's house, for I have five brothers, that he may testify to them, lest they also come to this place of torment.'" "Abraham said to him, "They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them." "And he said, No, father Abraham; but if one goes to them from the dead, they will repent." "But he said to him, 'If they do not hear Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded though one rise from the dead.'" You can see, here, what the issue was, can't you? This man knew that he had lived his life to himself; he had not lived it

to the glory of God. He wasn't interested in beholding the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ and seeing himself a sinner who needed grace. He was interested in the pleasures and comforts of this earthly life. He was interested in his house, his clothes, and his food. He had plenty enough to spare, but he would not think of the poor beggar who was longing to be fed with the crumbs that fell from his table. Now that the rich man has come to the place of torment, he is concerned for his brothers, that they not perish. He wants Lazarus sent back from the dead to convince them that there was a place of torment. They will believe, he thinks, if someone were to rise from the dead. But father Abraham tells him, "If they do not believe Moses and the Prophets, neither will they be persuaded though one rise from the dead." It is a hard heart that will not believe the testimony of Moses and Elijah, and will not come to see the glory of Christ in the gospel. But it is a tender heart; a heart that God Himself has been working on, by His grace, that will come and behold the glory of Christ in the transfiguration. It is a heart which will readily receive the truths and believe that sin brings everlasting ruin, misery, and despair. But Christ brings life, and joy, and peace, and everlasting happiness. He brings each one who believes in Him to eternal glory.

**And then finally - We will know that we are truly hearing Jesus if we are focusing our greatest attention on our cultivating our fellowship with Him.**

Verse 4 says, "And Elijah appeared to them with Moses, and they were talking with Jesus." "Then Peter answered and said to Jesus, 'Rabbi, it is good for us to be here; and let us make three tabernacles: one for You, one for Moses, and one for Elijah'—"because he did not know what to say, for they were greatly afraid." "And a cloud came and overshadowed them; and a voice came out of the cloud saying, 'This is My beloved Son.'" "Hear Him!" "And suddenly, when they had looked around, they saw no one anymore, but only Jesus with themselves." When you focus your attention on the Lord Jesus and seek to have fellowship with Him, remember that He is in the glory and you here upon the earth. You cannot see Him, but He can see you quite well. Do not be afraid. Your fellowship is with the Father and with the Son and with the Holy Spirit. Your fellowship with Him is a matter of cultivating your faith. You cannot have fellowship with Moses and Elijah as Peter, James, and John did that night. You cannot pray to the saints or Mary as the Roman Catholics think that they can, and really be heard. They are very wrong about this. But you can hear the Lord Jesus speaking to your soul. He speaks to you through the preaching of His Word, and the reading of it in private. There is great glory there, even though the world cannot see it or believe it. But it is very real to the person who does cultivate this fellowship. Are you cultivating fellowship with your Lord, in your heart? Many commentators have censured Peter for this statement of his, concerning the building of the tabernacles, but I do not think that there was any sin here in Peter's saying what He did. He was simply longing to understand better what conversation with a transfigured Jesus and a glorified Moses and Elijah would mean experientially. He longed for this exalted



experience to continue. God didn't see fit to grant that to him then. But he has it now. And we shall have it, before too long, ourselves. What are we to do in the meantime? We us obey the commandment of the Father to "Hear Christ." Let us read His blessed word and we pray as we meditate upon the Scriptures, remembering that we have a friend who sticks closer than a brother. Here there were; disciples who were mere mortal men having this glorious experience of seeing Jesus as He would be when He will come in His kingdom; here they were seeing and hearing the risen Moses and the glorified Elijah; and then suddenly, when they had looked around, they saw no one anymore, but only Jesus with themselves. It was quite startling really. But I am saying to you, that it was enough. It was sufficient for them to only have Jesus. It will be sufficient for you also. Only Jesus with yourself; just you and Jesus; His glory is that great, that it will be enough.