

Living in Anticipation

Mark 9:1-8

We've all had those times. You know; when you so looked forward to something that it affected everything you were doing as you lived in anticipation of the "big event." It would be interesting to take the time to share our various experiences at those diverse times in our lives when a future adventure impacted our attitudes, actions, and motivations leading up to that moment.

And it would be equally surprising how many of our stories would parallel those of others. For instance, how many of us remember the months and weeks of anticipation of testing and receiving our drivers license? Remember those cherished moments with dad or mom in empty parking lots stopping, going, parking, turning right and left? Do you recall reading the test manual, watching other drivers or your parents in an effort to pick up on any hint that would guarantee passing the test the first time.

Or how about when you got engaged and set the date for the wedding? Think about how careful you were to look your best and how you treated your future mate in anticipation of the "big day." Remember the night before the wedding praying in a cold sweat that the Lord would not return until after the wedding and honeymoon?

It's amazing how, when we look forward to something special in the future, it not only affects our present actions in a positive way but also overpowers the negative feelings and behaviors when there is nothing special to anticipate. Actually, if only for a period of time, living in anticipation of a special happening not only affects what we do but also gives us a purpose and enthusiasm for life itself.

In a real sense, living in anticipation is what the Bible often refers to as hope. It is the anticipation of the plan or promise of God that there is a "Big Event" in the future that directly affects everything we do in the present. Living with this expectation overpowers those dark moments when we otherwise feel overwhelmed, discouraged, and yes hopeless. Our anticipation of what God has promised in our future shapes our attitudes, our life choices, our moment-by-moment actions, and becomes the core of our purpose for living. It defines who we are.

There are few passages in Scripture that more dramatically create the anticipation we can have for the future than the passage which will capture our focus today. In the same vein there is nothing that is to have a greater potential for radically affecting our character and actions than the big event revealed in Mark 9:1-8.

Life Response

1. This week MEMORIZE and MEDITATE on 1 John 3:2-3; "*Beloved, now we are children of God, and what we will be has not yet been made known. But we know that when he appears, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is. Everyone who has this hope in him purifies himself, just as he is pure.*"
2. How would you define the impact of the imminent return of Christ and being in his presence as was Peter, James and John were? To what extent does this future reality affect your present lifestyle, attitude, and purpose?
3. Think for a moment about those things that truly motivate you . . . that cause you to want to get up in the morning?... that overpower any negative, oppressive attitudes or feelings? Are they eternal anticipations or are they temporal? Read I Corinthians 15:50-58. How should this passage define what we do? What we plan and live for?
4. Review 2 Peter 1:16-21 in context of Mark 9:1-9. Now identify the seven character qualities in verses 5-11 given with anticipation of the hope of the eternal kingdom and "The Majestic Glory" of verse 17. Write a brief description of where you are in practicing these qualities.

Matthew 16:28, 17:8 (RSB, pg. 1545)	Mark 9:1-8 (RSB, pg. 1595)	Luke 9:27-36 (RSB pg. 1640)
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“As we surrender body, mind, and will, the Lord transforms us from within so that we are not conformed to the world. As we behold Him in the Word, we are “transfigured” by the Spirit “from glory to glory.”

- Dr. Warren W. Wiersbe -

The Theological Promise:

The Applicational Practice: