

Date: Sunday March 28, 2021 **Scripture:** Mark 9:9-13

Well, this morning we continue in Mark chapter 9. We've been in Mark for a while now and we come to this great passage. This somewhat confusing passage here in Mark chapter 9, verses 9 through 13, and you can see the title of this sermon here, is the Q&A with Jesus. Mark chapter 9 and starting in verse 9. Will you read along with me as I read our passage this morning?

9 As they were coming down from the mountain, He gave them orders not to relate to anyone what they had seen, until the Son of Man rose from the dead. 10 They seized upon that statement, discussing with one another what rising from the dead meant. 11 They asked Him, saying, "Why is it that the scribes say that Elijah must come first?" 12 And He said to them, "Elijah does first come and restore all things. And yet how is it written of the Son of Man that He will suffer many things and be treated with contempt? 13 But I say to you that Elijah has indeed come, and they did to him whatever they wished, just as it is written of him." (Mark 9:9-13)

As people grow in their faith in Christ there are many questions that arise regarding truths that are found in the Bible. For example, I remember being saved, and being on fire for Christ. I understood the gospel, repentance for my sin, and faith in Christ. And I was hungry for the Word. But I didn't know a lot about doctrine. There were a lot of things that I needed to learn. I had a basic understanding of the Bible and even though I grew up in a Christian day school, and went to church even as a child, I knew that I was a sinner saved by grace, but there were a lot more things that I needed to learn from the Word of God. In fact, it wasn't until about three years later, that I discovered reformed theology, and the doctrines of grace. As I began to study those doctrines, there were more and more questions that I had as I began to learn the truths about God in His Word. There were more and more answers that were given to me as I asked more and more questions. And I know many of you have had similar experiences, because that's how the Christian life works, right? That's how it works.

We hear the gospel, we get saved and then we begin the process of sanctification. Of sanctification...of growing in our knowledge of Christ, and of His Word. Well, this was the same experience that the disciples had as well. In a similar experience that you and I have in salvation.

Theirs though, was a little different. It was a little different because they grew up as Jews learning the Old Testament. They were steeped in the Old Testament and they knew all of the details of the Old Testament as it was taught to them. Their whole culture was influenced, and it was shaped by the Old Testament Scriptures.

Whereas our culture isn't. Right? And there have been some amazing things that have happened in the lives of these disciples up to this point. They have been called to follow after Jesus, in which they left everything behind to follow Him. Think about that...Jewish boys, leaving everything behind to go and follow after Christ. And as we've seen here recently in their life, they declared that Jesus is the Christ. That is, He is the Messiah. And they were able to declare that because the Father had revealed it to them. There were things that they were learning along the way as they've left everything behind to go and follow after Christ. They declare that He is the Messiah.

They were told then that Christ was going to suffer and die and rise again. And then three of them were given this amazing experience that we saw last week, as Jesus is transfigured in glory before them on the Mount of Transfiguration. And they were there, and they saw Moses and Elijah glorified before them as well. They knew who these guys were. They studied their writings in the Old Testament Scriptures.

But as they are revealed to them...as it's revealed to them that Christ is going to suffer and die and rise again...these things are all new to them. This is new.

You see, these guys had been taught. They had been taught that the Messiah is going to come. They believe that, they understood that, they knew Messiah is going to come. They had been taught that the Messiah is going to set up His kingdom and that he's going to rule and reign over His kingdom. They got that. And they were even taught that Elijah was going to return before the Messiah would come. They understood that. They knew that, and so they had some basic understanding about the Messiah.

But there were still some details about Him that they were never taught. Because the scribes and the Pharisees, the religious leaders of their day...not only didn't understand the Word of God, but they didn't teach the Word of God, as God intended it to be taught. They added their own interpretations to it.

So although they had an understanding about the Messiah and what the Messiah would do when the Messiah would come, there are still details that they don't understand. Namely, His death and His resurrection. They don't get it.

And this led to their confusion and to questions. In order for them to understand what this was that Jesus was teaching them, this is all new to them. Now it's important to understand that they have just declared that Jesus is the Messiah, and they have just seen Him glorified on the Mount of Transfiguration, right? We saw that last week.

And all of this works with their theology, everything that they have been taught up to this point. All of that works. It fits in their theology. In fact, what does Peter want to do when he's up there on the mountain? He wants to stay there, right? Let's just hang out. Let's bask in the glory of Christ. It's the kingdom, there's the power and the glory. There he is --- the Messiah who is come -- let's build some tabernacles and let's just hang out here. He wanted to stay there. And he was OK with that.

But what did he have a problem with? The death of Christ. He had a problem with that. And therefore, the resurrection of Christ, because in order for there to be a resurrection, there first has to be a what? A death.

If you remember back in Mark chapter 8 verse 31, Jesus told them:

"And He began to teach them that the Son of Man must suffer many things and be rejected by the elders and the chief priests and the scribes, and be killed, and after three days rise again."
(Mark 8:31)

Jesus is teaching them these things, and so right after they have declared that Jesus is the Messiah, Jesus tells them that He's going to die. He declares to them His death. That didn't fit with their theology. They didn't like that. And they were so troubled by that they probably didn't even hear the last part where Jesus says, *And I'm going to rise again on the third day*. They just hear death, after declaring Messiah, and then they hear death, and everything shuts down. We can't have a dead Messiah. All of this is a mystery to them. It's a mystery. What is Jesus teaching us?

But as you remember from last week, Jesus was transfigured on the mountain. He was there in glory, along with Moses and Elijah. But Moses and Elijah leave. They are gone, and Jesus then is left there, standing in front of them, no longer transfigured. No longer revealing His glory. There's Jesus, whom

they left everything to follow. They understand they know what He looks like and they see Him there, in front of them.

And they now begin to head back down that mountain...back down the Mount of Transfiguration. Where they would ultimately be headed to where? To Jerusalem. They're going to be headed to Jerusalem because Jesus needed to go there, to go to a cross to die.

Jesus is going to begin His journey that descent from the mountain begins Jesus' journey to Jerusalem, where He would eventually go and die as a sacrifice for sins. But as they come down from this mountain, Jesus has something to say to these guys. Which leads to our first point. Point number one the injunction.

1. The Injunction

Look at what he says in verse 9.

As they were coming down from the mountain, He gave them orders not to relate to anyone what they had seen, until the Son of Man rose from the dead. (Mark 9:9)

Now Jesus has just been transfigured, and they saw Him in His glorious and powerful state. And then they heard the voice of the Father, saying, what? Listen to him! (Mark 9:7) Listen to the Messiah. Listen to Jesus, who's standing right there in front of you.

Well, here was their first test. Are they going to listen to Him or not? The Father says, listen to Him as we saw last week, implied in that is, obey Him. Listen to the things that He has to say to you, and do exactly what He tells you to do. And now Jesus gives them their first test. Are they going to obey?

What does Jesus test them with? What does Jesus say? Jesus says, don't tell anyone what you've seen. I know you just saw Me transfigured before your very eyes. My face was shown like the sun. My clothes were in glory, a glorious white, blazing white, like a white you've never seen. I know it's an amazing experience, but here's the thing guys... don't tell anyone.

Now you would think that seeing something like that, so amazing and so spectacular, that Jesus would say, go and tell everyone what you've seen, right? Look, you saw me. You saw the power, you saw the glory before you, go and tell everybody what you've seen. But Jesus doesn't do that. Why?

Why would Jesus tell them not to go and tell anyone? Well, remember what Christ came to do. He didn't come the first time to set up His throne there in Jerusalem and reign over His kingdom. What did He come to do? To die. He came to die. He came to give His life as a ransom for many. And just like Jesus would tell the disciples not to tell anyone about His miracles, because he didn't want to just be known as a miracle worker, Jesus tells these guys not to tell anyone about His transfiguration. Jesus didn't want to just be known as a miracle worker, and now He doesn't want to be known as the Messiah who will not suffer.

You see that. That's what he's after. They don't like the suffering Messiah. But Jesus knows He's got to go to the cross and suffer and die. Of course we know that he is the glorious King, but if he was not a suffering servant, the gospel would not be complete. The gospel wouldn't be complete, right? What is the gospel? The death and the resurrection of Christ. That's the gospel. If these guys would have gone down from the mountain and told everyone what they saw...remember there's three of them and by the

mouth of three witnesses it is established... right? It is confirmed... and so you've got three guys who saw Jesus glorified on the Mount of Transfiguration. It is a fact of who Jesus is. The people would have wanted to establish Him as King and rule and reign from that point on. Just as they wanted Him to do after He fed the 5,000, remember that? After He feeds the 5,000, they say He's the King, set up the kingdom, give Him a throne, rule and reign. And Jesus has to send them away and go off to a mountain to go pray with the Father. Because He came as a suffering Messiah. As a suffering servant.

If they would have established Him as King, maybe if He would have established His throne right then, then there would remain no sacrifice for sins. The gospel would be incomplete. Look, you can't have a glorious King without a suffering servant. You can't have the glory without the cross.

Peter loved the glory. He didn't want what? The cross. They wanted a conquering King without a crucified Savior. But you can't have this King over His kingdom, unless you have a sacrifice for sinners first. Why? Because that's God's plan. And that's always been God's plan. It's always been God's plan to send His son, the Messiah, to come and suffer and die for sinners.

If these guys would have been taught from their Old Testament better. They would have realized that. All they had to do is read Isaiah 53, right? There's the gospel laid out for you right there in the Old Testament. Isaiah 53. That should have been enough for them to know that the Messiah would have to suffer first before He would sit on His eternal throne.

But they didn't. So these guys have a limited understanding of God's plan for the Messiah. They don't get it. So Jesus gives them this injunction and He tells them not to tell anyone what they had just seen on the Mount of Transfiguration. But here's the thing. These guys don't have to remain silent forever, right? There was a time limit that was put on this injunction. How long do they have to remain silent? Look at the end of verse 9, *"...until the son of Man rose from the dead."* (Mark 9:9). Until He rises from the dead. After the resurrection of Christ they are free to tell everyone what they had seen on the Mount of Transfiguration. Look guys, I'm going to go and I'm going to die, and once I rise again, then you can go and tell everyone what you saw up on this mountain... and did they do it? They did.

How do we know? Because we read about it, right? They told them about the Mount of Transfiguration. They're free to tell everyone what they had seen on the Mount of Transfiguration. Why? Because it would be at that time that they would finally understand the significance of the Transfiguration. The Transfiguration was meant to show these guys a glimpse of Christ and what it will look like when He returns. To see Christ in glory is what every believer longs to see today, right? That's what we long to see. We desire to see Christ glorified. We can't wait until He appears and we get to see Him face to face in glory.

We know that will happen. Because he tells us in His Word and Peter and James and John got to witness that glory first-hand. They saw it with their very own eyes. We have eyewitness account of what Christ's glory will be like. Peter, James, and John. These guys, these eyewitnesses, they need to remain silent, because before Jesus would return in glory, He first had to go to the cross and die, and then rise again. Which totally confused these guys.

And leads to our second point. Point #2. Not only do we see the injunction given by Christ there, but point number two, we see the confusion.

2. The Confusion

Look at verse 10 and look what it says there.

They seized upon that statement, discussing with one another what rising from the dead meant. (Mark 9:10)

Literally these guys took hold of that statement that Jesus had just made about rising from the dead. They took hold of it and they begin to discuss it amongst themselves. What is He talking about? Now, we've just declared that Jesus is the Messiah. We just saw Him transfigured in His glory on display. Rising again? Guys, what do you think He means? And this discussion happens amongst these guys.

Now these guys had a theology of resurrection. Remember that was one of the major differences between the scribes and the Pharisees and the Sadducees. The Pharisees believed in a future resurrection, but the Sadducees denied it. Acts chapter 23 in verse 8 says,

For the Sadducees say that there is no resurrection, nor an angel, nor a spirit, but the Pharisees acknowledge them all. (Acts 23:8)

And so the Pharisees would have taught this to them, growing up the scribes and the Pharisees, these guys would have learned from them that there is a future resurrection. So the theology of a resurrection wasn't new to them. They had been taught that by the scribes and we looked at that even this morning in equipping hour, right?... what the Old Testament says about a future resurrection.

And they believed that. They understood a future resurrection for them. But what was so confusing for them was that they couldn't get their minds around the fact that Jesus, the Messiah, was going to experience resurrection. What's that all about? That's new to us. That wasn't in their theology. They wouldn't have gone to seminary and learn that in their seminary. This is all new stuff to them. They knew that in order for the Messiah to rise again, for there to be a resurrection of the Messiah, there first had to be a what? A death.

They get it. And when Jesus applies this to Himself, Messiah, death and resurrection, don't compute in their minds. They don't get it. They could handle the idea of a Messiah ruling and reigning. Oh that was great, that fit into their theology book. But they couldn't handle the idea of a Messiah dying and rising. That didn't fit. Dead Messiah was not in their theology. They couldn't understand a dead Messiah.

Now what confused them was that the death of the Messiah was going to be in their lifetime. Notice they were allowed to tell the people about the Mount of Transfiguration after the resurrection of Christ, right? They, as eyewitnesses, could go out and tell everybody about the resurrection, or about the Mount of Transfiguration, after the resurrection of Christ. Which means they believed what? This is going to happen in their lifetime.

In order for them to go and tell people, the death and the resurrection is going to then happen in our lifetime, and we will be able to go out and tell everybody about the Mount of Transfiguration after this happens within our lifetime. They understood that. They get that. And in their declaration of Jesus being the Messiah, they think that the establishment of the kingdom would happen in their lifetime too. They are thinking now at this point, not only now is the death and resurrection going to happen, but Christ must also establish His kingdom. The Messiah must establish His kingdom.

How do we know that? What is Acts chapter 1 and verse 6 say? They ask Him. Right before Jesus ascension, they ask Him, *"...Lord, is it at this time You are restoring the kingdom to Israel?" (Acts 1:6)*

Are you restoring the kingdom now, in our lifetime? And what does Jesus say? It's not for you to know the times. You just go and preach the gospel (Acts 1:7-8). You tell everybody what you have been taught and what you have seen. That's your job. But they are understanding at this point, they are thinking, the King is here and therefore the kingdom must be here. He's going to come and rule and reign, and He's going to establish His throne. So what, then, is all of this death and resurrection stuff about? What's going on here? We know that He's the Messiah, but we don't understand this death and resurrection thing, and so they are confused.

And it was their confusion then that led to a question about Elijah. You ever done that? Been thinking about one thing that leads to another question which leads to another question and another question. We've all done that right? As you begin to study something as you begin to grasp something, it's going to lead to more questions. We do that all the time with the Word of God. As we come to know more of the Word of God. We have more questions, we want more things answered, which is good. That's what we should be doing. That's part of the sanctification process. Ask the Bible questions. It's not afraid to answer you. It'll tell you the truth, 'cause it's all it speaks, right? So ask it questions. That's what these guys are doing. Asking questions. What's going on here? These disciples are pondering the resurrection of Christ.

And it leads to our third and final point. Not only have we seen the injunction, and the confusion, but now we see the question.

3. The Question.

Look at verse 11.

"They" (The disciples) "asked Him, saying, "Why is it that the scribes say that Elijah must come first?" (Mark 9:11)

Look, we've been taught by the scribes. And they've told us that Elijah is supposed to come first. It's a great question, right? Great question for these guys. They've been listening. They've been listening to what the scribes have had to teach them. They've been listening to their Old Testament teaching. Good job guys. Great question. Where does this question come from though? Well, the scribes had taught that Elijah must come first. Who did they just see on the Mount of Transfiguration? Moses and Elijah. Is that it? Is that the fulfillment? It must be, right?

What does Jesus say? Nope, that's not it. That's not the fulfillment of that.

These guys are thinking Elijah must come before the Messiah. Jesus is the Messiah. We just saw Elijah. What's next? Kingdom, right? That's in their theology. Those are the steps in their theology. But what does Jesus say? What's the next thing? Death. Death and resurrection. That's what's next.

And it doesn't make sense to them. They are confused. Which is why they ask this question. Now, where did the teaching about Elijah coming first come from? Hold your finger here in Mark chapter 9, and turn over to Malachi, chapter 3, Malachi, chapter 3. Malachi is the last book in the Old Testament. You go to Matthew, just hang a left and you'll hit Malachi. Malachi chapter 3. Malachi chapter 3 we have Malachi

talking about God, through Malachi, talking about a messenger. And look at Malachi chapter 3 and verse 1. Look at what it says there.

3:1 "Behold, I am going to send My messenger, and he will clear the way before Me. And the Lord, whom you seek, will suddenly come to His temple; and the messenger of the covenant, in whom you delight, behold, He is coming," says the LORD of hosts." (Malachi 3:1)

And then look over at chapter 4 and verse 5. Malachi chapter 4 and verse 5. We've got this messenger here in chapter 3 and verse 1, and Malachi chapter 4 and verse 5 says this.

"Behold, I am going to send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and terrible day of the LORD. 6 He will restore the hearts of the fathers to their children and the hearts of the children to their fathers, so that I will not come and smite the land with a curse." (Malachi 4:5-6)

This is where they get the teaching about Elijah. There he is. Notice him there in verse 5, *I am going to send you Elijah the prophet*. The messenger is going to come before the Messiah, and the messenger is identified as who? Elijah. There he is. We see the messenger in chapter 3 verse 1, and then all of a sudden in chapter 4, verse 5, there's Elijah. Must be the messenger. And therefore it was taught, and it was known throughout Israel that before Messiah comes, Elijah would come first.

What would he do? Look at chapter 4, verse 6. He would come and...

"He will restore" (or to turn) "the hearts of the fathers to their children and the hearts of the children to their fathers..." (Malachi 4:6)

What does that mean? What do you mean, Malachi? Well, Elijah is going to come and he's going to bring a spiritual restoration. The people will respond to Elijah in repentance and faith, just as their fathers had done. That's what he's talking about there. It's going to turn the children their hearts to their fathers and the father to the children. That is, he's going to bring restoration. He's going to bring repentance and faith.

But since Jesus is the Messiah. And these guys are standing there. These disciples, these three, are standing there, and they know, OK, you're the Messiah. And where's Elijah? The Elijah we've been taught in Malachi chapter 3 in chapter 4. Where is he?

It's a great question. How did Jesus respond? Turn back to Mark chapter 9. Look at verse 12.

"And He said to them, "Elijah does first come and restore all things." (Mark 9:12)

Jesus confirms what the scribes taught. Elijah does come. Good job guys. You were listening in school. He does come. They got that teaching right. They understood Malachi chapter 4 verse 5 correctly. But then Jesus continues on in verse 11 with a question for them. You guys asked me a question...great question guys...now I got a question for you. You ready for this? Look what He says in verse 11.

"And yet how is it written of the Son of Man that He will suffer many things and be treated with contempt?" (Mark 9:12)

Now they must be thinking here. What? It is written? Where? Where has this been written, Jesus? It's been written? We've never been taught this before...what are you talking about? Jesus is telling them

here, you got the Elijah part right, but you missed out on the suffering Messiah part. You missed it, guys. Just as it is written in the Old Testament. Notice He says *"it is written of the Son of Man"*. Why does He say *Son of Man*? Son of Man there is a messianic title from Daniel chapter 7 verse 13 referring to the Messiah, there...it is not referring to the humanity of Christ. A lot of people think that Son of Man must be referring to His humanity...no, it's a title of deity. That's His deity, as the Messiah. Daniel chapter 7 verse 13. (Dan 7:13)

It is written of the son of Man. Jesus is saying the Old Testament testifies that the Messiah...that is myself...must suffer and be treated with contempt. That's what He's telling them here. Where would they read something like that? Isaiah 53. Psalm 22. Read through Psalm 22.... I'd encourage you to do that today or sometime this week, read through Psalm 22. It's all about the suffering Messiah, it's a messianic song.

They would have also read it in Zechariah 12, verse 10, which says this.

"They will look on Me whom they have..." (what?) "pierced." (Zechariah 12:10)

Pierced. A suffering Messiah. Look, you got the Elijah part right, but you missed the suffering Messiah part. And really, what is going on here is this. They're asking Him how He could be the Messiah if Elijah hasn't come yet. If Elijah hasn't come yet, how can you be the Messiah?

And He turns around and He asked them how He could be the Messiah if He did not suffer, just as the Old Testament predicted. Right? That's what He's saying. Look, you're asking Me this question...how it could be the Messiah if Elijah hasn't come? Well, I'm telling you, the only way that I can be the Messiah is if I first suffer and die. That's what I've got to do. He's saying I must suffer and die, just as it is predicted. Just as the Old Testament says, just as it is written.

They want a reigning Messiah. But He told them that He first had to be a suffering Messiah. And all of this is new to these guys. It's all new to them. Their theology is being rocked. You ever have had that happen before? I know that that's what happened to me when I discovered reformed theology, and I'm going...that's just what the Bible teaches. What? What's going on here? My theology was completely rocked. And that's what's going on with these guys.

But Jesus continues on to give another explanation about Elijah. He doesn't notice this. He doesn't just leave them in their confusion. But He explains and He clarifies it for them. Look at what He says in verse 13.

"Jesus says, But I say to you that Elijah has indeed come, and they did to him whatever they wished, just as it is..." (what?) "written of him." (Mark 9:13)

Written. Just as it is written. What does He say here? Elijah did come. How? Was it on the Mount of Transfiguration? We saw Him there. No. It's not what I'm talking about there. He came in the spirit of John the Baptist. He came in the spirit of John the Baptist.

Hold your finger right here in Mark and turn over to Luke chapter 1. Luke chapter 1. We get this, an amazing, this amazing account of the angel appearing to Zacharias. Elizabeth, John the Baptist's mother, is old. She's old at this point and she's been barren. She's old and she's barren and so that's oftentimes how God works, right? Seems impossible. But God does the impossible, because all things are possible

with Him. And this angel appears to Zacharias, and in Luke chapter 1 and verse 13 look at what it says there.

"But the angel said to him, "Do not be afraid, Zacharias, for your petition has been heard, and your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son, and you will give him the name John. 14 You will have joy and gladness, and many will rejoice at his birth. 15 For he will be great in the sight of the Lord; and he will drink no wine or liquor, and he will be filled with the Holy Spirit while yet in his mother's womb. 16 And he will turn many of the sons of Israel back to the Lord their God." (Luke 1:13-16)

Does that sound familiar? Sounds like what? Malachi, right? Malachi chapter 4 and verse 6. There it is,

"...and he will turn many of the Sons of Israel back to their God." (Malachi 4:6)

In verse 17

"It is he who will go as a forerunner before Him in the spirit and power of Elijah," (Luke 1:17)

And now what does He quote? Look at this.

"To turn the hearts of the fathers back to the children. And the disobedient to the attitude of the righteous, so as to make ready a people prepared for the Lord." (Luke 1:17)

What is Jesus saying here? Did Elijah come? Yes he did. In the spirit and power of John the Baptist. Now John the Baptist is not a reincarnate Elijah. It's not as if Elijah came back from the dead, because remember, Elijah never did what? Died. He never died. He was just taken and he went to be with God. Elijah never died.

But John the Baptist is the spiritual fulfillment of the prophecy of Malachi chapter 4 and verse 5. John the Baptist came in the spirit and the power of Elijah. And what was John the Baptist's message? Repent. That's his message.

People turn from your sins and put your faith in the One who is coming, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world. He's preparing the hearts of the people to turn from their sin and put their faith in the Messiah, in Jesus Christ, who was coming right after him. In fact, Jesus was already there when John the Baptist is preaching repentance.

He comes in the spirit and the power of Elijah, preaching the exact same message that Elijah preached. Elijah preached repentance. That's why Jesus says back in Mark chapter 9 in verse 13, *Elijah has indeed come.* (Mark 9:13) In fact, after Jesus makes this statement to these disciples, after He tells them that Elijah did come, and they did to him whatever they wanted. Jesus makes this statement to these disciples in Matthew chapter 17 and verse 13.

In Matthew's account of what's going on here, this descent from the Mount of Transfiguration, here's what happens. Jesus teaches these guys, and in Matthew 17:13 it says,

"Then the disciples understood that" (Jesus) "He had spoken to them about John the Baptist."

They got it. The light went on. Oh...we get it, Jesus. We understand. Jesus is teaching them...John the Baptist is the messenger who came before the Messiah. And Jesus says back in Mark chapter 9, verse 13

"they did to him whatever they wished, just as it is written of him." (Mark 9:13)

Now notice what He says there... *"it is.."* (what?) *"written."*

That means it's written of who? Elijah. Speaking of who? John the Baptist. And what is written of him? Where is it written? In 1 Kings 19 verse 10, says this:

"He said, 'I have been very zealous for the LORD, the God of hosts; for the sons of Israel have forsaken Your covenant, torn down Your altars and killed Your prophets with the sword. And I alone am left; and they seek my life, to take it away.'" (1 Kings 19:10)

What's going on there? Elijah is proclaiming repentance to the people --- turn back to God, turn away from your idols -- and what did they want to do with Elijah? Kill him. Kill him. Get rid of him. We don't want to hear that message. We don't want to hear the message of repentance.

Which is sadly what a lot of people today don't want to hear, right? As we studied in 2 Timothy this last week, they want to have their ears tickled, right? Elijah wasn't an ear tickler. He preached, and he commanded the people to turn from their sins, and to put their faith in God.

Who did he call to repent? Elijah confronted King Ahab. Who is married to who? We all know this name...Jezebel, right? Jezebel, who is leading him astray, to worship all these idols, false gods. And he goes, and he confronts King Ahab. Did Ahab like it? No. Did Jezebel like it? No. What did they want to do? Kill him.

Now did they kill Elijah? Nope, they didn't. Elijah was taken to heaven by God. Did they kill John the Baptist? Yes they did. What did they do to John the Baptist who preached repentance? Cut his head off. Because he went to Herod and told Herod you must repent of your sins. Did Herod like that? He didn't. And ultimately it led to John the Baptist being beheaded. Why? Because as a prophet, he preached the truth of God's Word. That's what he was called to do.

Now is John the Baptist the final fulfillment of Elijah? No, he's not. He is the spiritual fulfillment. So does that mean that Elijah will not return again? No, he will return again. Malachi says, *before the coming of the great and terrible day of the Lord (Malachi 4:5)*. Elijah is going to come.

You see what Jesus is telling these guys here is there is a spiritual fulfillment of this prophecy in Malachi chapter 4, and there will be a physical fulfillment of this prophecy in the future...that Elijah is still to come. When is Elijah going to come? We don't know exactly. We do know *He's going to come before the coming of the great and terrible day of the Lord*. Most likely Elijah is one of the two witnesses that's found in Revelation 11. (Rev 11:2-3)

A lot of people ask who are those two witnesses that come back and proclaim and preach the gospel? We don't know. The Bible doesn't tell us, but we know Elijah is coming back. So possibly Elijah is one of them. Possibly Moses and Elijah. Or possibly John the Baptist and Elijah. We don't know for certain, but we do know Elijah is going to come back before Christ returns.

Now Jesus is teaching these disciples, and He's correcting their theology and understanding of the Scriptures. You see what He's doing here? He's helping them to understand the Word of God as it is written. That's what He does. And all of this points to the fact of what?

All of this that Jesus is teaching them here points to what fact? The fact that Jesus came the first time as the suffering Messiah to die for sinners like you and I. That's what He's pointing to. That's His point in teaching these guys and helping them to understand.

Look guys, I know your theology is all about a glorified King sitting on a throne. I get that that's going to happen, but before that happens I must come and die. I've got to go to the cross. And that's what Jesus did on that Palm Sunday. As they laid the branches down and cried out, Hosanna! And He walked in, on a donkey coming into the city, Jerusalem, as the sacrifice for sinners.

And He's done that for you and I. He paid the price for us, a price that we could not pay. Some of you are here this morning and you're still in your sins. You haven't repented of your sin and put your faith in Christ, who came to make the perfect sacrifice. A sacrifice that you couldn't make. You're trying to earn your way to heaven. And trying to earn your way to God. But you can't do that. Because the Scripture tells us that we are not saved by good works, but by faith alone, in Christ alone. Your good works will lead you to hell. But Christ came and He paid the sacrifice. He paid the price. So that you could be saved. And He calls you today to come to Him in faith. And repentance. Turn from your sin and put your faith in Jesus Christ alone and you will get to see Christ glorified one day. You will get to see exactly what Peter, James and John saw on the Mount of Transfiguration. But that won't happen unless you repent of your sin and put your faith in Christ. Do that today. Come to Him.

You see, Jesus is going to return. That's a fact. Jesus is going to return again one day in glory and He is going to establish His kingdom. That's the next step, right? That's what we have to look forward to. He already died. And He rose again on the third day, to give us salvation. But He's coming back in glory and He will establish His kingdom. And He will come again as the glorious King, who will rule and reign over all. Are you ready? Are you ready for that? Do you have your eyes fixed upon that?

Or you fixed upon the things of this world. Don't fix your eyes on the things of this world because it will always, always, always fail you. But keep your eyes fixed upon Christ, who is coming again to rule and to reign.

Are you living your life as if Christ is King? Are you living your life as if Christ is Lord? Submitting to the Lordship of Christ in everything that you do and say, do you submit to Christ as your King? That's what He calls you to do. Live, live your life as if He is your King. As if He is your Lord.

Listen. He's coming again, and if you're here and you're not a believer, this should terrify you. It should terrify you. Because the next time that Jesus comes, He's not coming to die on a cross, but He's coming in judgment. And it will bring judgment upon all of those who have not repented of their sin, and put their faith in Christ.

And many will say on that day, Lord Lord. (Matt 7:21-23) Lord, Lord, didn't we do all of this stuff in your name? Look at all the things we've done. And You will say depart from me, you worker of iniquity. I never knew you.

If you're not a believer here this morning, that should terrify you. That's the reality. But He's made a way for you to declare, Lord Lord! And for Him to say...Welcome home My good and faithful servant.

And that's what He will do for all of us who believe in Him. That's what we have to look forward to. And that should cause us to rejoice. Is your heart rejoicing right now? Understanding and knowing this truth? It should. If you're a believer in Christ, your heart should rejoice. And it should urge us to live, to live for Him every moment of every day, knowing that He will return at any moment. He's coming back. Are you ready?

Father, we thank You. We thank You for this amazing, amazing passage of Scripture that is so easily overlooked. We see the heart of Christ on display, teaching His disciples, telling them of the glorious news that He came to suffer and to die. What an amazing truth it is. Christ paid the price for our sins on that cross. And we thank You, Father, that He did not stay dead, but that He rose again on the third day and He's alive today, and He offers us eternal life. And we know that we have eternal life, that we have hope because of what Christ came to do. Thank You for that hope that we have. Father, I pray that if anyone is here this morning that doesn't have this hope, Father, I pray that You would draw them to you. God, I pray that You would take their heart of stone and make it a heart of flesh. That you would soften their heart. They would receive this truth and that they would repent of their sin and put their faith in You. God, I pray that You would help us to live this week, rejoicing in the fact that Jesus came into Jerusalem to suffer and die, and rejoice in the fact that Jesus didn't stay dead, but that He rose again on the third day. What an amazing truth this is. We're so grateful for it. Thank You for our time in Your Word this morning. It speaks to our hearts. Help us to go and live this out for Your glory alone. We pray in Christ name. Amen.