

# If you want to grow in your faith, you have to go up the mountain

If you were an explorer journeying into the deepest jungle, you'd probably find that some of the paths got narrower as you went deeper in. You'd likely find you needed to chop down vegetation out of the way to get through. As you go deeper, it can get more challenging (but more rewarding too!!) The same is true in our journey with God. There is a cost to pay for going closer and deeper to God. But it's totally worth it!

## Matthew 17.1-8

After six days Jesus took with him Peter, James and John the brother of James, and led them up a high mountain by themselves. There he was transfigured before them. His face shone like the sun, and his clothes became as white as the light. Just then there appeared before them Moses and Elijah, talking with Jesus. Peter said to Jesus, "Lord, it is good for us to be here. If you wish, I will put up three shelters—one for you, one for Moses and one for Elijah." While he was still speaking, a bright cloud enveloped them, and a voice from the cloud said, "This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased. Listen to him!" When the disciples heard this, they fell facedown to the ground, terrified. But Jesus came and touched them. "Get up," he said. "Don't be afraid." When they looked up, they saw no one except Jesus.

## The Choice

A well-known preacher called TD Jakes once gave a talk and spoke about being like an eagle. As a Christian, we can choose the level we want to go to with God. Many churches are full of people who haven't reached their full potential. But if we say yes to God, he will use us beyond what we can ask or imagine. Like an eagle, we can soar high with God. But not everyone will choose to do this. Decide today that you will!

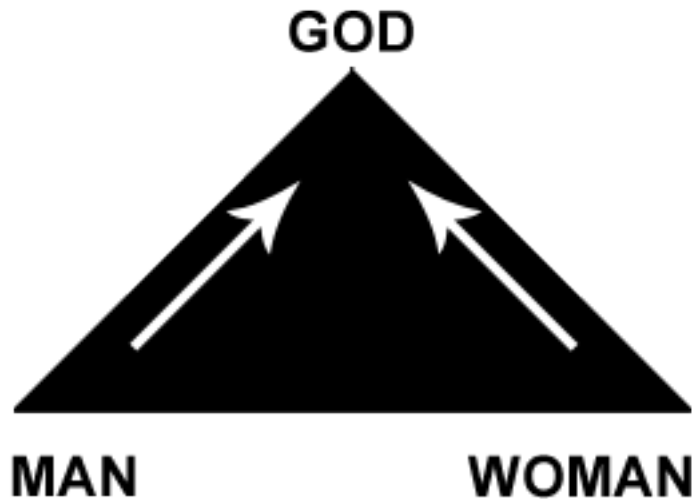
When Jesus went up the mountain, he decided to only take Peter, James and John with him. What made Jesus choose these three disciples? They were the ones who were closest to him. The lesson is clear: Jesus will choose those who choose to be close to him. The closer you get, the more that Jesus will reveal. Can you imagine how incredible it would have been to be one of those three disciples and have Jesus reveal himself in a new and awesome way. In verse 2, Jesus shone like the sun and became as white as the light. You want to see Jesus as he truly is and have incredible experiences with him? Well, the work starts today by you deciding to seek him, read his Word and do what he says, being open and asking him to bring his best for your life. If Jesus wanted to do something, would he choose to take you?

## The Height

In the Christian life, the only way is up! Jesus and the 3 disciples went up the mountain. No doubt this was exciting, but also challenging and tiring as they climbed. But they were going up the mountain. It was only when they were up the mountain, that Jesus changed

and became bright and shining. This didn't happen before, it happened UP the mountain. Again, our choice is clear – we have to climb and go deeper with God if we want to experience God and have experiences that are incredible and supernatural.

The pastoral person at Kenneth and Gloria Copeland's church had a useful picture of marriage. However, this image is just as useful for us in our relationship with God..



What we see is a triangle. At the bottom corners are man and woman. The closer that we go up the mountain towards God, the narrower things become.

In Matthew 7.13-14, Jesus said, "Enter through the narrow gate. For wide is the gate and broad is the road that leads to destruction, and many enter through it. But small is the gate and narrow the road that leads to life, and only a few find it."

It is also true that people grow closer as they grow closer to God – and what could be better than this. God can be found in the fullest and greatest way at the top of the mountain.

## The Revelation

At the top of the mountain, the disciples saw Jesus in a whole new light, literally. He was shining, glowing and radiating light and power. Not only that, they saw Elijah and Moses – representing the Law and the Prophets. Then a cloud of light surrounded them and they heard the voice of the Father God in heaven!! In all the revivals or revelations the world has seen, this was on another level..!

Listen, there may be a mountain to climb, but there's a reward at the top! When the Bible tells us that God will do way beyond what we ask or imagine (Ephesians 3.20), God really means it! The disciples saw something that no-one else would ever see – and experienced something that no-one else would ever experience.

In Luke 14.24-26, Jesus spoke of the cost of being his disciple.

But in Revelation 22.12, Jesus assures us, "Behold, I am coming soon! My reward is with me, and I will give to everyone according to what he has done."

The rewards for following Jesus up the mountain will be more awesome than we could possibly imagine.

## The Response

When God met with Jesus and the disciples in the cloud, the disciples only response was to fall face down. When the living God speaks and meets with us, that is the only response. This is what it means to truly fear the Lord. There is no other option than to fall down, terrified. Isaiah experienced this in Isaiah 6. But one word and touch from God restored Isaiah and released him into his prophetic life. In the same way, Jesus touched the disciples, told them not to fear and stood them to their feet.

This is the right order.. The Almighty God visits us, we fall facedown, then he touches us and speaks to us, and then we get to our feet and do what he calls, has anointed us to do. We may think that we are the ones doing things for God, but God has ways of letting us know it is him and his power working through us. Today, do you need a touch from the King? Do you need him to humble you? Do you have God in first place, in the right perspective? If you go up the mountain, it means more of God in you and less of you in you.. This means the old self, the human soulish self goes – and the Spiritual side of you rises up as the Spirit transforms you. (Ephesians 4.22-23)

The result..? A power shift where God lifts you to another level. You will see things happen that others may not even dream about. You will be used by God in ways you cannot imagine. Your dreams will be fulfilled and then some.. God may re-align things and visions, but he will make his best happen in and through you, believe. You will have a love and a power that others cannot have unless they also pay the cost and climb the mountain.

Want to get closer to God? It's time to climb the mountain.