

Mountaintop  
Experiences



Reflections



# Reflections

*Now after six days Jesus took Peter, James, and John his brother, led them up on a high mountain by themselves;<sup>2</sup> and He was transfigured before them. His face shone like the sun, and His clothes became as white as the light.<sup>3</sup> And behold, Moses and Elijah appeared to them, talking with Him.<sup>4</sup> Then Peter answered and said to Jesus, "Lord, it is good for us to be here; if You wish, let us make here three tabernacles: one for You, one for Moses, and one for Elijah." (Matthew 17:1-4 NKJ)*

Peter, much like we would want, wanted this “mountaintop” experience to continue forever. His suggestion for building three tabernacles or tents was, for him, a natural expression of his joy at what he had just seen. He had seen Jesus in all His glory! Who wouldn’t want to dwell in such a place? God, however, had other plans for each of them and He commanded them to listen to His beloved Son. As the vision faded, Jesus led them back down the mountain to where they would continue learning, serving, and eventually die as His faithful Apostles.

Though these “mountaintop” moments in life, where we truly find the joy of our salvation overshadowing all else, are moments that we would love to experience every day, Jesus calls us to see, and experience, the rest of life and its trials. Only in so doing can we become fully mature in our spiritual walk. It is through the trials of life that we grow and learn to trust Him at all times and in all circumstances. Jesus was Himself obedient through suffering and trials so that He could become our High Priest and Savior forever and be touched by our infirmities having experienced them..*though He was a Son, yet He learned obedience by the things which He suffered.<sup>9</sup> And having been perfected, He became the author of eternal salvation to all who obey Him, (Hebrews 5:8-9 NKJ)*

It sometimes seems that many have never enjoyed a time that could be called a “mountaintop” experience in their walk with the Lord. Their spiritual life has been more of a religious practice that is neither plagued by intense lows or by much excitement. Their prayer life may be more perfunctory in nature and their study and meditation on the Word of God is perhaps mere religious discipline rather than revelatory involvement with the

truth that reveals Jesus to them in an ever growing intimacy. Perhaps the best description of such Christian practice is that they have a form of Christianity but without its power to move and transform their life.

David, in the Psalms that he wrote, extols God, His Word and its power to move him in both joy and sorrow, ...*But let all those rejoice who put their trust in You; Let them ever shout for joy, because You defend them; Let those also who love Your name Be joyful in You. (Psalm 5:11 NKJ) and ...But I have trusted in Your mercy; My heart shall rejoice in Your salvation.<sup>6</sup> I will sing to the LORD, Because He has dealt bountifully with me. (Psalm 13:5-6 NKJ) and again...I rejoice at Your word As one who finds great treasure. (Psalm 119:162 NKJ) and then ...How can a young man cleanse his way? By taking heed according to Your word.<sup>10</sup> With my whole heart I have sought You; Oh, let me not wander from Your commandments!<sup>11</sup> Your word I have hidden in my heart, That I might not sin against You! (Psalm 119:9-11 NKJ)* David wrote his psalms when he was “on the mountaintop” of joy and when he was in deep despair. He had come to know that he served the God of the mountaintops and that He was also the God in the valleys of life. He knew that regardless of his circumstance, it was God to whom he must turn and he knew such a passion for God and His Word that he was moved to write with the power that comes from living through both the mountaintops and the valleys.

I have, in my life, experienced those special times where it seemed that God had immersed me in Himself, and where He led me through His Word to new insights that met my innermost needs. I have also experienced the deserts of life where it was as if my prayers were empty, and my dreams were dashed and replaced with failure and loss. It was in those trying times that I best learned to trust Him. It was in the pain of those moments that my heart was softened, my pride was cast aside, and I had to just rest in the promises that He had given in His Word and to wait patiently for Him to reveal Himself in my life. When you can relate to His suffering, He seems to let you experience His grace and mercy at a new level, and in His grace, He lets us “see” Him rather than our problems. If you are enjoying a mountaintop experience, rejoice in Him, be encouraged, be faithful in His Word and in prayer. Just don’t build tents there! **Pastor Doug**