

Power and Glory Matthew 16v28-17v23

There is a longing for glory in our hearts. *In what ways do we pursue it?*

We keep seeing in Matthew's gospel that the Kingdom of God has come near and that Jesus is its King! Jesus is both Lord and God—the power and glory, and the majesty and splendour are his. And he wants both to show us his glory, marvellously, and to share it with us (John 17v24, Romans 8v17, 2 Thessalonians 2v14). That gives us a deep honour and significance.

1) Seeing the Power and Glory of Jesus (16v28-17v13)

In 16v28, Jesus is saying that the disciples are going to see him “coming in his Kingly rule” before they die. It's going to be revealed to them what kind of King Jesus is. That happens following the resurrection and ascension (think of the growth of the Kingdom in Acts). It also happens, as a foretaste, in the transfiguration of 17v1-8. Jesus is transformed before their eyes—Peter, James and John see his glory and majesty revealed (v1&2). Jesus is King, and fulfils both the Law and the Prophets (represented by Moses and Elijah, respectively, v3). And in v5, the Father reveals that Jesus is his unique, beloved Son, the eternal Son. As we realise who this Jesus is, we may fall to the ground in terror but, beautifully, he comes and touches us (v7) and tells us not to fear. The disciples' vision is taken up with only Jesus (v8). *What about ours?*

The disciples think they must be getting close to the day and coming of the Lord and King (see Malachi 4v5-6) and so they ask, in effect, if they are still waiting for the Elijah who comes before the Lord (v10). Jesus explains, again (see 11v14), that the Elijah was John the Baptist who has come and suffered. It's as if these 3 disciples are saying, “If you're the King, the divine King, and it sure looked that way up there on the mountain, then why suffering and death for you and John the Baptist?” *What does true faith look like before the restoration (v11) of all things?*

2) Trusting the Power and Glory of Jesus (17v14-20)

The other 9 disciples have been unable to heal a boy whose life-threatening seizures are the result of demonic activity (17v14-16). Jesus is disturbed by their poverty of faith (v17). In compassion, he gets them to bring the boy to him and immediately casts out the demon (v18). He then touches the boy, who appears lifeless, and raises him up. The disciples were unable to drive out the demon (v19), despite having been given authority to do so (Matthew 10v1), because of the poor quality of their faith. It's not their faith is too small (v20), it's a poor kind of faith, which did not exercise true prayer (Mark 9v28-29).

Jesus promises here that Kingdom faith (personal trust in his power and glory as King) will enable and result in his Kingdom work being done (Matthew 17v20).

How does this help us not to allow the lack of full restoration to discourage us and distract us from the very real power and progress of the kingdom now? Jesus has shown us his power and his glory, and has taught us to pray his kingdom come, now on earth as in heaven.

