



Portion:

Title:

SCRIPTURES

- Matthew 17
- Colossians 3:12-17

CLIMB YOUR MOUNTAINS

- The Meaning of Mountains
- What about Your Mountains?

Caracas, Venezuela is nestled in a valley, surrounded by mountains. As a Boy Scout, I was involved in some physical training that included excursions in basic mountain climbing. At first, our adventures lasted a few hours and took us only up into the lower altitudes. That's where we became acclimated to the terrain and to the lower oxygen concentration in the air. As we became stronger climbers, able to navigate more difficult landscapes and our bodies adapted to less oxygen, we were able to climb higher and higher. The summit on the coastal mountain range in Caracas, known as "The Avila," is called "Pico de Naiguata," and is situated on the border between the Venezuelan states of Miranda and Vargas.

I had no idea that what I was learning at that time in my life would play such a significant role later on. It seemed then that I was simply enjoying myself learning about nature and hanging out with my friends away from the immediate grasp of my parents. That was

good enough for me! Think about it; it was an easy way to get outdoors, while at the same time having very little parental oversight. There was no way for me to know back then, at eleven years old, that God would use those experiences in nature, climbing mountains, to help craft a message decades later about the skills needed to do essential spiritual mountain climbing. The parallels are astounding!

When we read Matthew 17, it's easy to zero in on the amazing and magnificent "transformation" moment on the mountain. "And He was transfigured before them, and His face shone like the sun, and His clothes became white as light." Beyond any doubt, what this represents, and the conversation that ensues during and immediately afterwards, is the most critical topic in the chapter. Yet, don't get so transfixed that you miss something significant, the climb up the mountain itself.

How does the "climb" play out in your life as a Christian today? Is there anything significant about the mental, physical, emotional, and spiritual effort it takes to climb the mountain with our Blessed Savior? At minimum, we must assume there is some effort required. And borrowing from the words that Christ Himself used so often to preface a statement, "Most assuredly I say to you," a significant effort is demanded. How significant you might fear? Allow me to use a bit of an "artistic license" to reword and combine

certain pre-existing biblical concepts. Maybe in this case we will call it a “pastoral license!” “If anyone chooses to climb up the mountain with Me, he must deny his own desires and self-interests, and make significant sacrifices every day in order to follow Me.”

And let’s acknowledge that more often than not, it is easier to achieve things in the natural realm than in the spiritual. Climbing to the top of the mountains in your spiritual life is significantly (there’s that word again for the seventh time!) harder than strapping on a pair of boots, loading a backpack, and heading out on the trail. Let’s sort out what is so significant about what it will take for you to be victorious as you “Climb Your Mountains!”

PROPHETIC SEED:

“And after six days Jesus took with him Peter and James, and John his brother, and ***led them up a high mountain by themselves.***”
Matthew 17:1 ESV

PROPHETIC FRUIT:

And as they were coming down the mountain, Jesus commanded them, “Tell no one the vision, until the Son of Man is raised from the dead.” Matthew 17:9 ESV

Let's Set the Scene: Portion in a blurb

Introduction

Last week in [Sign Me Up!](#) we watched the religious leaders seek a sign yet again—this time to test Y'shua. We learned about their leaven which Y'shua compared to bad doctrine that can infect and fill everything it touches.

Simon was assigned his new name and we learned the distinction between Peter as the small rock and Y'shua as the massive Rock. We saw there is only one path to knowing the Christ and that is by the Father's will.

The unpleasant future of Y'shua's ministry was becoming clear and Peter did not like it. And Y'shua was not gentle in His admonishment of Peter for his resistance to the truth. You have to join Christ in the suffering that is coming. There is no way around it.

This week we witness one of the most important prophetic events in the New Testament. Y'shua is transfigured into a being of light in the presence of Peter, James, and John. Moses and Elijah then appear connecting this event to some of the most important prophecies in the Bible.

We are also introduced to a few other key ideas in this chapter. It takes preparation with prayer and fasting, at times, to do spiritual warfare; the disciples get exposed to the idea that Y'shua

will be killed as part of His ministry, and we see that Y'shua is very concerned with His disciples keeping their word, even when they made an error in giving it!

Matthew 17

The Transfiguration

1. Peter, James, and John find themselves on the mountain with Y'shua. They witness Y'shua transfigure into a being of light.
 1. This is what a glorified body looks like
 2. A body of flesh and bones as opposed to flesh and blood
 3. This is the body we inherit
 4. This is the incorruptible body of 1 Cor. 15
 5. This is the body Y'shua will get because he went to the cross —so he can be the same species as we are into eternity — so we can marry—because He chose to stay in the garden (Hebrew slave)
2. Then Moses and Elijah appear to talk with Y'shua (what did they say?)
 1. Connection to Malachi 4
 2. Connection to the restoration of all things
3. Peter sees this as a good thing. He wants to build three tabernacles (this is likely during the Feast of Tabernacles): one for Y'shua, one for Moses, and one for Elijah.

4. Then a voice came out of the Heaven, saying, "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. Hear Him!"
 1. This is the same as at His baptism in Matthew 3
 2. This is what Peter reports in II Peter
5. The disciples are frightened, but Y'shua touched them and said, "Arise, and do not be afraid."
6. Then Moses and Elijah disappeared.
7. As they left the mountain, Jesus instructed them to tell no one what they saw happen until after the resurrection.
 1. And that is what Peter wrote in II Peter
8. His disciples are sharp enough to recognize that this experience has something to do with the prophecy that Elijah must come as a forerunner to the Christ.
 1. Isaiah 40
 2. Malachi 4
9. Y'shua affirms their thoughts about Elijah's ministry:
 - (a) Elijah is coming first and will restore all things.
 - (b) Elijah has come already (the spirit of Elijah in John the Baptist).
 - (c) As John suffered, so will Christ!

A Boy is Healed

10. Y'shua then encounters an epileptic boy whom the disciples could not help.

- a) He addresses their faithlessness and then rebukes the demon, and immediately the child is cured.
- b) The disciples inquire privately about why they were unsuccessful in their attempts to cast out the demon.
- c) Y'shua tells them it is all about their faith. Even a small amount of faith would be sufficient, and sometimes you gain that faith by prayer and fasting.

Jesus Predicts His Death and Resurrection

11. Y'shua reveals that He will be betrayed and killed, and then will be resurrected on the third day.

Peter and His Master Pay Their Taxes

12. Next was the great tax controversy.

- (a) Peter was asked if his Teacher would pay the temple tax. He tells them, "Yes."
- (b) Later on Y'shua clarifies for Peter... Who is responsible for customs or taxes—sons or strangers?"
- (c) Peter correctly identifies that the strangers are the liable party.
- (d) The sons are free of this taxation, Y'shua says.
- (e) However, to remain beyond reproach and to offend no one, Y'shua instructs him to pay the tax.
- (f) And, he sends Peter off to get the money for the tax in a supernatural way, like when He called down bread from heaven to feed the 5000 and 4000.

- (g) Go catch a fish Peter. The first one you catch will have, in its mouth, the money you need for the tax.
- (h) Take that and give it to them for Me and you.

THE MEANING OF MOUNTAINS

1. Mountains

A. The word mountain appears in Scriptures 175 times in 157 different verses.

- (1) It is widely used for different purposes, one which is to relate the mental, physical and emotional aspects of our life to our spiritual growth and development.
 - (a) The Biblical significance of a mountain is to parallel spiritual growth with the mental toughness it takes to deal with a lack of comfort and the continual human desire to feel safe in every circumstance by always being able to predict what's around the corner.
 - (b) The life of the believer should feel like a continual mountain climb.
 - (c) Much like the person who sets out to climb Mount Kilimanjaro, the believer should "expect-the-unexpected".

1. Living in treacherous circumstances is not welcomed by hardly anyone. And, if truth be told, I don't enjoy it anymore than you do.
2. Having lived in the U.S. now for close to four decades, I can't hardly imagine not living with the comforts and safety this country has provided.
3. It is easy getting up in the morning and knowing, for the most part, what to expect on any given day. Mostly, everything functions like a clock.
 - a) What will happen when this style of living becomes a challenge?
 - b) Will you be ready to have your bags packed and to go on the journey our Savior is going to take you on?
 - c) Will you be ready for your own mountaintop experience? (More on this later in the message.)

B. Mountain climbing in the physical

- (1) Going outdoors and climbing mountains is probably one of the most exhilarating activities I have ever done. I would assume that doing so today could be even more exhilarating having learned what I learned in my younger days.

- (a) **Mental toughness required:** Climbing mountains requires a great deal of mental toughness. If you have never done it, don't take my word for it, grab a backpack and do it. There is no proper way to paint this picture for one who has never endured it.
- (b) The reason why mental toughness is needed is because when one has embarked on a climb, one has no idea how much longer it will take to get to a place where one can rest—a place where one can set up camp and to kick back and relax having accomplished the totality of the climb or the first leg of the climb.
 - 1. So, while climbing, one is continually asking one question, can you guess?
 - a) If you said, "How much longer?" You guessed correctly!
 - b) Moses in, Numbers 14:27 said, "How long shall I bear with this evil congregation...?"
 - c) The ascent was beginning to get difficult!
 - d) It is common to human nature to want to "throw-in-the-towel" whenever we deal with the same circumstances over and over. So the default mechanism is to **want to call it quits.**

- e) It would be foolish for me to assume you've never dealt with these types of situations.
- f) The better questions are, "How did you address it?" And, "What was the final outcome?"

C. Mountain Climb in the Spiritual

(1) Have you identified what mountains you need to climb?

(a) Your Mountains!

1. In the same way Jesus took His disciples with Him ***to reveal His glory***, He takes each and everyone of us to that same mountain, time and time again!

- a) Y'shua took His disciples with Him, not for His own benefit. He already knew His identity.
- b) He had no need to reveal this openly, other than for Peter, James & John to to come to the same realization.
- c) Parts of their own personal makeup required this revelation in order for them to eventually become ***totally sold out for the Gospel!***

D. Mountains to Overcome

(1) **Mountain of Anger**

- (a) Easily, this could be the tallest mountain any believer has had to climb.

1. Just as water is to a fish, so is anger the default mechanism to many, men and women alike.
 - a) You might have said this yourself.
 - 1) "I'm Italian; and we are hot-tempered. I can't help it."
 - 2) "I'm hispanic; this is how I grew up!"
 - 3) "I always apologize for my outburst after, if I realize I was wrong"
 - b) Where in God's word does it allow for such excuses?
 - 1) Keep looking because it is not there!
- (b) Here is a well-known verse, often ***purposely overlooked!***
 1. "Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, **he is a new creation**. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come." 2 Corinthians 5:17 ESV
 - a) The better question then is, "Am I really in Christ?"
 - b) The Bible reminds us to... "Let it not be! ***But let God be true, and every man a liar;*** as it is written, "That You might be justified in Your sayings, and will overcome when You are judged." Romans 3:4 MKJV

- c) *Excuses are not for the believer*, they are only for those who want to rely on what is easier and more common, instead of surrendering self to the changes God requires.

(2) Mountain of Lust

- (a) Most of Christendom today has been singing a tune that the believer today is not bound by the law. We have thousands of pages on our KEM site to prove otherwise.
 - 1. Be that as it may, the Jesus who according to today's Christianity "fulfilled the law" as in "did away with it," is the same Jesus who raised the legal bar when He said, "But I say to you that everyone who **looks at a woman with lustful intent has already committed adultery** with her in his heart." Matthew 5:28 ESV
 - a) So, how is that for a punch in the gut?
 - b) Besides the scriptures that speak of the person actually committing the act of adultery, this "higher standard" pegs the culprit just because they pondered the act with someone not his wife!
- (b) Provisions needed to climb the mountain of lust...
 - 1. The same way one packs a backpack to go on an excursion, the believer has to have provisions to draw

from for sustenance and strength whenever these mountains present themselves.

- a) “I have made **a covenant with my eyes**; why then should I look upon a young woman?” Job 31:1 NKJV
- b) “Therefore, brethren, we are debtors; **not to the flesh**, to live according to the flesh.” Romans 8:12 NKJV
- c) “I say then, walk in the Spirit, and **you shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh.**” Galatians 5:16 NKJV
- d) “For this is the will of God, your sanctification; that you should abstain from sexual immorality; that each of you should know **how to possess his own vessel** in sanctification and honor, **not in passion of lust, just like the Gentiles who do not know God.**” 1 Thessalonians 4:3-5 NKJV

(3) Mountain of Greed

- (a) Provisions needed to climb the mountain of greed...
 - 1. “**No servant can serve two masters**, for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will be loyal to the one and despise the other. **You cannot serve God and mammon.**” Luke 16:13 NKJV

2. “Not that ***I speak in regard to need***, for I have learned in whatever state I am, to be content.”
Philippians 4:11-12 NKJV
3. “For ***the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil***, for which some have strayed from the faith in their greediness, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows.” 1 Timothy 6:10 NKJV
4. “Let your conduct be without ***covetousness; be content with such things as you have***. For He Himself has said, “I will never leave you nor forsake you.””
Hebrews 13:5 NKJV

(4) Mountain of Unforgiveness

(a) Provisions needed to climb the mountain of unforgiveness...

1. “For ***if you forgive men their trespasses***, your heavenly Father will also forgive you; but if you do not forgive men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.” Matthew 6:14-15 ESV
2. “Then Peter came to Him and said, Lord, how often shall my brother sin against me and ***I forgive him? Until seven times?*** Jesus said to him, I do not say to you, Until seven times; but, Until seventy times seven.” Matthew 18:21-22 ESV

3. "Take heed to yourselves. ***If your brother trespasses against you, rebuke him. And if he repents, forgive him.*** And if he trespasses against you seven times in a day, and seven times in a day turns again to you, saying, I repent, you shall forgive him. And the apostles said to the Lord, ***Give us more faith.***" Luke 17:3-5 ESV
4. "Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and tumult and evil speaking be put away from you, with all malice. And be kind to one another, tenderhearted, ***forgiving one another,*** even as God for Christ's sake has forgiven you." Ephesians 4:31-32 ESV
- (5) Practical application of how to climb MANY mountains
 - (a) Love!
 1. "Therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, ***put on tender feelings of mercy, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, long-suffering, forbearing one another and forgiving yourselves,*** if anyone has a complaint against any. As Christ forgave you, so also you do. ***And above all these things put on love, which is the bond of perfectness. And let the peace of God rule in your hearts,*** to which you also are called in one body, and be thankful. Let the

Word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord. And everything, whatever you do in word or deed, ***do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by Him.***”

Colossians 3:12-17 ESV

- a) The believer has to allow Jesus to take him up the mountain the same way He took His disciples.
- b) However, this is not without personal sacrifice.
 - 1) You'll be required to learn to overlook the trespasses of others. This is probably one of the hardest things we can do in all our humanity, since WE are always on OUR own minds. Every time someone trespasses against us, we feel well-justified to harbor negative sentiments towards that person.
 - 2) You'll be required to learn to forgive yourself! How often do you still have regrets for past behavior that cannot be taken back? Have you realized how much weight you are carrying on your shoulders?

- 3) You'll be required to put on love! This may seem a little easier than the other two, but this verse is not merely referring to putting on love towards those whom you already love. Loving those whom we have good relations with is not a challenge. Flip that on its head and then there's a challenge to be had. The moment we have to love a person for whom we don't have the best of regards, that is when the rubber meets the road.

WHAT ABOUT YOUR MOUNTAINS?

2. Conclusion

A. Main Point

- (1) Today's chapter began with the three disciples of Y'shua being asked to go on an excursion with Him to the top of the mountain. It would behoove us to not think anything of why it was these disciples He chose, and not some of the others.
- (2) The Bible does not tell us why, but we can definitely speculate that they were the ones whom He believed needed this experience the most.

- (3) That is not to say that they were the neediest ones, or the weakest ones, but we can surmise that for the purpose of development, they were the ones who would favor the most.
- (4) We have already read in Matthew 16 that Peter was asked by Y'shua to get "behind me Satan," for not realizing the work Yahweh was doing through Him (Y'shua), and that He (Peter) was not to stand in the way of that or to have the enemy use him as a tool the same way he used Judas Iscariot.
- (5) In bringing Peter to the top of the mountain and letting him see His Glory, Y'shua was reaffirming something in Peter. Even though Peter would still blow it again and again, imagine if he had not been put through the mountaintop experience.
- (6) What about you? How many times and how often do you want Yeshua to bring you to a mountaintop experience, in order for you to realize that once you have fully witnessed His Kingship, you are to fully surrender to that which He has revealed.
- (7) Climbing your mountains has everything to do with you bringing with you only that which is necessary for a full encounter with Y'shua, and nothing else.

- (8) **The more you load your backpack with unnecessary items, the less likely you are to arrive at the top, and the more likely you are to miss the transformation experience.**
- (9) You see, Yeshua already knew who He was. He didn't reveal Himself to His disciples for His own benefit but the benefit of the disciples.
- (10) In the likeness of that event is what He does with each and everyone of us.
- (11) You have to release the excess weight to be able to climb your mountain, that is your baggage. If not, you will never fully experience your own mountaintop transfiguration.
- (12) Are you ready to ***Climb Your Mountains?***

QUESTIONS & DISCUSSION

- 1. In the same way Y'shua took His disciples with Him, up to the mountains to reveal His glory, He takes each of us to that same mountain...**
 - A. Why do you believe He does that?
- 2. As Christian, there are many mountains to overcome. Describe how each of these might apply to you and how you will overcome them. Use the accompanying Scriptures to help.**
 - A. Mountain of Anger? (II Corinthians 5:17; Romans 3:4)

- B. Mountain of Lust? (Matthew 5:28; Job 31:1; Romans 8:12; Galatians 5:16; I Thessalonians 4:3-5)
 - C. Mountain of Greed? (Luke 16:13; Philippians 4:11-12; I Timothy 6:10; Hebrews 13:5)
 - D. Mountain of Unforgiveness? (Matthew 6:14-15; 18:21-22; Luke 17:3-5; Ephesians 4:31-32)
- 3. Use Colossians 3:12-17 to craft an essay about the practical application of how to climb many mountains.**
- A. Have you identified what mountains you need to climb?
 - B. Please describe each in detail. (Hint: you should draw on your answers in Question 2.)
- 4. It is common to human nature to want to “throw-in-the-towel” whenever we deal with the same circumstances over and over. The default mechanism is to want to call it quits.**
- A. How do you address these challenges?
 - B. What has been the final outcome?
- 5. The more you load your backpack with unnecessary items, the less likely you are to arrive at the top of the mountain, and the more likely you are to miss the transformation experience.**
- A. You have to release the excess weight that is your baggage, to be able to climb your mountain(s). If not, you will never fully experience your own mountaintop transfiguration.
 - B. Are you doing that? Please explain how!