

It Seemed Like a Good Idea at the Time

In the story of the transfiguration of Christ (*Matthew 17:1-13; Mark 9:2-13; Luke 9:28-36*), Jesus is transformed in His appearance while Peter, James and John look on. While Jesus is praying, He is gloriously joined by Moses, the lawgiver and Elijah, the prophet of God. They talk with Jesus about His upcoming crucifixion in Jerusalem (*Lk 9:30-31*). Peter, so thrilled and honored to witness such a wonderful sight said, “*Lord, it is good for us to be here.*” and suggested erecting three tabernacles (tents or booths) in honor of the Christ, Moses and Elijah. Perhaps he thought that such an event should be commemorated and thus remembered by the three structures. It’s interesting that Mark’s account says that Peter did not know what to say and Luke wrote that Peter didn’t know what he was saying. For a fella who didn’t know what to say, Peter said something anyway and his suggestion seemed like a good idea at the time. But then, a great cloud overtakes them and they hear, “*This is My beloved Son in whom I am well pleased. Hear Him!*”, thus God gives full preeminence to Christ, leaving the law and the prophets behind. I believe Peter’s idea to memorialize the transfiguration event was in good faith, but then God corrected him in showing that the law was going away and the prophets were being fulfilled before his very eyes.

To this day, people still desire to build monuments, give out trophies, and mount memorial plaques to walls in an attempt to keep a momentous or glorious moment alive. However, Christians are to live in the present, learn from the past and hope for the future (*Heb. 3:13; 1 Cor. 10:6; 2 Cor. 6:2; Rom. 15:4; Phil. 3:12-14; Titus 2:13*). In recent years we’ve seen our own country divided over commemorative statues and monuments. As believers, we should not be concerned with those things made of stone and marble which will fade away with time, but rather pray for the precious souls of our fellowman “*that they may be saved.*” (1 Cor. 10:32-33).

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