



NO SERMON NOTES THIS WEEK

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ASBURY DAILY STUDY GUIDE *February 12 - 17, 2024*

INTRODUCTION

Taking in the view from a mountaintop is a unique experience. Basking in the glow of an unrestrained sun. Tracing the lines of shadows sweeping over the valley below. Feeling as though you may be able to reach up and touch the sky. Mountaintops can be a place of spiritual renewal. They also played a pivotal role in a number of major Biblical stories and events. In this week's devotionals we'll examine a few of those happenings and consider what they mean for our lives today.

Monday: Exodus 20:1-17 (*Moses Receives the Ten Commandments*)

When we picture the Ten Commandments, we often think of carved stone tables engraved with the words of God. But the receiving of the Ten Commandments wasn't a lifeless handoff of chiseled rules, it was the culmination of a series of mountaintop discussions Moses had with God (see Exodus 19-32). In what ways has God spoken to you when you've had mountaintop experiences (literal or figurative)? How did those experiences change you?

Tuesday: Genesis 22:1-18 (*Abraham's Faith is Tested with a Sacrifice*)

The voice pierced the tension at the pivotal moment of this story: "Abraham!... Do not lay a hand on the boy." It was a messenger of God, relaying that Abraham's faithfulness – his "fear of God" (v.12) – had been affirmed. Just a moment before, Abraham was ready to sacrifice his beloved son, Isaac, to prove to God that he was willing to sacrifice anything. Think about a time when you had to sacrifice something to follow God. What was it? How did it change your view of God? How did it change the way you follow God?

Wednesday: Matthew 5:13-16 (*Jesus Preaches a Sermon from a Hill in Israel, now known as the "Mount of Beatitudes"*)

From the top of a gentle slope overlooking fields that ultimately roll into the Sea of Galilee a bit over a half-mile away, Jesus delivered a wide-ranging sermon. Among the things he spoke of were the ideas of being salt and light. Salt, of course, brings a richer taste; and light provides a beacon for the lost. How can you be "salt and light" in your daily life?

Thursday: Mark 9:2-9 (*The Transfiguration*)

At the top of a mountain (accounts vary on whether it was Mount Tabor or Mount Herman), three of Jesus' disciples – Peter, James, and John – witness a startling event. Jesus becomes radiant – his clothes beamed a brilliant white and "his face shone like the sun" (Matthew 17:2, NIV). Peter stumbles over his words, unsure what to say in the midst of such a supernatural occurrence. Have you ever been at a loss for words as a result of an experience with Jesus? What happened?

Friday: John 19:17-29 (*The Crucifixion of Jesus*)

Golgotha. The "place of the Skull." The place where Jesus hung with two other criminals and breathed his last. In this final mountaintop scene we're examining this week, the world changed forever. The people detailed in John's gospel account are having radically different experiences. The chief priests are upset about the wording used to mark Jesus' cross. Pilate and the Roman soldiers are going about this execution as they would any other. The disciples and women who came out of love for Jesus were surely mourning. When have you experienced a situation differently than others around you experienced it because of your faith? How did it change the weight of that moment for you?

MOVING FORWARD

Most of us don't live on a mountaintop. At some point we have to come back down, abandoning the majestic vistas. But while our lives may not be lived on the mountaintops, it's important that we recall the grandeur we experienced while we were on them. Go into this week remembering the five experiences we examined this week; and consider what they mean for you as an everyday follower of Jesus.