

## This Is US



### Matthew 17:1-20

Six days later Jesus took Peter and the two brothers, James and John, and led them up a high mountain. As the men watched, Jesus' appearance changed so that his face shone like the sun, and his clothing became dazzling white. Suddenly, Moses and Elijah appeared and began talking with Jesus. Peter blurted out, "Lord, this is wonderful! If you want me to, I'll make three shrines, one for you, one for Moses, and one for Elijah." But even as he said it, a bright cloud came over them, and a voice from the cloud said, "This is my beloved Son, and I am fully pleased with him. Listen to him." The disciples were terrified and fell face down on the ground.

Jesus came over and touched them. "Get up," he said, "don't be afraid." And when they looked, they saw only Jesus with them. As they descended the mountain, Jesus commanded them, "Don't tell anyone what you have seen until I, the Son of Man, have been raised from the dead."...

When they arrived at the foot of the mountain, a huge crowd was waiting for them. A man came and knelt before Jesus and said, "Lord, have mercy on my son, because he has seizures and suffers terribly. He often falls into the fire or into the water. So I brought him to your disciples, but they couldn't heal him."

Jesus replied, "You stubborn, faithless people!...Bring the boy to me." Then Jesus rebuked the demon in the boy, and it left him. From that moment the boy was well. Afterward the disciples asked Jesus privately, "Why couldn't we cast out that demon?" "You didn't have enough faith," Jesus told them.

## 1. A Spiritual "Mountaintop" Is a Personal Experience of Jesus' Power and Glory

"Six days later, three of them **saw that glory**. Jesus... led them up a **high mountain**. His appearance changed from the inside out... Sunlight poured from his face. His clothes were filled with light." (Matt 17:1-2 Msg) "They were **glorious** to see." (Luke 9:29-31)

"Teacher, **this is wonderful!**" Peter exclaimed" (Mark 9:5)

## 2. Don't Expect to Live on the Mountaintop

"At the **foot of the mountain** they found a great crowd surrounding the other disciples, as some teachers of religious law were arguing with them... "**What is all this arguing about?**" Jesus asked. One of the men spoke up and said, "Teacher...I asked your disciples to cast out the evil spirit, but **they couldn't do it.**" (Mark 9:14-17)

## 3. Use Mountains to Build Life-Giving Habits

"a light-radiant cloud enveloped them. As they found themselves buried in the cloud, they became **deeply aware of God.**" (Luke 9:35 Msg)

### Habit of looking for Jesus' presence

"Meanwhile, Peter and those with him were **slumped over in sleep**. When they came to, rubbing their eyes, they **saw Jesus in his glory**" (Luke 9:32, 36 Msg)

### Habit of listening to Jesus' voice

"a bright cloud came over them, and a voice from the cloud said, "This is my beloved Son, and I am fully pleased with him. **Listen to him.**" (Matt 17:5)

### Habit of loving Jesus most

"When they opened their eyes and looked around **all they saw was Jesus, only Jesus.**" (Matt 17:8 Msg)

## 4. Use Valleys to Build Power-Giving Faith

"Afterward the disciples asked Jesus privately, 'Why couldn't we cast out that demon?' 'You didn't have **enough faith**' Jesus told them." (Matt 17:19,20)

"This kind can be cast out only by **prayer.**" (Mark 9:29)

## 5. The Mountain Prepares Me to Serve in the Valley

"At the bottom of the mountain, they were met by a **crowd of waiting people**...a man... fell to his knees begging, "Master, **have mercy on my son.**" (Matt 17:14-15 Msg)

"So let's not get tired of doing what is good. At just the right time we will reap a harvest of blessing if we don't give up." (Gal. 6:9)

## 6. Believe God Does His Best Work in the Valley

"They all shook their heads in wonder, astonished at...God's majestic greatness."

(Luke 9:43 Msg)

## EEFC Small Group Study Questions Stuck in a Spiritual Slump

1. Have you ever had a “spiritual mountain top” experience?  
What was it like?  
What did you do when you realized the “mountaintop” feeling was gone?
2. Have you been in a spiritual valley recently? Describe it.
3. How did you get out of it?
4. How do you practice the habit of looking for Jesus presence?  
Give some examples
5. How do you practice the habit of listening for Jesus voice?  
Give some examples
6. How do you practice the habit of loving Jesus most?  
Give some examples.  
How would a visitor to our Sunday service tend to measure how much we love Jesus?  
Based on that, do you think they would rate us high, medium, lukewarm, or low? Discuss.
7. Jesus said the disciples lacked spiritual power because they did not have enough faith, and because they did not pray enough.  
How can we tell if we are really strong in faith?  
How do you measure the strength of your prayer life?  
How do you measure the strength of the church’s prayer life?  
EEFC has weekly and monthly prayer meetings.  
Do you know when they are?  
Do you know how many people attend?  
Have you considered attending? Why or why not?
8. “The valley is where we are called to serve. The valley is where God does his best work.”  
Share a time God worked through you to serve others at a time when you were in a valley.  
What was the result in their life? In your life?