



## MOUNTAIN TOP ADVENTURES

(A Bible Study on Luke 9:22-43 - The Transfiguration of Jesus)

### Getting Started

Mountaintop adventures are those exhilarating moments in life when we have felt uplifted and closer to God. Such moments recharge us with new enthusiasm for life and make us feel good about ourselves, other people, and God. These mountaintop adventures are times of great inspiration in our life. We all need these inspiring interludes from time to time to recharge our spiritual batteries and to prevent our faith and life from going flat and stale.

### Into the Word

A. Read Luke 9:22-28

1. How do you think the disciples felt after Jesus told them of His coming suffering and death and their need to take up the cross in verses 22-23? How would you have reacted to Jesus' words if you had been there?

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2. Why do you think Jesus took Peter, James and John up a mountain away from other people?

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3. Do you think the disciples needed some time alone with Jesus away from the crowds? What purpose could this time alone serve?

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4. Do you ever feel a need to get away from the routine of your life and from other people and be alone with Jesus? What purpose can this time alone with Jesus serve in our life? How can a person create such time in a busy schedule?

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5. What are some of the daily struggles and hassles in your life that dampen your joy in living and in your faith? Share these with the group if possible.

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B. Read Luke 9:29-36

1. How do you suppose that Peter, James and John felt as Moses and Elijah “appeared in glorious splendor, talking with Jesus” (v. 31)? How would you have felt?

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2. Why do you think Peter wanted to build three shelters on the mountainside? What do you think he was trying to preserve or retain by building the shelters?

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3. In verse 35, God, the Father, spoke to the disciples. What do His words indicate was the purpose of this mountaintop experience for the three disciples?

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4. Comment on this thought: “Inspiring moments should not be pursued as ends in themselves but as a means to an end, to prepare us for greater love and service to God and others.” Do you agree or disagree? Why?

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5. Describe a mountaintop adventure in your life when you felt especially close to God. What effect has it had on your life and faith? Do you think such experiences are common for most people? Why or why not?

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During mountaintop adventures, we feel inspired and renewed. Such moments leave us animated, energized, motivated, excited and activated. Once the adventure is over, however, a person can feel a sense of being let down. Unless the ebb and flow of life and our feelings are understood and anticipated, this let-down can be devastating.

C. Read Luke 9:37-43

1. After the Transfiguration, Jesus, Peter, James and John came down from the mountain to encounter a father and his ill son. How does this episode mirror or reflect your own experience after some inspiring event in your life?

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2. How did Jesus respond to the disciples’ failure to heal the son (v.41)? Why do you think Jesus was angry with the people?

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3. What is the hardest part of coming back to your daily life after a special time? How can you lessen the likelihood of a sense of let-down as you return to a normal routine?

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### **Mountaintop Experiences**

Mountaintop adventures don't just happen. We have to seek them out and prepare for them. After all, Peter, James and John had to climb up the mountain with Jesus to witness His Transfiguration. If they had stayed below, they would have missed it. Likewise, we must go places and associate with people who can help prepare us.

1. Describe a time in your life that was especially inspirational to you. What helps you to remember this inspiring time?

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### **Keeping The Inspiration Coming**

We are often told that the average person only uses 20% of his God-given potential to live, to learn, to love. The remaining 80% is wasted. That is a tragic waste. In contrast, Irenaeus, a second-century Christian, said, "The glory of God is a person who is fully alive." An inspired person is one who is fully alive. Such a person is making full use of his time and talents for God and others.

To become fully alive, we need to seek our life's mountain top adventures. They don't just happen. Few people are inspired while sitting at home alone before a TV set and watching the soaps. Inspiration doesn't come while complaining on the phone about your life. Mountaintop experiences seldom occur in a darkened room over a stale cup of coffee. Inspiration doesn't just happen. We have to put ourselves in the path of inspiration and then it will come into our life.

1. How can we put ourselves in the path of inspiration? Name some things that inspire you or increase your zest for life? Where are you likely to encounter these things?

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2. As Lutherans, we believe that God works through Word and Sacrament. How can we find inspiration in these means of grace?

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3. Have any of the following been a mountaintop adventure for you: your confirmation day, family or personal devotions, Holy Communion, personal witness opportunities, LWML convention or retreat, a Bible study group? If so, explain.

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4. Read Hebrews 10:25 and Colossians 3:16.

a. What part can worship and our fellow Christians play in inspiring us? How can we, in turn, inspire our fellow Christians?

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b. Retreats and vacations can be special mountaintop adventures in our life, but where can we go to find daily inspiration and guidance? Read Psalm 119: 105 and comment.

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## **Sharing Your Inspiration With Others**

When we are inspired, we are to share that gift with others. Jesus, Peter, James and John didn't stay on the mountain. They came down to help and serve others. God fills our cup so we have something worthwhile to share with others. An inspired person himself becomes inspiring, encouraging and exciting to others. They have the attitude expressed in Psalm 118:24, *This is the day the Lord has made, let us rejoice and be glad in it.* With that attitude, life can be wonderful and great just the way God intended.

1. Name a person who inspires you. Why do you find that person inspiring?

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2. Could you possibly acquire the trait that makes that person an inspiration to others? Why?

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3. How could you be more inspiring to others? How do you think it would enable you to better help others?

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4. What worthwhile gifts or talents can you share with those around you that could inspire them to greater love and service to God?

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5. Jesus took Peter, James and John up the mountain to help them understand who He is and what His mission in life was. What should be the purpose of our taking others on a mountaintop adventure with us?

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If we plug into God's great power by using His Word and Sacraments, we will be both inspired and inspiring to others. Inspired by God, we can live victoriously and on top of a mountain. This doesn't mean that we will not have problems. We will have problems as long as we live in our sinful world. However, if we believe and trust in Jesus, we are going to come out on top of life and all its difficulties. Life will be a great adventure. That is a promise we can count on.

### **Closing Prayer**