

# THE SOUTHEAST SOWER

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## “They Saw Jesus Only”

Vernon Teagarden

Mathew records the account of the transfiguration in (Matt. 17:1-9). Jesus took Peter, James and John with Him upon a high mountain by themselves. There, Moses (the lawgiver) and Elijah (the prophet) appeared to them. However, it is stated that it was Jesus with whom these two Old Testament characters talked.

Peter may have been in the forefront most of the time among the apostles, but Jesus was head over Peter. James later became a martyr for the cause of Christ (Acts 12), but Jesus was the one Who would be crucified on behalf of James's sins. John later was exiled on the isle of Patmos for the word of God and for the testimony of Jesus Christ (Rev. 1:9); but it was Jesus, the Word of God, Who testified on behalf of God, the Father.

Moses and Elijah were correct in speaking to Jesus rather than speaking to the three apostles who had accompanied Jesus to the top of the mountain.

Further, God the Father, make it known to Peter that Jesus was superior to either Moses or Elijah after Peter suggested that three tabernacles be erected. One for Moses, one for Elijah and one for Jesus. The Father said, “This is my beloved Son, in Whom I am well pleased, hear Him!” (v. 5).

Jesus was superior to all of the others. When the disciples heard the Father's words, they fell on their faces and were greatly afraid. However, when they lifted up their eyes, they saw no one but Jesus! This is the way it should be.

If our focus is spiritual, we, like the three apostles see “Jesus only.” If our focus is not spiritual, we see everything except Jesus, and unless we refocus on Him, we are headed for danger and destruction.

Is this not what happened to Peter on the occasion of his walking on the water for a short period of time. Matthew also records this event for us in the 14th chapter of Matthew. You will recall that as the disciples were in their boat on the Sea of Galilee fighting a

terrifying storm, Jesus came walking to them on the water during the fourth watch of the night. The disciples supposed Jesus was a ghost and were frightened, crying out in fear. But Jesus immediately spoke to them, saying, “Be of good cheer! It is I; do not be afraid.” (v. 27).

Immediately, impetuous Peter, called out to Him and said, “Lord, if it is You, command me to come to You on the water.” So the Lord did as Peter requested and Peter began walking to the Lord on the water. But something happened. Peter lost his focus, took his eyes off the Lord and seeing nothing but the terrifying storm around began to sink crying out, “Lord, save me!” (v. 30). The Lord immediately saved Peter but certainly was disappointed in him (v. 31).

What happened to Peter? This is almost a rhetorical question. The answer is simple. Peter took his eyes off the Lord, and instead of seeing Jesus only, he saw everything else around him, the water, the high waves, the sound of the terrifying wind, and he began to sink.

Is this not what happens us? We take our eyes off the Lord, no longer seeing Jesus only, and begin to sink, spiritually?

If we want to succeed spiritually, then we need to learn to do what the Hebrew writer teaches us to do, look “unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith...” (Heb. 12:2)

## DO YOU SEE JESUS ONLY?

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**Service Times:**

**Sunday: 10 am, 10:50am; 6:00pm**

**Wednesday: 7:30 pm**

## HOW DID CHRIST PREACH TO THE SPIRITS IN PRISON?

Gene Frost

**ANSWER:** This question refers to 1 Peter 2:18-20: “For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit: by which also he went and preached unto the spirits in prison; which sometime were disobedient, when once the longsuffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing, wherein few, that is, eight souls were saved by water.”

Jesus before coming to the earth, as God (theos) was a Being of spirit. (John 1:1, 4:24) When He came to earth He took on flesh and was made in the image of man. (John 1:14, Phil. 2:5-8) In death the spirit of Christ separated from the body (James 2:26) The body was placed in the tomb and the spirit entered into hades. (Acts 2:27) But death was not able to hold Him and He was resurrected. (Isa. 28:14-16, Matt. 16:18, Acts 2:31) He was put to death in the flesh but made alive in the spirit, i.e. by reason of an eternal spirit was able to come forth from the grave victorious. (cf. Heb. 9:14)

By this same spirit He went and preached to spirits in prison. The pivotal question of this passage is, when did Jesus in spirit preach to spirits in prison? The text tells us: “when once the longsuffering of God waited in the days of Noah.” How did Jesus preach in the days of Noah? Peter tells us in the first chapter of this epistle: “Of which salvation the prophets have inquired and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace that should come unto you: searching what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify...” (1 Pet. 1:10-12) God had sentenced man because of his wickedness: “I will destroy man whom I have created from the face of the earth...” (Gen. 6:7) Yet man could be delivered from this prison of conviction in which he waited for the divine execution. “My spirit shall not always strive with man, for that he is also flesh: yet his days shall be an hundred and twenty years.” (Gen. 6:3) Christ in the spirit preached to the antediluvians through Noah, a preacher of righteousness. (2 Pet. 2:5; cf. 2 Pet. 1:21, 1 Cor. 2:7-13, 2 Sam. 23:2, etc.) In other words, when the people were disobedient in the days of Noah, Christ preached to them through Noah. By this same eternal spirit, Himself in Deity, He was able to come forth from the grave.

Peter does not suggest that Christ went into hades to preach, as some have supposed. Nothing is said of hades. Nothing is said of Christ preaching after His death. Rather when Christ preached was in the days of Noah. To whom He preached were the disobedient souls in prison, i.e. under sentence from God. How He preached to those then, we are told, was by the spirit, the same spirit by which He was made alive following His death. That Christ did not go into hades and preach to anyone we know by the fact that after death one’s condition or state cannot be changed. It is appointed unto man once to die and after this the judgment—there is no second chance between. (Heb. 9:27) Furthermore, in hades there is a great gulf fixed so that there is no crossing over. (Luke 16:23-26) Now is the accepted time; today is the day of salvation. (2 Cor. 6:2)

Those who obeyed the preaching of Noah were saved from the sentence of death in the flood; in fact, only eight souls. This was the effect of his preaching of righteousness. After a true likeness, Christ preaches to us today, not in the person of Noah but through His apostles and prophets. (Eph. 3:3-5, Matt. 28:19-20, 2 Cor. 5:20) And as by water Noah and his family were delivered from death, even so “baptism doth also now save us,” i.e. by baptism those under the sentence of death (Rom. 3:23, 6:23) are delivered (Acts 2:38, 22:16, 1 Cor. 12:13, Col. 1:13)

**Note:** Taken from, “Bible Answers,” Vol. 1, pg., 128-131