



## Discussion Guide

Date: 7/27/2025

Sermon Title: Is life about the journey or the destination?

Scripture: Mark 9:2-8

This discussion guide is a layout to be used with a group or class. We have included opening and closing prayers to start and end your group. The guide may be used for personal or family reflection as well.

### OPENING PRAYER

*God of light and glory, as we gather in this time of reflection, open our hearts to your presence. Just as you revealed yourself on the mountaintop, reveal yourself to us now in our questions, our conversation, and our quiet listening. Help us to see Christ clearly and follow him more faithfully down the mountain and into the world. Amen.*

### Opening Question:

1. Have you ever had a “mountaintop” experience in your faith (e.g., a retreat, camp, mission trip, or a moment of deep connection with God)? What was it like to come back down?

### Digging into the Word:

1. Read Mark 9:2-8 before diving into the following questions. What stands out or is catching your ear in this story? What do you imagine the disciples were feeling as they witnessed Jesus' transfiguration?
2. Why do you think Peter wanted to stay and build tents? What does that say about how we often want to hold onto spiritual highs?
3. Jesus doesn't let the disciples stay on the mountain. Why is it important that they return to the valley?

### Additional scripture:

4. Read Matthew 28:16–20. How does this passage reflect the idea of moving from spiritual experience into a faithful action?
5. How can we bring the transformation we experience in sacred moments back into our daily lives?

### Wesleyan insight:

6. John Wesley emphasized sanctification—the ongoing work of God's grace in our lives. How does this story affirm the idea that discipleship is a continuing journey, not a destination?
7. “The life of faith is a pilgrimage, a journey ever on the way to God's full likeness in us.” — Randy Maddox, Wesleyan theologian. In what ways is your own faith a journey? Are there areas you sense God calling you to grow, change, or act?

8. Wesley taught about “means of grace” like prayer, worship, Scripture, and service. How do these practices help us carry the mountaintop into the ordinary days of discipleship?

#### **Sermon Questions:**

9. We are reminded that the disciples are imperfect but still invited by Jesus to the mountain. The sermon mentions "wrestling with faith" as a way to prepare for mountaintop moments. What does this look like in your life? What questions are you currently wrestling with?
10. Pastor Allison shared how Peter declared Jesus as the Messiah before the transfiguration experience. How has your understanding of who Jesus is evolved over time?
11. Reflect on Peter's reaction during the transfiguration (wanting to build dwellings). How do we sometimes miss experiencing God's presence by trying to control or preserve the moment?
12. The sermon points out that even after their mountaintop experience, the disciples still struggled and made mistakes. How does this encourage or challenge you in your own faith journey?

#### **Applying it:**

13. Discuss the statement: "Faith is not a one-time fix-it project. It's an ongoing journey." How have you seen this play out in your own life?
14. In what ways do you relate to the disciples' struggle to understand Jesus' true identity and mission?
15. How can we find meaning and growth in the "valleys" of our faith journey, not just the mountaintops?
16. In what ways can we cultivate a faith that is resilient and growing, regardless of whether we're experiencing spiritual highs or lows?

#### **CLOSING PRAYER**

*God of transformation, we thank you for the mountaintop moments that open our eyes to your glory. But even more, we thank you for walking with us in the valleys, on the road, and in the everyday moments of life. Send us now to live as disciples in the world—not just keeping the light to ourselves, but sharing it with those in need. Give us strength for the journey. In the name of Jesus, Amen.*

#### **WAYS TO RESPOND (or challenges for you this week)**

1. This week, set aside time to "wrestle" with a question or doubt you have about your faith. Journal your thoughts or discuss them with a trusted friend.
2. Practice being present in moments of spiritual significance. When you feel God's presence, resist the urge to "record" or control the experience. Instead, simply be still and receive.
3. Reflect on a past "valley" in your faith journey. How did God work in that difficult time? Share your insights with the group next week.
4. Choose a spiritual discipline (prayer, scripture reading, service, etc.) to practice consistently this week, recognizing that faith grows in the everyday journey, not just the mountaintop moments.