

LIFT UP your EYES

Date: Sunday 14th September to Sunday 5th October 2025

Key point of this campaign: For our people to position themselves for a fresh encounter with God. To lift up their eyes above their circumstances to hear and see God.

Dear CG Leader,

Please see below the following selection of many questions for your cg discussion. *Please choose the questions you think are the best fit your cg. Our prayer is that as you lift your eyes, you would encounter God in a fresh and personal way. May His presence fill you with hope, clarity, and courage to step into all He has prepared for you.*

With love,

The Connect Team.

Announcements:

<p>Giving</p>	<p><i>To equip you in the leadership of your connect group during the Money Matters Campaign, please see the link below to our C3 SYD website with information and videos on, 'What is Giving?', 'Why do we Give?' and 'How do we Give?' Please forward this link to anyone in your cg who would like to know more: https://c3syd.church/nextstep/giving/</i></p> <p><i>The web page Includes:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 3x Teaching Videos ○ Giving Booklet ○ Ways to Give
<p>Conference 10-12 October</p>	<p><i>Don't forget to register for Conference 2025! Happening from the 10th to the 12th of October.</i></p> <p><i>This year we are introducing a new structure! Running Friday night, Saturday day and Sunday morning. Sunday morning, we will gather all locations at our NB location, and we will be celebrating baptisms and having lunch together. https://c3syd.church/conference2025/</i></p>
<p>Online Prayer</p>	<p><i>If someone in your connect group can't make it to a face-to-face prayer meeting, our Online Prayer Meeting is a great alternative!</i></p> <p><i>Here's the link to join or share: https://c3syd.church/prayer/</i></p>
<p>Foundations</p>	<p><i>Our online Foundations Course is held in the evenings and runs weekly for 5 weeks. Please encourage any new believers in your connect group to attend this significant course to help them establish strong foundations, even if the course runs on your connect group night. Starting at 7pm.</i></p> <p><i>Please stay in touch with them to help them plug into community, gather them to church, answer any questions they may have and then resume attending your cg once the course finishes. (Of course, if your cg meeting doesn't clash with the Foundations course, and the new believer is up for it, they could attend both meetings – Foundations and your Connect Group.)</i></p> <p><i>Here's a link to the website for more information: https://c3syd.church/next-step-foundations/</i></p>
<p>Freedom Ministry</p>	<p><i>Freedom Ministry is Holy Spirit directed and empowered prayer ministry aimed to bring healing to an individual, spirit, soul and body. If you or anyone in your cg is interested in accessing this ministry, please fill in the form below and our team will be in touch: https://c3syd.info/freedom</i></p>

Connect Questions

○ **Week 1: LIFT UP YOUR EYES**

14th September 2025

1. What are the things in our lives that distract us from hearing from God (both internal and external)? Consider how you move around your world (walking, driving, on public transport): what do you see if you look down and what can you see if you look up?
2. How have you and your perspective been changed by spending time with God? If you can, give a specific example from this year.
3. What can be your next step to consider God and not simply "do more" for God? Is there a name of God that you'd like to understand? A topic you'd like to study or a book you've always wanted to read.
4. We are not able to fix the world ourselves, but God invites us to be a part of what He is doing. What is our role in pursuing God's purposes in ourselves, our neighbourhoods and our nation?
5. Where has God's light been shining for you in the world's darkness lately?

○ **Week 2: LIFT UP YOUR EYES – To see God**

○ **Week 3: LIFT UP YOUR EYES – To see the purpose and people**

28th September 2025

1. Many encounters between God and people occurred on mountains. Have you ever climbed a mountain, either physically or figuratively and how did it change you? Alternatively we often talk about "mountaintop experiences" with God where all else falls away. Share any stories you might have.
2. How does our Christian faith incite curiosity in others (think of the weird things we do)? Are there things we hide from others because we don't want to answer questions about it? What could be your next step in making God more visible to the world?
3. Moses had been living in the wilderness, tending sheep – a long way from his upbringing in the palace. Can you relate to how he must have been feeling about himself when God called him? What would it mean if God only called us to do big things when we felt ready?

4. When you spend time with someone, you learn about the things they care about. Has this been happening in your walk with God? Is there a next step you can take in this area, for example praying for a certain group this month, asking God to show you people He is moving towards as you go about your day?
5. How has God affirmed you and equipped you to serve Him in the past? How is your level of trust that He will do it again? Is there a next step you can take, to move your eyes from yourself and your situation, up to our Almighty God?

○ **Week 4: LIFT UP YOUR EYES – To see Christ afresh**

Week 1: Lift Up Your Eyes

Date: Sunday 14th September 2025

Key Point of this week: Rising out of anything that holds us back and we are learning from Isaiah 60.

Key Scriptures:

- Isaiah 60
- 59:21 is important leading into 60.
- Excerpts from Chap. 58-59 (landing in Isaiah 60)

Summary:

The purpose of this Campaign is to encourage our congregation to *look up*. In a culture of distraction, where internal pressure and external worries consume our attention, it is more important than ever to consider God (biblically; NT- *examine closely, observe well*. OT- *giving serious thoughts to see/behold*).

Psalms 121 paints a precious picture of *looking up*:

¹ I lift up my eyes to the mountains—
where does my help come from?

² My help comes from the Lord,
the Maker of heaven and earth.

The scriptures are *filled* with passages where God reveals himself to people and beckons them into encounter; to *look up*. As Christians, we affirm the living and active nature of God's word. We believe that God is not someone who simply met with people in the past through distant stories, but that these stories reveal something of the nature of God in his desire to encounter humanity today.

As with all of the elements of Scripture, stories of encounter contain rich theological depth and purpose. At times, these are multi-layered, with later reflection—either from the N.T looking back on the O.T or even today looking back on scripture as a whole! — showing us something that the authors themselves may not have seen. It is clear that whenever people encounter God, something in their perspective, calling or personhood changes; sometimes with resistance, but always producing good.

In this campaign, we will focus on 3 distinct encounters where people were summoned to *look up*. We will explore what was produced *in them* (how were they transformed?) and *through them* (how were others impacted?).

¹ 'Consider Meaning - Bible Definition and References', Bible Study Tools, accessed 18 July 2025, <https://www.biblestudytools.com/dictionary/consider/>.

This week, we are anchored in Isaiah 60. This passage on *arising* paints the picture of God *moving* in action and our necessary *response* to His grace. In week 2, we will wrestle with Isaiah's throneroom vision. In this sequence, Isaiah is swept up by the magnitude of God and commissioned to speak on his behalf. Week 3 will cover the story of the burning bush, where Moses encounters God in an unusual way. His identity is *affirmed*, and, like Isaiah, his commissioning is clear. In the last week, we will look at the Transfiguration of Christ. The disciples witness Jesus in a radically new light in this encounter; they see his *glory*!

Background:

Background to Isaiah 56-66

56:1-8	66:18-24
The Places of Foreigners in the Service of Yahweh	
56:9-59:8	65:1-66:17
Yahweh's challenges concerning the Jerusalem community's life	
59:9-15a	63:7-64:11
Prayers for Yahweh's forgiveness	
59:15b-21	63:1-6
Visions of Yahweh acting in judgement	
60:1-22	61:10-62:12
Visions of Jerusalem Restored	
61:1-9	
The Prophet's Commission	

The Book of Isaiah was written across three major historical settings.² Due to the broad timeframe covered, many scholars' hypothesis multiple dates for the completion of the work, which was then collated to form one major book. Chapters 56-66 are theorised to have been written about Israel's *post-exilic* period, dating this section from the late 6th century until the 3rd century BC.³

Chapters 56-66 continue the themes of Judgement and Hope but with a decidedly new perspective, namely that the righteous remnant will be composed of people from within Israel and the nations.⁴ Oswalt also believes this section of Isaiah is arranged chiastically; in other words, the outside chapters (56 and 66) form a mirror in descending order, finally arriving at chapters 60-62 as the carrier of the central message.

Isaiah 58 discusses the nature of *true worship*, and Isaiah 59 looks at the bleakness of sin and lack of justice occurring in Israel.

² John N. Oswalt, *The Book of Isaiah. Chapters 1-39*, The New International Commentary on the Old Testament (Eerdmans, 2009).

³ Margaret Barker, *Eerdmans Commentary on the Bible: Isaiah* (Eerdmans, 2019), 1-2, https://www.perlego.com/book/2985423/eerdmans-commentary-on-the-bible-isaiah-pdf?utm_source=google&utm_medium=cpc&campaignid=15820430121&adgroupid=131576157306&gclid=Cj0KCQjw4bipBhCyARIsAFsieCyW0ZZiGd9RSuXkFPKQ8FcAjYHkKJMPxZxVWQ-SZnEe1hvYpKAV2UoaAgjeEALw_wcb.

⁴ Paul D. Wegner, *Isaiah: An Introduction And Commentary* (Inter-Varsity Press, 2021), 64, <https://www.scribd.com/book/523175769/Isaiah-An-Introduction-And-Commentary>.

What does God do in response? Enacts his own justice. Compare 59:9-11 with 60:1-4. Darkness of Israel and the nations against the backdrop of God's *coming light*.

A note on Apostasy

We often loosely speak about Israel's disregard for God, which led them towards apostasy and judgment. Oswalt points out that this Apostasy is specifically defined in the books of Hosea (chs.1-3) and Ezekial (chs. 16 and 23) as:

- "Prostitution, the debasing of oneself with unworthy lovers for gain. For the people of God, this meant 'forgetting God'(Deut. 8:11), that is, forsaking their sole allegiance and obedience to him and serving other gods...abuse of those weaker than oneself, because the primary goal has now become satisfying one's own needs through manipulation of the environment. Thus, for the prophets, idolatry, adultery, and oppression are always indissolubly linked."⁵

Supporting points:

Isaiah 60:1-5

"Arise, shine, for your light has come,
and the glory of the Lord rises upon you.

² See, darkness covers the earth
and thick darkness is over the peoples,
but the Lord rises upon you
and his glory appears over you.

³ Nations will come to your *light*,
and kings to the brightness of your dawn.

⁴ "Lift up your eyes and look about you:
All assemble and come to you;
your sons come from afar,
and your daughters are carried on the hip.

⁵ Then you will look and be radiant,
your heart will throb and swell with joy;
the wealth on the seas will be brought to you,
to you the riches of the nations will come.

1. We are called to arise

- The book of Isaiah reveals hope in the midst of a thoroughly human *reality*. Where does this hope come from? Who calls the people of God to *arise* out of their sin?
 - None other than God himself!

⁵ Oswalt, *The Book of Isaiah. Chapters 1-39*, 6.

- Chapters 58-59 form the conclusion of God's *dealing* with the sinfulness of Israel, which began in Chapter 56.⁶
 - See Isaiah 58:1-6
- The people of God were concerned with religious duties, not as a form of love and worship, but as a means of accessing God's blessing and merit. This, as Oswalt describes, is the crux of sin: *self-interest*.
 - The issue with this is that we make ourselves *gods*; this creates a life of meaningless value!
- As God called Israel to see "loose the chains of injustice", so does he call us to live according to his plans. Church, feeding the poor, fasting, and prayer are all excellent actions; but. Are these things leading us "out of ourselves, to God?"⁷
 - We are *beckoned* by God to continually fix our eyes upon him, not because we are not worth attention, but because He knows we flourish when this happens.

2. There is grace to arise

- The tension of "being chosen people (ancient and modern)" is learning to live as *righteous*. "If the world is to be won, it will only be done so because it has seen the reality of Christ in Christ's followers." (Oswalt)
- How does this occur? Only by the grace of God. The devastating part of Isaiah 56-59 is the "radical sinfulness" that plagues the people of God. Yet God is still active in the lives of his people by His power and faithfulness towards them.⁸
- He calls us to arise despite our inability "to put it (the world) right in their own power."⁹
 - "The project of human salvation can be undertaken only by Yahweh himself...But an agenda is set, nevertheless, in which human participation is indispensable. Yahweh involves his servants in the realisation of his purpose for the world."¹⁰

3. The outcome of arising – purpose is found!

"Why does the servant make salvation available to his people? In order that they may declare the good news of God to the world, and that's really what chapters 56-66 are about."

- Isaiah 56-66 points to the people of God *serving* the nations by being a place they flood to in order to learn "God's instructions of life."¹¹

⁶ J. G. McConville, *Isaiah*, Baker Commentary on the Old Testament Prophetic Books (Baker Academic, a division of Baker Publishing Group, 2023). [Exploring Isaiah: 58-59; 66 \(John Oswalt – Week 3\)](#)

⁷ [Exploring Isaiah: 58-59; 66 \(John Oswalt – Week 3\)](#)

⁸ McConville, *Isaiah*.

⁹ McConville, *Isaiah*, 663.

¹⁰ McConville, *Isaiah*, 663.

¹¹ [Oswalt, The Book of Isaiah. Chapters 1-39.](#)

- Isaiah 60 is a beautiful picture of this reality coming to fruition; the central message of this section is the restoration of the people of God and their arising out of sin in order to *bless* the nations.
 - “Just as Isaiah needed to receive the fiery, but ultimately gracious cleansing of God (6:5– 7), so did the nation (chaps. 40– 55). and just as Isaiah needed to receive God’s commission (6:8– 13), so did the nation (the people of God)(chaps. 56– 66).”¹²

Resources:

- [Exploring Isaiah: 56-57 \(John Oswalt - Week 1\)](#)
 - Theme of the book as a whole: “Israel as the servant of God. The servant of God to reach the nations.”
- [Exploring Isaiah: 57; 65 \(John Oswalt - Week 2\)](#)
- [Exploring Isaiah: 58-59; 66 \(John Oswalt - Week 3\)](#)

¹² Oswalt

Week 2: Lift Up your eyes to see God Isaiah's encounter

Date: Sunday 21st September 2025

Key Point of this week: Lift up our eyes to see God in a fresh way.

Key Scriptures:

- Isaiah 6 (Anchor)
- Isaiah 60
- Ties in well with week one.

Summary:

In this passage, Isaiah is called up to a throne room vision of God before being commissioned to speak to the lost sheep of Israel. It is a powerful encounter where Isaiah's perspective of God is magnified (train of his robe...). Isaiah is pulled up and shown what God is doing and what he will do for his people.

Week 2 Background:

Historically, this chapter is at a crucial turning point in the life of the nation of Judah. Under the long reign of Uzziah (c.792/791–739 BC), the nation had prospered, but by the time of Ahaz (c.735–715 BC) the country had become an Assyrian vassal. Morally and politically, the nation had experienced a deplorable decline. God sends Isaiah at this difficult time as a prophetic voice to the nation.

In the year King Uzziah died is a time of upheaval and threat, when the king dies there is period of unrest, sense of loss, uncertainty until another king is in place. This would be the best time for the enemies to attack because the city was without a leader. In this time of uncertainty, God calls Isaiah to be a prophet to His people. Chapter 6 reveals a consecration, as he *lifts* his eyes to see God. He is commissioned and called on behalf of his people.

Further Resources:

- "The Holy One of Israel" See Reading: [Holiness in the Book of Isaiah](#)
- *Theologies in the Book of Isaiah* (John Goldingay) Part One "[Holiness](#)"
- Witherington III, Ben. *Isaiah Old and New: Exegesis, Intertextuality, and Hermeneutics*. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2017.

Supporting points:

1. When we lift our eyes, we are reminded who God is.

God is not *a better human*. Sometimes we live with the thinking that God is a superhuman, like us, but without any of the defects. This is not the case. God is completely *other* to us.

Isaiah 6:1-4:

"In the year that King Uzziah died, I saw the Lord, high and exalted, seated on a throne; and the train of his robe filled the temple.² Above him were seraphim, each with six wings: With two wings they covered their faces, with two they covered their feet, and with two they were flying.³ And they were calling to one another:

*"Holy, holy, holy is the Lord Almighty;
the whole earth is full of his glory."*

⁴ At the sound of their voices the doorposts and thresholds shook and the temple was filled with smoke."

Background:

"The burden of the song of praise is both holiness and glory. The holiness of Yahweh is regularly called to mind in the name "the Holy One of Israel," frequent in Isaiah (as in 1:4), denoting his radical and unapproachable "otherness."¹³ The holiness of God is declared as a character trait, whereas glory is the impression left on "those who encounter him."¹⁴

- To *see* the Lord was of incredible significance for the hearer of these words. It brought memories of the Covenant made at Sinai, where the almighty Yahweh said to Moses "No human shall see me and live!" (Exodus 33:20). To gaze upon the Lord directly was seen as fatal for a human. And yet, we see in verse 5, Isaiah is spared for a purpose.
- Isaiah *perceives* God. He sees him for who he is...completely powerful and completely set on the purification and establishment of his people.

2. When we lift our eyes, we are reminded *who we are*.

- We must reflect on the magnitude of the God we serve; the nature of Isaiah's vision paints a grand picture of God *as the completely sovereign king*. What is the appropriate response to such a vision and revelation of God? It seems two-fold;
 - Inward awareness (covering, terror at inadequacy-both the "seraphim" and "Isaiah" engage in this)

¹³ McConville, *Isaiah*.

¹⁴ Ben Witherington III, *Isaiah Old and New: Exegesis, Intertextuality, and Hermeneutics* (Fortress Press, 2017), 97.

- “Isaiah’s lamentation over his sinfulness melds into confession.”¹⁵
- When we allow our inadequacies to be shaped into confession, God is present, for he “gives *grace* to the humble, but resists the proud.” (James 4:6)
- Outward praise (singing of the glory of God, delighting in Him and offering him what he deserves).
- To gaze upon (look at, consume, perceive) his holiness is *good*. When we peer at the Holiness of God, we are often drawn towards our inadequacy. This can be painful, but we follow a God who is faithful and merciful. He knows *who* we are and does not leave us in our state! Think of the Incarnation of Christ- the ultimate expression of God’s love toward us)

Isaiah 6:5-7

“Woe to me!” I cried. “I am ruined! For I am a man of unclean lips, and I live among a people of unclean lips, and my eyes have seen the King, the Lord Almighty.” Then one of the seraphim flew to me with a live coal in his hand, which he had taken with tongs from the altar. ⁷ With it he touched my mouth and said, “See, this has touched your lips; your guilt is taken away and your sin atoned for.”

- Isaiah makes no case for his innocence; God just reaches out. Another significant part of this mercy is that Isaiah himself produces *nothing*.¹⁶
 - “God does not reveal himself to destroy us, but rather to redeem us...”¹⁷

3. When we lift our eyes, we *are cleansed and commissioned*.

Isaiah 6:8

“Then I heard the voice of the Lord saying, “Whom shall I send? And who will go for us?” And I said, “Here am I. Send me!”

- Isaiah’s response to encountering God is *deep gratitude*.¹⁸
 - “Unless that (Spiritual) experience issues in some form of lived-out praise to God, it will turn upon itself and putrefy.” In other words, our recognition of the grace of God can stir us towards complete service. When we reflect on the unmerited mercy God has shown towards us (focused in the person and work of Christ), what other response is there other than “Here am I. Send me!”

¹⁵ McConville, *Isaiah*, 108.

¹⁶ Jenni Williams, *The Kingdom of Our God: A Theological Commentary on Isaiah* (SCM Press, 2019), 46, <https://www.scribd.com/book/437611201/The-Kingdom-of-our-God-A-Theological-Commentary-on-Isaiah>.

¹⁷ Oswalt, 184.

¹⁸ Oswalt, *The Book of Isaiah. Chapters 1-39*, 186.

- We must remember that the mercy of God we experience and rely upon is not to be in isolation.
 - As we looked at Isaiah 60 last week, the ultimate restoration of God's people was in order to make the "ways of God" plain for people to see. As God renews our hearts by his grace, we are beckoned to be *Christ's ambassadors* on earth.
 - One is reminded of Paul's 2nd letter to the Corinthians; saying "²⁰ We are therefore Christ's ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us. We implore you on Christ's behalf: Be reconciled to God." (2 Cor 5:20)

Week 3: Lift up your eyes to see purpose and people

Burning Bush

Date: Sunday 28th September 2025

Key Point of this week: Lifting up our eyes to see the purpose and people around us.

Key scriptures

- Exodus 2:23-25
- Exodus 3:1-8
- Further excerpts from Chapter 3.
- Exodus 19

Summary:

In this section, Moses encounters God through the burning bush. Previously, Moses had killed an Egyptian for the sake of his people, had then been rejected by his people, and subsequently chased out of Egypt for his actions.

We see God responding to the cry of his people (he *remembers* His covenant with them) through Moses and his commissioning. After such trouble, Moses responds with doubt; “Who am I that I should to Pharaoh and bring the Israelites out of Egypt?”. God responds, as if Moses should have no problem, saying, “I will be with you.” What a powerful statement.

Sign of God’s victory through Moses would be the Israelites’ *worship* on the mountain. Possible comparison to Exodus 19.

Background

Mountains and Encounters.

In the Ancient Near East (the culture God’s people were immersed within), mountains were seen as places of divine encounter. They imagined mountains as places “where the heavenly realm in the skies meets the human realm on the land. In this place, people can access God’s wisdom and power and his very presence.”¹⁹ Tim Mackie describes the atmosphere up in the mountains as “thin” within ancient imagination; by this, he means there was little divide between *heaven* and *earth*.

Mountains were mysterious and dangerous, places where the gods ruled from.²⁰ In this way, as humans ruled on earth, they reflected “what the gods do on mountains.”²¹

¹⁹ ‘The Symbolism of Mountains in the Bible | Free Guide’, accessed 20 July 2025, <https://bibleproject.com/guides/the-mountain/>.

²⁰ [A Mountain Rising from the Chaos](#)

²¹ Ibid.

With this in mind, it is no surprise that many encounters between God and people occurred on mountains. For example, Moses received the law, Abraham prepared to sacrifice Isaac, Elijah confronted the prophets of Baal, and Jesus was transfigured before the Disciples, all on mountains!

The theologian Kevin Van Hoozer, speaking on scripture, says “I’m not the first to compare reading the scripture theologically to mountain climbing. It’s actually an ancient image, due, no doubt, to the fact that in the Bible, people do seem to meet God on mountains. And meeting God is why we come to scripture in the first place.”²²

Theophany:

“Chapters 3 and 4 of the Exodus follow a literary pattern well attested both in the Bible and in other literature of the ancient Near East: the theophany form.”²³

See [HERE](#) for a brief definition of Theophany.

Despite Moses’ Egyptian upbringing, the humble beginnings of this story—which show Moses as a Shepherd—reflect his *now* strong “identification with his own ethnic people...it is apparent that should he ever return to Egypt, he would go on as an Israelite.”²⁴

Exodus 2:25-27 and Exodus 3:7-10 act as an “envelop” surrounding the burning bush narrative; God expresses complete *concern* for his nation, yet they are not “consumed”.

- “God’s concern for Israel frames Moses’ encounter at the burning bush. This literary frame creates the image of the bush as a representation of Israel in the midst of fiery oppression in Egypt. Though they are in flames, they will not be consumed.”²⁵

Further Resources:

- [A Mountain Rising from the Chaos](#) (20min mark onwards) – Bible Project.
- [The Mountains](#) – Bible Project (Podcast Series)
- [The Mountain – Bible Project](#) (Animated Video)
- [Jesus on the Mountain: A Study in Matthean Theology](#)
- [Bible Project Classroom](#) (FREE 15-hour course on Exodus!)
- [Mere Christian Hermeneutics](#) (Zondervan Master Lectures - Kevin Van Hoozer)

²² Mere Christian Hermeneutics - Introduction - An Experiment in Criticism (Zondervan Masterclass Series)

²³ Douglas K. Stuart, *Exodus* (Holman Reference, 2006), chap. 2.

²⁴ Stuart, *Exodus*.

²⁵ Bible Project Classroom, [Session 5: Commissioning Moses](#)

Supporting points:

1. Lifting our eyes draws us closer to god

Exodus 3:1-3

- The Hebrew word for bush is “seneh” (סִנֵּה). Referring to a “relatively small” bush, Moses would have been “well aware of how quickly bushes burn and would thus have been struck by two factors: first, a single bush on a hillside without anyone else around it was on fire; and second, instead of burning up it burned on and on...naturally attracted” Moses.²⁶
- *Seeing* plays an important role within the Moses narrative; first, he looked upon the injustice of the Israelites and took action (Exodus 2:11-14). Now, he *sees* this strange sight and is beckoned closer.²⁷
 - How often are we beckoned or drawn in towards God by the peculiarity (or uniqueness) of the Christian faith? How often are others who see us drawn towards God by our behaviour?

2. Lifting our eyes affirms our identity

Exodus 3:4-6

- God addresses Moses twice (“Moses, Moses”).
“In ancient Semitic culture, addressing someone by saying his or her name twice was a way of expressing endearment, that is, affection and friendship.”²⁸
 - The name “Moses” *sounds* like the Hebrew for “draw out.”
 - Who will be God’s chosen instrument for *drawing out* the Israelites?²⁹
- Verse 6 is significant; as Moses encounters God, his identity as part of the people of God is “assured.”³⁰
 - As God reveals, “I am the God of your Father, the *core* of Moses’ identity is established *in* God. Despite the turmoils he has encountered and will encounter, he is assured as part of God’s family.”³¹
 - The Christian today takes *great* comfort in God’s affirmation of their identity. We rejoice in being part of the family of God. This God is someone who enacts change in hearts and causes our eyes to be lifted.

²⁶ Stuart, *Exodus*.²⁷ Bible Project Classroom, [Session 5: Commissioning Moses](#)²⁸ Stuart, *Exodus*.²⁹ Bible Project Classroom, [Session 4: Becoming Moses](#)³⁰ Stuart, *Exodus*.³¹ Bible Project Classroom, [Session 4: Becoming Moses](#)

3. Lifting our eyes enables us to see the purpose of the mission: people.

Exodus 3:7-10

- God's desire and concern for his people is so evident in this section. The three verbs used, "seen", "heard" and "am concerned", denote "the sense "I have carefully watched"... indicating the intensity of God's interest in the misery of his people."³²
- As Moses is drawn in towards God, the heart of God is revealed. As God reveals *Himself* to Moses on Mount Horeb, he also reveals the *mission* that accompanies his good character; namely, the rescuing of his people.
 - To encounter God, to lift one's eyes and see, often produces a call to *action*. How often are we consumed with our own "Godly encounters" that we miss seeing the heart of God for others?
 - Yes, God loves us *fully* and *uniquely*, but this love should do something in us. It should help us look outward.

4. Lifting our eyes helps us *see* god's strength

Exodus 3:11-15

- The strength of God is on full display in this encounter, as Moses is continually encouraged to look beyond himself. For every discouraged, downcast attitude Moses brings forward, God has a reply:

Moses' Objections and God's Response

- Who am I? → I will be with you.
- Who are you? → I will be whoever I will be.
- What if they don't believe me? → What is this in your hand?
- I am clumsy-mouthed. → I will be with your mouth.
- Send someone else. → What about Aaron, your brother?

(Bible Project Classroom, Session 5: *Commissioning Moses*)

- God *always* equips those he calls. With his presence.
 - Eyes off himself...over to God and the people. Not about the person, about God.

Application:

- Moses was given a fresh calling and was honest in his response. He was afraid; he doubted his ability. The qualifying factor for his mission was God's presence.
 - How can I apply this *fairly* for an audience today? What is the primary point of God's presence showing up in such a way?
- He is glorious; he holds the keys to *death* and *Hades*.

³² Stuart, *Exodus*.

Week 4: Lift up your eyes to see Christ afresh The Transfiguration

Date: Sunday 5th October 2025

Key Point of this week: Lift up your eyes to see Christ afresh.

Key scriptures:

- Luke 9:21-27 (Important lead up)
- Luke 9:28-36
- Alternatively: Mark 9:2-13
- Alternatively: Matthew 17:1-13
- 2 Peter 1:16-21

Summary:

All accounts of this passage are preceded by the cost of Discipleship, and “some who are standing here will not taste death.” We see here the beginnings of Jesus’ glory, “glimpsed” at through the Transfiguration.

It is really important to read the whole verse 9:27 “Truly, I tell you, some who are standing here will not taste death before they see the kingdom of God.” Then to fulfill this promise is the next verse 9:29 “About eight days after Jesus said this, he took Peter, John, and James with him...

Peter, James, and John were the inner circle of Jesus, throughout the gospels there are times where Jesus takes these three without the other disciples, Luke 6:12-16, Mark 9:2-3, Luke 8:49-56, Matthew 26:36-38,

In true disciple fashion

Supporting Points:

1. Lift up our eyes gives us a fresh vision of christ glorified

The new Jesus, his face shone like the sun, his clothes came as white as the light
(Matthew account)

Matthew 17:5-8

⁵ While he was still speaking, a bright cloud covered them, and a voice from the cloud said, “This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased. Listen to him!”

⁶ When the disciples heard this, they fell facedown to the ground, terrified. ⁷ But Jesus came and touched them. “Get up,” he said. “Don’t be afraid.” ⁸ When they looked up, they saw no one except Jesus.

What does transfigure mean – Greek μεταμορφόω metamorpho – where we get the word metamorphosis. The worm spinning a cocoon and after a season going through the change of form into a butterfly. Transfiguration is an alteration and change of the outward form. The change that takes place in Jesus's form is astonishing. Let's look at how Jesus is described when he transfigures before the disciples:

- His face shone like the sun: his countenance radiated, they see Jesus face shines with such an intensity that it was as bright as the sun.

This reminds us of two stories: Moses crying out to see God's glory in Exodus and

Moses pleading with God to have a vision with God himself in Exodus 33:18-23, cries out let me see your face, the answer was no you can only see my back. No man shall see God and live. When the glory moved past Moses, was reflected in the face shine so much that when he went down the mountain he had to wear a cover over his face.

And now God does as Moses requested and let Moses see Jesus' face in full glory. Jesus is not reflecting the glory of God as Moses once had, this is coming from within Christ, he was the glory. Hebrews 1:3, he is the express image of his person and the very brightness of His glory.

Hebrews 1:1-3 NKJV

God, who ^[a]at various times and in various ways spoke in time past to the fathers by the prophets, ²has in these last days spoken to us by *His* Son, whom He has appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the ^[b]worlds; ³who being the brightness of *His* glory and the express image of His person, and upholding all things by the word of His power, when He had ^[c]by Himself ^[d]purged ^[e]our sins, sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high, ⁴having become so much better than the angels, as He has by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they.

We beheld his glory John 1:14

The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the one and only Son, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.

Paul on the road to Damascus blinded by the glory – brighter than the noon day sun.

Acts 9:3

As he neared Damascus on his journey, suddenly a light from heaven flashed around him. ⁴He fell to the ground and heard a voice say to him, "Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me?"

- His clothes became as white as the light. Even Tide can't make clothes whiter than the clothes of Jesus at this moment. No stain, his garments are pure and white. Consistent with the white light coming from within. He is pure, holy radiant.

- Moses and Elijah – the law and prophets coming together and talking to the Messiah. About his destiny and the task set before Him, in order to fulfill the law and in order to fulfill the prophets.

Jesus' transfiguration validates him as the ultimate prophet – a mediator greater than Moses and Elijah (Deut. 18:15-18). And a voice from heaven declares that he's more than a prophet; he's God's beloved Son. "Son of God" is a title reserved for the messianic king (see Ps. 2:6-7). But Jesus is also God himself, revealing God's glorious presence in human form. He is God's Mountain presence descended to earth. So Peter must decide whether to heed the words of the heavenly voice to "listen to Him" (Matt. 17:5) or continue to question his ways.

2. Lifting up your eyes and seeing christ is not about the encounter but what that encounter activates in you

Peter wants to stay here forever, he wants to build three tabernacles, Peter wanted to camp at this encounter, stay on the mountain with just the disciples, Jesus, Moses and Elijah. But God shifts there focus, this encounter is not about them, it speaks to what Christ is about to do on the cross and the future of the glorious kingdom coming on earth, as it is in heaven.

Mark 9:6 explains "He did not know what to say, they were so frightened."

In response to Peter's ridiculous request, a bright cloud covers them. This is my beloved son, in whom I am well pleased. Hear Him!! They fell down and were greatly afraid, in terror.

Now they are hearing audibly the voice of God, commanding them to listen! Jesus came and he touched them and said:

17:6 "Get up" (nkjv "Arise") Don't be afraid." When they looked up, they saw no-one except Jesus."

Peter – describes this moment in his second letter,

2 Peter 1:16-18 NKJV

¹⁶ For we did not follow cunningly devised fables when we made known to you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eyewitnesses of His majesty. ¹⁷ For He received from God the Father honor and glory when such a voice came to Him from the Excellent Glory: "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." ¹⁸ And we heard this voice which came from heaven when we were with Him on the holy mountain.

¹⁹ [1] And so we have the prophetic word confirmed, which you do well to heed as a light that shines in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts; ²⁰ knowing this first, that no prophecy of Scripture is of any private [2] interpretation, ²¹ for prophecy never came by the will of man, but [3] holy men of God spoke *as they were* moved by the Holy Spirit.

This moment was a foreshadowing of what was about to happen in the resurrection, ascension and the second coming of Christ. It was so much more than what they knew.

With the entirety of the Gospel and church history, we have the opportunity to see Christ for who He is...or begin to see him in his glory.

2 Corinthians 3:18

And we all, who with unveiled faces contemplate^[a] the Lord's glory, are being transformed into his image with ever-increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit.

3 Lift up our eyes gives us an urgency that he will return soon

In the transfiguration we get a glimpse of the glorified Christ. The first coming of Christ, he came as a humble servant. With his death, resurrection, and ascension he is glorified and will come back in the second coming as the glorified Christ. We will see him like this with our own eyes. Revelation 1 and 19 describe him in this way.

Revelation 1:12-18

¹² I turned around to see the voice that was speaking to me. And when I turned I saw seven golden lampstands, ¹³ and among the lampstands was someone like a son of man, ^[d] dressed in a robe reaching down to his feet and with a golden sash around his chest. ¹⁴ The hair on his head was white like wool, as white as snow, and his eyes were like blazing fire. ¹⁵ His feet were like bronze glowing in a furnace, and his voice was like the sound of rushing waters. ¹⁶ In his right hand he held seven stars, and coming out of his mouth was a sharp, double-edged sword. His face was like the sun shining in all its brilliance.

¹⁷ When I saw him, I fell at his feet as though dead. Then he placed his right hand on me and said: "Do not be afraid. I am the First and the Last."¹⁸ I am the Living One; I was dead, and now look, I am alive for ever and ever! And I hold the keys of death and Hades.

Revelation 21:22

I did not see a temple in the city, because the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are its temple. ²³ The city does not need the sun or the moon to shine on it, for the glory of God gives it light, and the Lamb is its lamp. ²⁴ The nations will walk by its light, and the kings of the earth will bring their splendor into it.

Revelation 22:20

²⁰ He who testifies to these things says, "Yes, I am coming soon." Amen. Come, Lord Jesus.

"When the splendor of the face is shown, and the brilliance of the clothing described, it is not that the substance is removed, but the glory is changed. " Jerome Commentarium in Matthaeum

Application: This week our heart is that you encounter God and the Lamb, Christ, glorified at the C3 SYD Conference. To lift up our eyes and see God afresh, to see Christ glorified, to get a bigger vision of Christ.

Resources:

- [Transfiguration: What Did Jesus Do? - Understanding the Work of Christ with R.C. Sproul](#)
- [What we MISSED Reading the Transfiguration...](#)
- [Mere Christian Hermeneutics](#)
- For the preceding passage: [Luke 9:18-22](#)
 - Luke tells the story of Jesus from the Earth up; his humanity leading towards divinity. *Suffering Servant* and *Son of Man* (divinity). How does this feed into the transfig. narrative?
- Luke [9:28-36](#)
- [Bible Project](#) video on The Mountain and what mountains represent in the Bible.