

Chat with the children

- Who has ever....?
 - been somewhere very hot (image)
 - been somewhere very high (image)
 - been somewhere very famous (image)
 - been to an amazing gig (image)
 - been in a huge crowd (image)
- Come home (image)
- Talk about what was so amazing about each of the "somewhere very..." experiences
 - but then try and unpick what it was like to come home afterwards
 - to apply or relate to daily life what the "high" had been like
- Connect to Jesus' disciples coming down the mountain from the transfiguration into daily reality...

Hard Subjects!

- (Image: teacher and pupils)
- School - the best days of your life - that's what they say!
- I'm sure in some ways its true - few responsibilities; life full of endless possibilities before you...
- But for most people school has other memories too!
- I don't know what it was for you, but for me it was anything involving languages - not just French or German, but even English!
 - I simply didn't get it!
 - I couldn't hold all the words and phrases in my head; I couldn't remember vocabulary; I didn't see the stuff that everyone else seemed to see in the books we read...
 - I was out of my depth, scrabbling around to try and make it appear I was coping!
- For other people, maybe it was Maths or Physics or Chemistry.
- For everyone there are things we find hard to understand, hard to take in
- Now the mark of a really good teacher is the one who can help us with the things we find hardest, who can explain that bit of Maths, who can help us remember vocab
 - who, despite the difficulties - ie us! - manage to help us understand!
 - find some method to help us comprehend something previously incomprehensible
- In a sense that is part of what Jesus was doing for the disciples at the top of that mountain:
 - who am I? The Christ. Do you know what it means to be the Christ? Let me show you...
 - but his input was just as much required as they came down the mountain again...
 - for he knows they need to apply that great insight when they are down the mountain, in the reality of daily life

What happens: Jesus heals

- Jesus and the three come down the mountain
 - meet up with the other nine, plus whoever else had been with Jesus...
 - there was a large crowd there too...
 - and in the crowd a man whose son had convulsions from demonic possession...
 - more, he'd asked Jesus' disciples (who, remember, had gone out healing and

casting out demons earlier in this chapter - maybe 10 days, almost certainly less than two weeks before) to heal his son
 - the disciples had failed

- Then Jesus appears, and the man goes over the disciples heads to Jesus himself:
 - Jesus makes a despairing comment (v.41, which we'll come back to) and the rebukes the evil spirit and heals the boy
 - drawing forth amazement at the greatness of God (v.43)

Jesus' exasperation

- Jesus demonstrates faith, a trust in God able to ask with confidence in the willingness and ability of God to help
 - there should have been enough evidence for the disciples to do the same - but they failed
 - perhaps Jesus even felt there was enough evidence available for the crowd, Jews all of them, with the whole OT heritage available, to ask God with confidence in His willingness and ability to rescue this child
 - his exasperation is that they seemed unable to take that step of faith, to ask...
- If Jesus healed, it was because he trusted his Father and acted on that trust:
 - he invites us to have the same trust and critically to act on that trust

Signs and Wonders

- *(Image: fireworks or flare?)*
- Is this a firework or a flare?
 - is it just for amazement?
 - or is it also for communication?
- When God displays his power he is not merely showing off!!
 - God's hope is that our reaction goes beyond amazement
 - into praise, into trust, into insight
- Jesus uses the heightened awareness of God's greatness to point them to the Cross: qq (v.43bff)
 - this was not only the power of God for the rescue of one boy whose father called out to Jesus
 - this was also a sign pointing forward to the power of God to rescue all people who will call out to Jesus

Conclusion

- **Have we seen God?**
 - what are our mountain tops with God? When have we seen him clearly, entered into fresh depth of relationship with him?
- **Do we have faith in God?**
 - faith that actually acts, prays, seeks healing and wholeness, change in people?
- And are we not merely concerned with the "wow" of healings and displays of God's power, **but with the full salvation he offers at the Cross?**
 - for ourselves and for others...