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The Gospel of Luke / Luke 9:18–27

Introduction

- <https://www.foxnews.com/us/maine-woman-brings-raccoon-petco-unconventional-pet-spa-experience> - Getting nails trimmed pet raccoon! A regretful decision! Not so smart!
- There's going to be a day, and maybe you've already had "that day," where you look back on life and regret some decisions you made.
- You will not get to the end of your life and look back and say, "I regret that I followed Jesus." You will not enter into eternal life and see the face of Jesus and say, "Jesus, I wasted my life following you." I have never ministered to anyone on their deathbed who said, "Following Jesus was not worth it."
- That doesn't mean it's not difficult following Jesus. Jesus sets the bar high - to be like Him. Yet, it's a constant struggle to be like Jesus. Struggle to obey. Struggle to give up our desires for His desires. Struggle to forgive. Struggle to pray, to read the Bible, to clearly hear God's voice. BUT... the struggle is worth it. Faith is worth it because we know that IN FAITH we gain everything our hearts long for.
- [Luke 9](#) = turning point in Luke's Gospel. End of ministry in Galilee. Jesus to set His face toward Jerusalem and begin His journey to the cross.
- [Luke 9](#) - Luke wants us to know that Jesus is the King who dies.
- [Luke 9:20](#) - Jesus asks the most important question that anyone will ever answer, "Who do you say that I am?" How you answer that question will determine the way that you live your life AND if you will live a life that matters.
- [Luke 9](#) is a call to discipleship. This passage - three ways that we need to follow Jesus.

Follow Jesus with conviction.

- The events leading up to this moment miraculous and spectacular. The Galilean ministry was a huge success. Thousands had witnessed the power of Jesus and heard the message of the Kingdom.
- Lingering question: “Who is this man from Nazareth?”
- Vs. 18 - Jesus praying... Luke shows Jesus praying at significant times in His ministry (baptism, calling of twelve, transfiguration, Mt. of Olives (22:41)). Praying that disciples might know who He is?
- Significant question: “Who do the crowds say that I am?” (vs. 18) - [Matt. 16](#) and [Mark 8](#) - Jesus asks this question while they are at Caesarea Philippi - a Greco-Roman city named for Herod the Great’s son, Philip. Originally, Panias after the Greek God pan - half human, half goat.
- A place of pagan worship. Literally known as the “Gate of Hades.” Children thrown alive into entrance of a cave at one of the temples as an act of worship - child sacrifice.
- A place where the disciples, as good Jews, would have never traveled. Yet, Jesus takes them to the Gate of Hades to ask them the most important question: “Who am I?”
- They answer: “John the Baptist, Elijah, one of the prophets.” General consensus of people is that Jesus was significant, but uncertainty surrounding His true identity. (Malachi said Elijah would return before the Messiah.) Moses foretold of a great prophet ([Deut. 18:15](#)).
- Jesus makes the question personal: “Who do you say that I am?” The most significant question you will ever answer.
- At the end of the day, what matters for your life, is not what the world confesses about Jesus - what matters is what YOU confess about Jesus.
- Peter’s bold confession: “You are the Messiah” (CSB, or Christ). Christ/ Messiah = anointed one - set aside for significant ministry. In OT, prophets, priests, and kings were anointed. Jesus is THE anointed one. He is THE prophet, priest, and King.

- [Matthew 16:17](#) - Peter knows this because the Father revealed it to him. Jesus changes Peter's name from Simon to Peter - Rock. "On this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not overpower it."
- The church built on this confession of Faith - Jesus is the Messiah. It's built on Peter's confession, your confession, believers' confession through the century.
- We gather this morning and every Sunday because of our conviction that Jesus is the Messiah who has come to save us and give us life.
- Follow Jesus with conviction.
- **The world is telling you to believe.** The message of Caesarea Philippi - "Believe these false gods." The message of our culture - Believe what you want to believe. OR, believe what this culture tells you - anything goes, you can define for yourself what's right and wrong. Make no mistake about it - the world is calling you to believe - a worldview of
- **You must daily embrace truth.** [John 14:6](#) - We hold fast to conviction that the way to find life is not believing anything you want but holding fast to the truth revealed in Jesus Christ. We don't waver in that truth.
- **You must avoid mixing truth with error.** Most of us in this room would say we embrace the truth, but you must be careful. Very easy to subtly let the world influence the way you think - very easy to compromise truth. e.g., "I believe Jesus, but LGBTQ can't be sinful. After all, you can't help how you feel. Plus, God loves all people." Or, "Maybe it's all right if I divorce my spouse, after all, God wants me to be happy."
- How do I combat mixing truth with error? [Col. 3:1](#), Ph. 4:8. Be truth SATURATED NOT truth DEHYDRATED. (Drinking in the world like a diet coke... tastes good but leave you thirsty.)
- Subtle lies of the world - don't fall for it. Confess Christ with conviction.

Follow Jesus because of His sacrifice.

- Jesus' sacrifice - Why we follow with conviction.

- First unexpected statement: “Don’t tell anyone.” Jesus doesn’t want confusion about who He is. At this point, He has not died and risen again. People wouldn’t understand. After the resurrection, Jesus would not hold His disciples back from telling the truth - once they had witnessed the fulness of Jesus.
- Second unexpected statement: “Necessary to suffer, be rejected, be killed, and raised on the third day.” God’s Messiah would travel to Jerusalem to endure terrible suffering. (Son of Man = [Daniel 7](#) - THIS is not what you would expect for the Son of Man!)
- Jesus would be rejected/crucified not by Israel’s enemies, but by the religious leaders of Israel. ([John 1](#) - “He came to His own, yet His own did not receive Him.”)
- It is necessary - Jesus knew His mission. The crucifixion/resurrection was the plan from the beginning ([Gen. 3:15](#)). His death/resurrection would not be a surprise to Jesus. It’s why He came - to pay the price for our sins.
- Message to the disciples clear: “I’m not the kind of Messiah you want, I’m the Messiah you need.”
- Jews wanted a Messiah would deliver from physical enemies (why the Jews tried to make Jesus king by force in [John 6](#)). Jesus came to set us free from our greatest enemy: Sin and death.
- What’s the kind of Messiah that you want? Be honest... I think most of us would say we want Jesus, but do we want Jesus for who He is, a suffering Messiah who calls us to join IN His suffering, or do we want a Messiah of our own making?
- Just a reminder:
 - Jesus is NOT a life-coach.
 - Jesus is NOT a spiritual guide.
 - Jesus is NOT a personal assistant.
 - Jesus is NOT an interesting subject to study.

- Jesus is LORD AND SAVIOR. - He has given Himself for you, and we follow Him because of the sacrifice He has made for us - because we KNOW HIM as Lord and Savior.

Follow Jesus ready to sacrifice.

- vs. 23 - “If anyone...” - Jesus going to Jerusalem to die. Looks to disciples. “If you are going to follow me, know what it means... It means death... Death to self.”
- The words that Jesus gives do not describe OPTIONAL Christianity but NORMAL Christianity. [Luke 9:23-27](#) is what characterizes every follower of Jesus.
- A disciple follows the example of Jesus - because Jesus was willing to sacrifice His life for us, we’re willing to sacrifice our lives for Him.
- **We must remove ourselves from the position of master over our own lives.**
 - Deny himself (vs. 23). (*Same verb used of Peter when he denied Jesus - to turn your back on...*) Self-denial? Does it mean I don’t eat that extra piece of dessert? Or, I don’t buy that luxury car when a normal car will do? This is NOT a Lent - “I’m going to give up social media for 40 days.” This is, “I’m going to give up my life every day.” Denying self = I’m not going to be the master of my life. I’m going to let the ONE who is perfect and good rule over my life.
- **We must daily surrender.**
 - Faith in Jesus is not a one-time event. Faith in Jesus is a daily decision to put your life in the hands of our good and gracious God and choose to do His will. Take up your cross - NOT a piece of jewelry but an instrument of death. In ancient Roman world, the most humiliating, shameful death possible.
 - Jesus giving an invitation to death and public humiliation. NO self-centeredness AND a willingness to live life in stark contrast to the rest of the world even if it invites much ridicule.

- Daily = daily obedience. Daily cross bearing = “I’m a dead man” ([Gal. 2:20](#)). NO area of your life where Jesus is not present and bringing you into conformity with His will... finances, ambitions, marriage, sexuality, entertainments, relationships, etc. must all be brought into conformity with the will of Christ. NO area of your life where you can say to Jesus, “This is off limits to Jesus.” NO area of your life where you can say, “This is mine.”

What does it look like to daily surrender?

Assess every life situation in light of Scripture. Scripture does not speak to every issue of life but it informs every issue of life.

Assess every thought you have about every life situation you face. Do you have the mind of Christ? ([1 Cor. 2:16](#)) Or, is your thinking self-centered and self serving?

Assess every response you have to every life situation. Are you responding to life situations biblically? In obedience to HIS Word?

Assess your motives in every life situation. Why do you respond the way you do in life situations? Is your motive to glorify God, or glorify self? To gain for you or to gain for the Kingdom? This is a HEART question.

- **We must be convinced that we gain when we lose.**
 - 24-27 - Live for your gain and lose everything. No one on their deathbed says, “I wish I could have gained more of this world...” BUT, many say, “I wish I would have walked more closely with Jesus.”
 - If you gain in this life yet reject Jesus’ call to discipleship, you lose everything ([Lk. 9:26](#)).
 - vs. 27 - Speaking of transfiguration? Resurrection, ascension? Coming of Spirit at Pentecost? The point: “You’re going to see Me as King... You’re going to see that I am the ONE worth following.”
 - The way to real life is to give up your life. The way to joy is to find joy in what Jesus has done for you. The way to blessing is to be a blessing for the sake of the Gospel.
 - **Are you fighting to gain, or are you choosing to find joy in losing (daily surrender)?**

- The cross looks like the greatest loss in human history - God in the flesh dying - For a moment, it looked like the Messiah was defeated. BUT... it was necessary. Jesus was NOT defeated. He was paving away to victory through His resurrection. Have you experienced salvation that comes in trusting Christ, turning from your sin, and turning to Him by faith?
- Follower of Jesus: What would it look like to lose your life today for the sake of Jesus? Would it look like not holding on to a grudge? Offering forgiveness? Making time for someone you'd rather not make time for? Repenting of a sin that you've treasured? Allowing Jesus to change your worldview?