

Week 6: Follow... and Die

Luke 9:18-27, 57-62

To be studied in preparation for October 21, 2018.

Leader's Note: This fall we are introducing an approach to group Bible study called "storying." Please refer to the resource, "Storying," available [on our website](#), for a detailed guide on how to facilitate storying in your group.

this is life:

A people apprenticed to
the Life of Jesus

Why We Have Gathered

Our common goal as apprentices of Jesus is to learn
to be *loved by Jesus*, to be *led by Jesus*,
to *become like Jesus*, to *lead others to Jesus*.

Establishing "Safe Harbour"

For us to open up to God and one another, the environment needs to be safe, and we each need to be safe for each other. Let's remember the following guidelines:

- Practice **good listening skills**: open body postures and eye contact, no "cross talk" (side conversations when someone is sharing), non-judgmental reflection, attention to the one sharing (rather than forming your own thoughts), allowing others to finish their thought, and not rushing to fill a pause or moment of silence.
- Honour "**sharing boundaries**" and **confidentiality**: Don't share what you don't have permission to share, here or outside our meetings, and don't gossip about others. Tell your own story.
- Don't try to fix, problem-solve or rescue**. Our aim is "**gospel fluency**": pointing toward Jesus' life-changing power and the truths of who we are, who God is, and what God has done in Christ.
- Practice **healthy conflict resolution**: offer **grace**, **patience** and the **benefit of the doubt**; accept your responsibility for **peace**; seek swift **reconciliation** and **make amends** for hurts caused.
- Let's seek to be co-**learners** and make this a safe space to ask **any and all questions**.

Entering Into the Story: Luke 9:18-27, 57-62

Setting the Scene: *In Luke 9:1, Jesus takes the twelve apostles' apprenticeship to a new level. No longer are they just observing Jesus in ministry. It's time for an "internship" – replicating what Jesus has done with them out among the villages of Galilee, spreading the news about the King and his kingdom. When they return, full of new experiences, crowds of people follow them to find out more. So Jesus gives them yet another assignment – feed them all! This too is a "ministry lesson" about the divine identity and power of Jesus. Today's story happens after the leftovers are picked up and Jesus' apprentices finally find themselves alone with him. It includes Jesus' challenge to those who have already begun to follow him, and his challenge to those who aren't so sure. As I tell you this story, I invite you to consider who or what you relate to in the story, and why.*

Tell the Story: The leader will tell **Luke 9:18-27, 57-62** from memory.

Rebuild the Story: Let's open up our Bibles to Luke 9:18-27 and 57-62.

- *Walk through, chronologically, verse by verse, asking "Who, What, Where, When, How, and sometimes Why" questions. Where did the story-teller add or omit details?*

Read the Story: Read the story in one translation. If you have time, you might choose to read a second translation as well.

Debrief the Story: Let's respond to the following questions:

- ***Who or what do you relate to in the story, and why?***
- *What picture or description caught your attention or came to mind as you listened?*
- *What questions arise for you out of what Jesus teaches?*
- *What can this story tell us about apprenticeship to Jesus?*
- *What are the barriers to apprenticeship that this story exposes?*
- *What other Scriptures or biblical principles does this story remind you of?*
- *How could this story be used to help someone else understand apprenticeship to Jesus?*
- *How will you apply this story in your own life? What is your "take-away"?*
- ***What specific action do you sense God asking you/us to do as a result of our conversation with Him through his Word?***

Praying for One Another

Using the Lord's Prayer (Matthew 6:9-13) as a guide, and based on what has come to the surface in your sharing together, lift one another to God in prayer.

WORSHIP

Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name.

Express your thanks and praise to your heavenly Father for his work in your lives.

PETITION

Your Kingdom come,
your will be done
on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.

Invite God to be King in the various areas of your life, as well as for practical needs, people far from God, the church's mission and its leadership.

CONFESSION

And forgive us our debts,
as we also have
forgiven our debtors.

Repent of any sin, express forgiveness regarding any broken relationship, and ask for God's help in bringing reconciliation wherever it is needed.

ENGAGEMENT

And lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from the evil one.

Ask God to lead, protect and heal you wherever it is needed. Give time to listen and respond to the Spirit's voice.

WORSHIP

For yours is the kingdom,
the power and the glory,
forever and ever. Amen.

Close by praising God for who he is, and for anticipated opportunities and answers to prayer.

Leader's Notes

This is the first of two studies on the "Follow Me"/"Led by Jesus" chapter of this sermon series. From this point on in the book of Luke, Jesus makes it clear that apprenticeship will not be "accidental," nor can it only be "intellectual." It requires a personal choice, "counting the cost." A few insights to introduce to the discussion where appropriate:

- ❖ When Jesus speaks of denying yourself, he's not talking about neglecting healthy self-care for the sake of the cause. He's speaking about firing the "Self," or what is often called "the Flesh," and evicting it from the corner office of your life.
- ❖ "The Flesh" refers to the primal appetites of our bodies and minds; these can't be trusted because they've been poisoned by the selfish influence of sin. Jesus needs his apprentices to know that genuine apprenticeship cannot include an ongoing competition between those twisted and destructive desires and His good and loving leadership.
- ❖ Unfortunately those desires don't die easily; they are "hard-wired" into our bodies and thought life. That's why they require a daily "crucifixion," so that they can be reformed under Jesus' leadership.
- ❖ Jesus also says that it's possible to forfeit your self, or as some translations say, your *soul*. This is the deepest and most real part of who you are – the unique self-hood that you carry as a person made, and being re-made under Jesus' leadership, in the image of God. The interests of your "Self"/Flesh are not in the best interests of your deepest, truest self/Soul. The world, the flesh and the devil often seek to equate the two, to the destruction of our souls.
- ❖ You might want to explore why, when people express an interest in following Jesus, he makes it more difficult, not easy, for them to follow through.